



Marsha DeGennaro &lt;mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org&gt;

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**Fwd: [External Email] School Supply List**

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Marsha DeGennaro <mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org>  
Draft

Thu, Sep 7, 2023 at 10:15 AM

From: **Gina DePuma** <gdepuma@milforded.org>  
Date: Tue, Aug 29, 2023 at 3:01 PM  
Subject: [External Email] School Supply List  
To: <lpiascyk@woodbridgeps.org>

Dear Lynn Piascyk,

I am writing to you as chair of the Woodbridge Board of Education to draw your attention to a growing concern not only for my family, but most likely others in our community: the hardship faced by some parents in purchasing essential school supplies for their children. We started at Beecher Road School when my daughter was in Kindergarten in 2017. Since then, we have seen an increase in the supply list and the specificity of the items on the list. Now with two children attending Beecher Road School, our supply list has a total of 41 items and 5 optional items. In addition to those 41 items between 1st and 5th grade, the teacher has requested the children bring in several of each item. For example, my 5th grader needs 7 composition notebooks. Even though these materials are necessary, as you can probably imagine, the cost for all these items adds up very quickly. For both my children, we have spent almost \$300 on school supplies! Thank goodness we only have 2 children. And, many of those very specific items listed by the teacher we could not find in stores so we had to order these additional items online, making the process not only costly but often frustrating.

The cost of living has increased in recent years and as Woodbridge residents, we have one of the highest mill rates around, making our taxes very high. As a result, many families are financially stressed and some students may arrive at school without the necessary materials, which could impact their learning experience and academic progress. Neighboring towns such as Milford and Orange school systems do not require students to purchase their own school supplies. Orange is in our own district with a much lower mill rate and they do not require families to pay additionally for their child's education. I feel that it is our collective responsibility that every student in our school and district have equal access to quality education and necessary resources.

I am requesting that the Board of Education consider allowing the school district to purchase the necessary materials that students need. Being an educator myself and working in an elementary school, I know first hand that allowing the teachers to choose and purchase materials would not only ensure they are getting the materials that they want in their classroom, but also will allow them to have those resources before the students enter the classroom. Therefore allowing the teachers to be more prepared before the students walk

into the room. Having the teachers choose and purchase their own materials will also allow for bulk purchasing from larger companies, which can significantly reduce costs. These supplies can then be distributed to students and teachers as needed throughout the school year.

If the school district can not purchase the school materials, I ask that you at least consider a supply assistance program or collaboration with local organizations such as nonprofits or charities that specialize in providing educational resources to children to help supplement these costs for our Woodbridge families in need.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Gina DePuma  
[gdepuma@gmail.com](mailto:gdepuma@gmail.com)

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**Gina DePuma**  
Instructional Coach  
John F. Kennedy Elementary  
Milford Public Schools

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