

**Peekskill CSD PTO  
Committee/Building Report Form**

Submission Date January 6, 2020

Month & Year January 2020

Committee Advocacy

**Items Requiring a Vote:**

None

**Items Requiring Discussion:**

None

**Items for Information Only:**

Next committee meeting scheduled for 6 PM on 1/21/19 in the Parent Resource Center at Uriah Hill School.

This fall, we have been working with PCSD BoE and staff to develop a clear, concise message about foundation aid and a clear strategy for conversation with elected officials and the Peekskill community.

After our initial committee meeting on October 22, 2019, we met again on November 12,th to brainstorm a “core message” that included all of the elements that needed to be addressed with our elected officials this year. We used the “Triangle Messaging Strategy” developed by Auburn Seminary to synthesize our core message into a single sentence for this year: “Without equitable state funding, Peekskill will need to continue to do *more* with a lot *less* than our neighbors to educate and empower our children to reach their full potentials.”

This message can be supported with statistics, stories and values, depending on the context where it will be used, e.g. advocacy letter, press release, interview, etc..

On December 12th, Margery met with Dr. Mauricio, Robin Zimmerman, Laura Belfiore and Branwen McDonald to share the core message and plan next steps. Laura wrote a letter to elected officials, which was translated into Spanish. We were able to collect more than 100 signed copies of the letter at Saturday Academy on December 16th. We will continue collecting signatures in the coming months as state legislators determine the state budget. Faculty, staff and students of PCSD will also be invited to sign letters. (A different version will be developed for younger children.)

We will ask the following of our legislators:

1. Fully fund the Foundation Aid formula.
2. Adjust/simplify the formula.
3. Fairly fund our schools.

The letters will be delivered to Assemblywoman Sandy Galef and Senator Pete Harckham in their local offices. We will also seek out ways to reach Governor Cuomo directly for an advocacy meeting.

**Other recommendations:**

Uncouple Westchester County from Upper Hudson counties. Our cost of living is more in line with Long Island and NYC. The state needs to update our regional cost index.

Encourage all community members to participate in the US Census - funding and representation is directly tied to the census!

Learn about the Successful Schools Model. It lists what schools need to thrive. If we do not have what is on the list, how will we succeed? We are caught up in the “Matthew Effect.”

Submitted by: Margery Rossi

\*\*Please be sure to include a budget for any financial requests