



Wordsplash made by Westborough Preschoolers during Kindness Week April 2019

# Kindergarten: Full Day Study Report

5.22.2019

Westborough Public Schools  
Kindergarten Full Day Study Subcommittee  
Final Report and Recommendations

## Table of Contents:

(Select Heading to move to that section of the report)

Kindergarten Committee Members:	3
Introduction:	4
Recommendation:	5
Program Information:	7
Learning and Analysis:	8
Implementation Considerations:	9
Conclusion:	9
Appendix:	10

Kindergarten Full Day Study Committee Members:

Amber Bock <u>Co-chair</u>	Superintendent of Schools
Irene Oliver <u>Co-chair</u>	Director of Finance and Administration
Maryann Stannard	Fales Principal
Kristen Vincent	School Committee Member
Jodi Windover	Kindergarten Teacher
Andrew Bradley	Advisory Finance Committee
Leigh Emery	Westborough Town Selectman
Brandon Quinones	Hastings School Area Parent
Amy Peterson	Armstrong School Area Parent
Suzanne Walker Petri	Hastings School Area Parent
Angela Richov	Fales School Area Parent

We want to thank the committee for their engaged and thoughtful work to develop a set of recommendations and information to guide School Committee in making decisions regarding Kindergarten programing.



## Introduction:

In May of 2018, the School Committee voted to have the Superintendent form a subcommittee to study the potential of shifting from tuition based full day Kindergarten to tuition-free full day Kindergarten. A committee was formed this year, and over several months the committee studied the impacts and potential options of moving away from the tuition based programing. The work was undertaken in response to the requests from the parent community, as well as faculty.

The School Committee has not formally reviewed the Kindergarten funding program for over eight years. Given the clear research that proves early childhood education as essential across a range of positive impacts for children, a review of the tuition based program is now important and relevant to the current educational values and learning goals of the Westborough Public Schools.

After thoughtful work and collaboration, the committee has finalized its research and learning phase, and has concluded with certain recommendations. It is the goal of this report to share the following:

- A recommendation for Kindergarten program funding
- The meaningful learning gathered during our process
- Implementation considerations & Impacts to consider

It is our hope as a committee that this report will provide the information needed for the School Committee to accept this committee's recommendation for Kindergarten funding. Following our recommendation, the remainder of the report provides the informational detail on the committee's work that guided our decision making.

## Recommendation:

The committee unanimously recommends that Westborough move to a tuition-free full day Kindergarten program. A majority of the committee supported the recommendation of a staged transition over several years to reach the target goal of tuition-free full day Kindergarten. The major area of concern was focused on the financial impacts to the town in absorbing the full cost of programming. After an exploration of numerous options, the recommendation from the committee is for the following phased option:

OPTION ONE (Recommended): Phase in at FY21 and Tuition-free at FY22

*(Reference to the 'General Fund' is the "School" General Fund; not the "Town" General Fund)*

PHASE AT FY21 & FREE AT FY22	Estimated Beginning Bal	Salaries	Salaries To Gen Fund	Adjusted Salaries Against Revolving	Tuition	Ch. 70 at FY23	Projected Yr End Bal	Funds From Town to Gen Fund	Gen Fund Budget - 3% Ea FY	Increase to GF Bud	Est. Enrollment Paid Tuition	Tuition Rate	No. Staff Off Revolving to Gen Fund
FY19	1,250,000	(500,000)	-	(500,000)	554,200		1,304,200	-	51,278,540	0.0%	163	3,400	0
FY20	1,304,200	(1,054,000)	-	(1,054,000)	554,200		804,400	-	52,806,278	0.0%	163	3,400	0
FY21	804,400	(1,080,350)	385,839	(694,511)	324,000		433,889	385,839	54,390,466	0.7%	216	1,500	5
FY22	433,889	(711,873)	395,485	(316,388)	-		117,501	395,485	56,022,180	0.7%	216		5
FY23	117,501	(324,298)	324,298	-	-	868,053	117,501	324,298	57,702,846	0.6%	216	-	4
FY24	117,501		-	-	-							-	0
3 Year Total From Town								1,105,622	163,218,925	0.7%			
FY23 Ch 70 To Town								868,053					
Net 3 yr Funds From Town								(237,569)					

4/11/2019

- All K students would attend full day K tuition-free in FY22
- Gradual three-year increase to the School General Fund Budget while phasing staff off the tuition account. All 14 staff salaries will be shifted to the School General Fund Budget by FY23
- For FY21 school year, recommend reducing full day tuition to \$1,500. This will provide an estimated revenue of \$324,000
- In FY23, begin to receive additional Chapter 70 funds from the state to the town, estimated to be \$868,053, because all K students will be counted as full-day students (Families who pay tuition for children to attend the optional second half of a full-day K program are only counted as half-day students.)
- In FY22, there will be a savings in transportation, estimated at \$53,000, because the half-day students will not need transportation home in the middle of the day

The committee selected this option as they felt it would allow for a slow progression toward tuition-free full day funding with an impact to the budget that could be foreshadowed to Advisory Finance Committee, Selectmen, and the town meeting.



