

**Town of Belmont**  
Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee  
Minutes for Thursday January 19, 2107 7:30 am  
Town Hall, Conference Room 1

2017 JAN 27 PM 2: 24

Members Attending: Roy Epstein (RE), Jim Gammill (JG), Anne Helgen (AH), Michael Libenson (ML), Laurie Slap (LS)

Also Attending: Anthony DiCologero (AD),

1. JG called the meeting to order at 7:31 am.

2. The minutes of January 6th were approved 4-0, with one abstention. *[Note that the minutes were originally submitted to the Town Clerk with the incorrect date of January 5th, but quickly resubmitted with the correct date of January 6th. Both versions remain posted on the town website as of January 26th.]*

3. JG updated the members about the discussions of funding Full Day Kindergarten that had taken place last week at the School Committee finance subcommittee meeting and at its full meeting. The main thread of the discussion is that moving away from a tuition based program with the prospects of receiving additional state aid comparable to the lost tuition was a desirable outcome; the differences in opinions were about whether the benefit should be thought of as a town-wide benefit, or a narrower benefit targeting the kindergarten parents.

JG reported that the current plan of the School Committee is to begin to register students for the fall kindergarten program with the same tuition level posted for the afternoon session. The subcommittee indicated that it will continue to monitor the situation, potentially raising the issue again later in the spring.

4. JG asked for comments and discussion around the materials he distributed, including the Town Administrator's December 20, 2016 memo, JG's note in response dated January 13, 2017, pp 185-186 from the 2015 Financial Task Force Report, and a summary of the payroll data for FY17 and FY18 (projected) compiled from data provided by the school administration. The subcommittee members discussed these items, with additional comments and information from AG.

One thread was an effort to tie the Town Administrator's initial school budget share of \$53.3 million back to the 2015 Financial Task Force model, and comparing that number with a \$52.487 million using the 2015 Financial Task Force tables, and the \$52.291 million from JG based on a 3.67% increase over FY17 plus \$325,000 for five additional FTEs.

A second thread was the action in FY16, and the plan for FY17, for the school district to keep operating surpluses in the General Fund plus Grants budget primarily in the Circuit Breaker account, instead of either returning these amounts to the town or budget to draw them down in the following years.

A third thread was regarding the payroll, and the extent to which the existing step-and-lane table provided annual raises to unit members below the top step.

JG said he would attend the next school committee finance subcommittee meeting on January 24th.

AD said the plan is for the school administration to have its first full draft of the FY18 budget ready by January 31, and that the SC expects to vote on February on a budget for delivery to the Town and Warrant Committee meeting at the joint meeting scheduled for February 13.

5. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 am.