

Final Draft/Template
Email to SC Chairs/Comparative Communities
Sent 6/9/16

Dear _____,

I am on the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee and am heading up a sub-committee to explore opportunities to improve efficiency of operations in our district by comparing targeted expense categories with comparable districts.

We selected _____ as one of the communities we'd like to compare ourselves to due to its quality of educational outcomes and similar enrollment. The subcommittee has spent many hours reviewing publicly available data; we are now seeking your help.

We would greatly appreciate your taking a few minutes to respond to the 5 questions below or refer them to another individual in your district who may be able to respond to them. We are happy to share a copy of the report that will be submitted to the A-B School Committee at our Summer Workshop.

Please contact me (dbaum@abschools.org or 978-621-8550) or Michael Coppolino (copp@verizon.net or at (978) 852-7757) if you prefer to discuss these topics or if you have any questions. We appreciate and look forward to your input.

Thank you,

Diane Baum
A-B Regional School Committee Member
Comparative Communities Sub-Committee

QUESTIONS

*Numbers in parentheses are those used in the DESE Chart of Accounts

1) **Health Insurance:** What is the current district or town-employee split for health insurance costs (5200) and for retirees (5250)? (Acton-Boxborough's is 75%/25% for current employees and 50%/50% for retirees).

2) **Teachers:** What type of early retirement incentive (if any) does your district offer to encourage veteran teachers to retire early?

3) **Administrative/Operational:** We are looking at staffing at the district and building-levels and are wondering if you have organizational charts for your central office and schools that you can share. We are interested in positions included under the following categories reported to DESE:

i) School Building Leadership (2200), which includes curriculum leaders, department heads, school principals & assistants, headmasters and deans.

ii) Specialist teachers (2310), instructional coordinators (2315), professional development leaders (2351), paraprofessionals & teaching assistants (2330).

iii) District level administration (1000 & 2100) including curriculum directors (2110) and dept. heads (2120).

4) **Transportation:** We are looking at our district's costs for transporting students both in-district (to-and-from school) and out-of-district.

i) For in-district transportation (3300), do you own or lease your bus fleet? Are leasing arrangements reviewed periodically? Do you charge families a fee for in-district transportation?

ii) For out-of-district transportation: How does your district transport students attending out-of-district schools? (We use mainly CASE Collaborative transportation and some private.) If you use collaborative-provided transport, how many students used it in FY15, and how much was spent? Do you have access to a fee schedule? Is there a process to ensure OOD transportation contracts are fair and reasonable, e.g., does your district bid out or consider other transportation costs? Is there useful data on FY16 spending available?

5) **Athletics (3510) & Other Student Activities (3520):** Though only about 1% of our total budget, fees for athletics and extra-curriculars such as music, theater, etc., tend to hit family pocketbooks pretty hard. We are troubled by the variability of the income streams upon which these programs depend (user fees keep going up). What was the total operating cost of your athletics program in FY15? What percentage of this budget was funded by (1) user fees, (2) gate receipts, (3) donations and (4) appropriated budget? (We were 31%, 4%, 4% and 61%, respectively.) Do you have similar data (% funded by fees v. appropriated budget) for Other Student Activities?

Per Pupil Expenditures All Funds

	Acton- Boxborough (LEA 600)	Belmont (LEA 26)	Hingham (LEA 131)	Westford (LEA 326)	Winchester (LEA 344)	Needham (LEA 199)	Reading (LEA 246)	Wachusett (LEA 775)	Wellesley (LEA 317)
Administration	452.17	334.20	345.52	324.20	583.88	663.41	346.83	269.28	506.76
Instructional Leadership	921.30	841.76	864.36	700.84	865.84	1,240.88	696.50	715.22	1,243.92
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	5,149.43	4,990.35	5,170.63	5,286.19	5,418.17	6,012.45	4,899.79	4,310.89	6,754.22
Other Teaching Services	1,097.26	938.85	1,178.01	1,013.16	982.53	1,138.07	1,009.25	1,175.32	1,904.04
Professional Development	99.79	134.72	54.03	219.88	146.46	231.66	314.95	140.43	375.48
Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology	298.86	337.71	172.74	345.89		517.28	431.40	135.14	476.74
Guidance, Counseling and Testing	480.36	329.25	505.91	420.05	457.08	525.70	368.03	240.84	630.34
Pupil Services	1,487.24	787.48	966.60	1,264.87	833.55	1,123.90	791.51	1,148.53	1,400.34
Operations and Maintenance	873.03	1,080.99	1,001.45	1,095.99	809.52	1,207.69	1,056.36	879.61	1,292.08
Insurance, Retirement Programs and Other	2,006.76	1,913.97	1,332.98	1,764.13	1,684.25	2,400.75	1,833.50	1,881.25	2,436.88
Expenditures Within The District	12,866	11,689	11,592	12,435	12,109	15,062	11,748	10,897	17,021
Expenditures Outside the District	58,444.89	74,927.34	67,395.86	64,163.96	56,436.20	66,729.82	53,396.90	33,278.75	106,615.78
TOTAL PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES	14,016.35	13,028.52	12,367.63	13,117.80	12,800.52	15,900.30	12,519.75	11,537.24	18,288.90

