

January 24, 2020

Dear Community Members,

At its meeting last Thursday, January 16, GSA's Board of Trustees voted to modify our proposed tuition increase for the coming year, reducing it by half, to just \$300 per town student. We took this action aware of the difficulties our original proposal had created for towns who were already well into their budget planning. As I had mentioned in my last letter to you, there was, the next day, a joint meeting of representatives from town select boards in the Blue Hill Town Office; they had received our modified proposal.

The meeting reflected all the thoughtful concerns and dilemmas one would expect when conscientious town leaders are faced with a proposal that would raise taxes. At the same time, I was impressed by the many expressions of support and constructive suggestions for moving forward in a unified way. There was broad agreement that a solution all towns buy into will be better than a divided outcome. It was suggested that a working committee be formed, composed of representatives from each town's school and select boards and from GSA, to grapple together with the issue of how to fund GSA. This committee would then bring their plan to voters next year.

We should all welcome the towns' shared commitment to finding sustainable solutions to GSA's financial predicament.

As far as our modified request for the coming year, that now lies with the school boards in each town—they control the school budget brought to voters at the town meetings. Please share your thoughts about GSA and about our proposed tuition increases with your school boards. Letters to the papers are also a good way to share your thoughts.

Town Forums hosted by GSA

We have begun to schedule community forums in each town over the next month, to provide all residents with accurate information, answers to questions, and a venue to express thoughts and ideas with one another and with GSA. Please try to attend your town's forum and encourage others to do so as well. So far, we have scheduled the forum for Brooksville on Wednesday, February 5, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm in the Brooksville Elementary School gymnasium.

Regardless of how you feel about GSA's proposed tuition increase, I urge all of you to stay involved with your local schools. The peninsula's schools and communities will benefit from your energy and wisdom.

As always, if you have any questions, reach out to me, and thank you for your interest and support.

Tim Seeley