

## Lisa Cataldi

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**From:** Rep. McNamara, Joseph M.  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2025 1:15 PM  
**To:** House Education Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Requesting Support for the Warwick Public Schools Budget Commission

**From:** Vinny Gebhart <vinny@gebhartforwarwick.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 5, 2025 2:48 PM  
**To:** Rep. McNamara, Joseph M. <Rep-McNamara@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Noret, Thomas E. <rep-noret@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Kislak, Rebecca M. <rep-kislak@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Biah, Nathan W. <rep-biah@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Casimiro, Julie A. <rep-casimiro@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Cotter, Megan L. <rep-cotter@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Donovan, Susan R <rep-donovan@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Fascia, Richard R. <rep-fascia@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Giraldo, Joshua J. <rep-giraldo@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Perez, Ramon A. <rep-perez@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Phillips, Robert D. <rep-Phillips@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Read, III, Earl A. <rep-read@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Roberts, Sherry <rep-Roberts@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Shallcross Smith, Mary Ann <rep-shallcross-smith@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Voas, Brandon T. <rep-voas@rilegislature.gov>  
**Subject:** Requesting Support for the Warwick Public Schools Budget Commission

Dear Members of the House Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed legislation that establishes the Warwick Public Schools Budget Commission. As a City Council member, I firmly believe that this bill is an absolute necessity for getting spending in our district under control.

Our community deserves fiscal responsibility and transparency in how our resources are allocated—especially given the current financial challenges we face. Recent reports have projected a staggering \$9 million deficit, a reality underscored in articles such as [“City Council Approves School Finance Review Panel”](#), [“Council Wrestles with School Budget Crisis”](#), and [“Council to School Officials: No Quick Fix for Deficit”](#). These reports highlight the urgent need for decisive action. Every day that passes without addressing this shortfall further compromises our ability to manage the impact on our FY25 budget. The creation of this commission represents a proactive and critical step toward ensuring that every dollar is accounted for and that we have a clear, long-term financial strategy.

Key aspects of the bill that underscore its importance include:

- **Robust Oversight and Accountability:** The commission’s authority to review, amend, and approve school expenditures, as well as to conduct audits, will provide essential checks and balances over our district’s financial operations.
- **Strategic Financial Planning:** By developing a three-year financial plan focused on fiscal stability, the commission will equip us with the tools to navigate and mitigate future financial challenges.
- **Transparency and Integrity:** The commission’s operations, bound by public records, ethics, and open meetings laws, will ensure that our community remains informed and engaged in the fiscal decision-making process.

I wholeheartedly endorse this measure as it addresses a critical need to regain control over our district’s spending and to confront the looming \$9 million deficit head-on. It is time we took decisive action to safeguard our financial future and uphold our commitment to responsible governance.

Thank you for considering this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Vinny Gebhart  
Councilman, Ward 9  
[GebhartForWarwick.com](http://GebhartForWarwick.com)