### Three additional options for consideration:

#### OPTION TWO: Tuition-free at FY21 and Move All Staff to General Fund at Over 2 Years

FREE AT FY21 & MOVE STAFF TO GEN FUND	Estimated Beginning Bal	Salaries	Tuition Remains Constant	Ch. 70 At FY22	projected Yr End Bal	FUNDS FROM TOWN to Gen Fund	Gen Fund Budget - 3% Ea FY	Increase to GF Bud	Est. Enrollment Paid Tuition	Tuition Rate	No. Staff Off Revolving to Gen Fund
FY19	1,250,000	(500,000)	554,200		1,304,200	-	51,278,540	0.0%	163	3,400	0
FY20	1,304,200	(1,054,000)	554,200		804,400	-	52,806,278	0.0%	163	3,400	0
FY21	804,400	(1,080,350)	-		(275,950)	275,950	54,390,466	-0.5%	163		3
FY22	-	(870,068)	-	868,053	(2,015)	870,068	56,022,180	-1.6%	163		11
		11 Staff FY22		2 Year Total From Town		1,146,018	107,196,744	-1.1%			
				FY23 Ch 70 To Town		868,053					
				Net 2 yr Funds From Town		(277,965)					4/11/2019

- All students attend tuition-free full day K in FY21
- Move staff off tuition account to School General Fund Budget over two years. All 14 staff salaries moved to the School General Fund Budget by FY22
- In FY22, there will be a spike in funding gap of \$870,068 which is approximately a 1.6% increase to the School General Fund Budget (before the budget is developed)
- Would begin to receive additional State Chapter 70 funding equal to \$868,053 in FY22, which is one year sooner than the Phase One Option
- The transportation savings of \$53,000 would occur in FY21

#### OPTION THREE: Continue Tuition for Full Day & Move Staff to General Fund Over 2 Years

CONTINUE WITH TUITION BUT MOVE STAFF TO GEN FUND	Estimated Beginning Bal	Salaries	Salaries To Gen Fund	Adjusted Salaries Against Revolving	Tuition	NO Ch. 70	Projected Yr End Bal	Funds From Town to Gen Fund	Gen Fund Budget - 3% Ea FY	Increase to GF Bud	Est. Enrollment Paid Tuition	Tuition Rate	No. Staff Off Revolving to Gen Fund
FY19	1,250,000	(500,000)	-	(500,000)	554,200		1,304,200	-	51,278,540	0.0%	163	3,400	0
FY20	1,304,200	(1,054,000)	-	(1,054,000)	554,200		804,400	-	52,806,278	0.0%	163	3,400	0
FY21	804,400	(1,080,350)	231,504	(848,846)	554,200		509,754	231,504	54,390,466	0.4%	163	3,400	3
FY22	509,754	(632,776)	237,291	(395,485)	554,200		668,468	237,291	56,022,180	0.4%	163	3,400	3
FY23	668,468	(648,596)	-	(648,596)	554,200		574,072	-	57,702,846	0.0%	163	3,400	0
FY24	574,072	(664,811)	-	(664,811)	554,200		463,462		59,433,931	0.0%	163	3,400	0
							2 Year Total From Town		468,795	107,196,744	0.4%		
							Ch 70 To Town		-				
							Net 2 yr Funds From Town		(468,795)				4/11/2019

- Estimating that approximately 65 students will remain in half-day K each year
- Move 6 staff salaries to the School General Fund Budget, phased over two years in FY21 and FY22
- Tuition revenue would continue to fund 8 staff salaries to offset the School General Fund Budget

- No additional Chapter 70 funding to the town
- No transportation savings

OPTION 4: Continue with the Current Model of Tuition-based Full Day Kindergarten

- Continue tuition-based full day program, but work to reduce cost of tuition
- Expand options for tuition relief for families who desire full day K
- Move 6 staff salaries to the School General Fund Budget, phased over two years in FY21 and FY22
- Move more than 6 staff salaries to the School General Fund Budget with the reduction in tuition

**Program Information:**

To reach a majority conclusion, the committee spent the last several months to learn about and understand the need for tuition-free full day Kindergarten and the financial impact in moving away from the tuition supported funding that has provided the backbone of staffing offsets in the school budget. Based on the data and discussion, they then committed to selecting an option that met the following criteria:

- It had the most manageable financial impact
- It limited potential negative impacts
- It achieved meaningful program options that met our values and goals

Currently the Westborough Schools has a range of 18%-25% of each annual Kindergarten class that attends half-day programming. This means each year, between 45 to 60 students receive less Kindergarten programming than their peers who are attending full day. Additionally, the district provides tuition support to approximately 10%- 15% of families enrolling their child into the full day program.