Spend Less than A-B
(excludes Concord and Sudbury)

<i>Total Per Pupil</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>ILT</i>	<i>Classroom & Specialist Teachers</i>	<i>Other Teaching Services</i>	<i>PD</i>	<i>Instr Materials Equip & Tech</i>	<i>Guidance Counsel & Test</i>	<i>Pupil Services</i>	<i>Ops & Maint</i>	<i>Ins. Retire & Other</i>	<i>SPED Exp in District</i>	<i>SPED Exp out of District</i>	
Belmont	Belmont	Belmont Concord	Belmont	Belmont			Belmont	Belmont		Belmont	Belmont	9 Belmont 1 Concord 1 Dedham 5 Harvard 8 Hingham 5 Marblehead 3 Milton 1 L-S 8 Westford 5 Wilmington 8 Winchester 3 Nashoba 1 Needham 10 Reading 10 Wachusett 1 Wellesley	
Hingham	Harvard Hingham	Hingham		Harvard	Hingham	Hingham	Harvard	Harvard Hingham		Hingham	Hingham	Harvard Marblehead	
Marblehead	Marblehead	Marblehead		Milton L-S			Milton	Marblehead Milton					
Westford	Westford	Westford Wilmington		Westford Wilmington	Wilmington	Wilmington	Westford	Westford Wilmington		Westford	Westford		
Winchester		Winchester Nashoba		Winchester			Winchester	Winchester	Winchester	Winchester Nashoba	Winchester	Winchester Nashoba	
Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading			Reading	Reading		Reading	Reading	Reading	
Wachusett	Wachusett	Wachusett	Wachusett			Wachusett	Wachusett	Wachusett Wellesley		Wachusett	Wachusett	Wachusett	
	7	7	10	3	8	2	3	7	13	1	7	6	5

FY2014 Education Spending as a % of Town Budget

Municipality	County	Education	Debt Service	Total	Education %
Acton	MIDDLESEX	53,961,056	2,904,631	81,900,740	66%
Boxborough	MIDDLESEX	11,840,301	931,777	19,430,791	61%
AB		65,801,357	3,836,408	101,331,531	65%
Belmont	MIDDLESEX	39,405,335	4,983,526	77,485,237	51%
Carlisle	MIDDLESEX	16,291,435	1,771,505	25,236,127	65%
Concord	MIDDLESEX	48,314,325	6,969,666	82,757,174	58%
CC		64,605,760	8,741,171	107,993,301	60%
Dedham	NORFOLK	33,481,792	8,475,397	86,065,508	39%
Harvard	WORCESTER	11,972,509	1,153,744	22,442,410	53%
Hingham	PLYMOUTH	41,337,582	6,874,711	82,867,889	50%
Lexington	MIDDLESEX	81,142,967	12,272,910	160,318,311	51%
Marblehead	ESSEX	31,215,680	4,742,971	66,227,939	47%
Milton	NORFOLK	38,305,046	3,884,410	73,375,013	52%
Needham	NORFOLK	59,171,688	10,579,550	120,431,930	49%
Reading	MIDDLESEX	38,171,621	3,970,499	76,000,178	50%
Sudbury	MIDDLESEX	53,693,723	3,127,894	80,927,586	66%
Lincoln	MIDDLESEX	13,688,084	1,152,595	29,685,203	46%
LS		67,381,807	4,280,489	110,612,789	61%
Wellesley	NORFOLK	59,357,916	12,579,137	125,005,533	47%
Westford	MIDDLESEX	49,447,581	7,105,631	90,391,358	55%
Wilmington	MIDDLESEX	41,380,644	3,997,610	76,908,060	54%
Winchester	MIDDLESEX	39,590,201	7,209,394	84,804,226	47%
Bolton	WORCESTER	12,326,021	2,012,254	19,962,834	62%
Stow	MIDDLESEX	14,961,404	1,799,013	23,548,244	64%
Lancaster	WORCESTER	10,884,739	710,650	16,785,104	65%
Nashoba		38,172,164	4,521,917	60,296,182	63%
Paxton	WORCESTER	5,536,536	1,248,674	10,866,333	51%
Princeton	WORCESTER	4,967,605	96,287	8,485,020	59%
Rutland	WORCESTER	9,242,388	2,697,784	16,898,757	55%
Sterling	WORCESTER	10,505,095	1,765,966	20,404,393	51%
Holden	WORCESTER	22,459,302	4,353,557	39,308,251	57%
Wachusett		52,710,926	10,162,268	95,962,754	55%