168 Boston Hill Road

Andover, CT 06232

May 13, 2025

Editor

Rivereast News Bulletin

P.O. Box 73

Glastonbury, CT 06033

To The Editor:

The anonymous flyer recently distributed to Andover residents was clearly filled with disinformation. But worse than that, it was also filled with baseless, abusive, personal attacks. The Rivereast has already apologized. The writers owe the town an apology too. I'm not holding my breath.

For now, let's rebut two of its claims.

First, the flyer states, "Andover already has the highest Per Pupil expenditure." In truth, Andover is #58 in the state. The flyer shows rates for certain surrounding towns, each of which is—sure enough!—lower than Andover's $23,439. But that isn't the proper comparison. Because fixed building and administrative costs are distributed over fewer students in small districts, per-pupil expenditures are inversely correlated to school size. So the towns to compare with are those with similar numbers of students. The closest to Andover's student population are Salisbury ($30,154), North Canaan ($28,891), Sherman ($26,415), and Chester ($27,734), all higher than us. The fifty smallest districts average $24,987. Andover looks pretty good in comparison.

Second, the headline on the flyer is that Andover Elementary is sitting on a cash hoard of over $900,000. This is wrong in so many ways it's hard to count them. The money for the school is sitting in accounts controlled by the town government, not the school. They receive a monthly stipend and have no access to other funds (besides grants and tuition). They do have a $175,000 Rainy Day fund – not much in a $4+ million budget. But the school cannot access even that without sign-off from the Town Administrator.

The Town and the BOE recently reached an agreement on a Capital improvement fund, again in town, not school, accounts. That includes $113,000 originally planned for paving and $100,000 from a previous town surplus. When the 2023 audit is finally completed, there should be around $300,000 additional. That would leave a healthy capital fund of just over $500,000. But most of this money is already earmarked for three Capital projects: upgraded bathrooms, overdue paving, and elevator repairs.

The BOE is not hoarding money. Like any household, it is saving up for big-ticket items.

Again, though, the biggest problem with the flyer is its *tone*. This is not how we want our little community to behave.

For more corrections to the disinformation in the flyer, please see https://flyer.andoverct.info. For an apology from the flyer writers, I would recommend you don't hold your breath either!

Sincerely,

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