The 2017-2018 summary provides a typical snapshot of programming:

---

Total students:	270	
Full day:	221	81.8%
Half day:	49	18.2%
Financial Support:	44	16.3%

Tuition collected from FY10 to FY18 has ranged \$500,000 - \$560,000.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Teachers paid on the Tuition revolving account:

FY18 = 4.0 FTE; FY19 = 13.0 FTE (Carries the fringe benefits for those FTE)

---

Statewide, of the 351 communities in the Commonwealth, Westborough is one of 56 communities charging tuition for full day programming: [2018-2019 State K Programing](#)

## Learning and Analysis

Once the current program numbers were shared and established regarding student percentages and trends, the committee explored and discussed the potential impacts to the student school experience for those attending half day, as well as the impacts to the total Kindergarten program experience. Drawing from the previous work developed by two neighboring communities (as well as Needham as a third report) we reviewed their research and findings:

[Northborough](#)

[Hopkinton](#)

[Needham](#)

### **EDUCATIONAL IMPACTS**

Committee member Brandon Quinones, a School Psychologist, provided a summary presentation to the group outlining the numerous benefits to strong, well-developed full day Early Childhood programming. One of the powerful conclusions for the committee was what was termed “Absence of Data.” This is when the programming experiences of full day can result in positive impacts because of what doesn’t occur in a child’s learning experience, such as academic delays, absences and other attendance impacts, or positive personal identity outcomes that result from being fully included in the school setting. This research indicates the benefits of full day Early Childhood programming is prevention based and is shown to have “protective benefits” in that it diminishes risk factors and increases positive opportunities for students.

[Why Full Day Kindergarten?](#)

[Full Day Kindergarten Fact Sheet](#)

Additionally, the faculty on the committee provided a clear picture of the added complexities required of split programming, and the loss of instructional time that results for all Kindergarten students when teachers plan instruction around the split day curriculum implementation. The staff discussed what they see as the equity issues and invisible social consequences of having a group of students separate from classmates each day, and how that presents as a different school experience to peers. Kindergarten is the formative social fabric of starting the school experience and introducing a social stratification difference in the learning and social experience of 15-20% of a class introduces potential bias, inequity, and loss of a vibrant, heterogeneous learning environment.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

Financial considerations and discussion were the heart of the committee’s analysis and learning. Director of Finance and Administration Irene Oliver provided a range of data to



develop a working understanding of the financial impact to the loss of tuition funding and the percentage offset of Chapter 70 funding. [Chapter 70 & Tuition](#) The summary analysis concluded that two key factors have major impact: One, the financial transition between tuition loss and the start of Chapter 70 funding, and two, the gap between annual program costs and Chapter 70 funding.

A substantive insight for the committee was that the current model of tuition-based programming diminishes in effectiveness over time because salaries will continue to increase. Without increasing tuition, costs will rise and need to be shifted onto the budget without the benefit of any additional Chapter 70 funding. This is because students are still counted as .5 while the district is charging tuition.

Regarding the funding structure of tuition, the committee spent time assessing various levels of tuition and the impact on families as well as budget impact. The \$1,500 felt like the appropriate level in moving with a staged transition to eliminate tuition. The committee felt cutting the tuition in half recognized the need for families to see a relief from the cost impact of the current tuition while allowing a gradual transition in the budget offset. The committee recognized that all of these options are estimates based on assumptions and the School Committee will need to consider each component of an option based on the circumstances during the years of implementation.

### Implementation Considerations:

The committee felt strongly that in developing a final option for recommendation, the following considerations be fully explored.

- The report should be shared and discussed with both the Advisory Finance Committee and Town Selectmen, so that they have the background content for SC's decision making.
- Further financial models should be run applying the cost options to explore other unforeseen impacts or opportunities.

### Conclusion:

The conclusions of this report are in line with the values and educational goals of the Westborough Public Schools. As a committee, each member was very invested in the complex discussion of the funding responsibilities and burdens that are carried by the Westborough community. People did not work out of their own best interests, but focused on the betterment of the school and life experiences of the students we are charged with serving, while weighing the impacts to all Westborough citizens.

## Appendix:

Reports on Full day Kindergarten Programing:

[Enrollment in Full Day K by City and Town](#)

[2018-2019 State K Programing](#)

[Northborough](#)

[Hopkinton](#)

[Needham](#)

Presentations and Committee work:

[Chapter 70 & Tuition](#)

[Why Full Day Kindergarten?](#)

[Full Day Kindergarten Fact Sheet](#)