



**The Public Schools of Brookline**  
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To: Finance Subcommittee  
Linus J. Guillory, Jr., Ph.D., Superintendent

From: Susan K. Givens, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent, Office of Administration and Finance

Date: October 18, 2024

Re: Brookline Community Comparison

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During the past several rounds of negotiation Brookline has used the following ten communities when evaluating compensation competitiveness.

*Acton Boxborough*  
*Arlington*  
*Belmont*  
Boston  
Cambridge  
*Lexington*  
Needham  
*Newton*  
Wellesley  
Winchester

There are several ways that comparable communities are typically chosen as benchmarks; enrollment demographics (DESE), community demographic (i.e. ability to pay/DOR), local proximity, and student performance (MCAS, AP, SAT results).

To begin to understand why these communities were selected as Brookline's comparable communities, we turn to data provided for each community that is available on the state website specifically from DESE and DOR. Though this data lags, it is helpful as a snapshot of like information gathered and reported for all communities and school districts. In reviewing the information from DESE, we can see that they have identified nine communities that are comparable based on student enrollment demographics; five of these communities appear on the above list (*italicized*). Data gleaned from DOR is helpful when looking at community demographic; however, information related to median household income for the year was not readily available. A summary of the DESE and DOR data for these 10 communities is attached.

This information is being shared to ensure that everyone is familiar with the communities used when gathering market information as well as to clarify and/or validate the use of these communities as comps for Brookline.

## Brookline Comparable Communities

### DESE DART DATA

Data pulled 10.18.24

| Communities             | Enrollment | Low Inc. % | SWD % | ELL % | Teachers | StdT/Tchr | Admin | In Distr PPS |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|-------|-------|----------|-----------|-------|--------------|
| <i>Acton Boxborough</i> | 5133       | 10.6       | 15.5  | 6.2   | 401.2    | 12.9      | 42    | \$18,058     |
| <i>Arlington</i>        | 5987       | 10.5       | 16.5  | 5     | 469.7    | 12.5      | 48.5  | \$17,868     |
| <i>Belmont</i>          | 4378       | 11.1       | 14.3  | 9.8   | 281.5    | 15.4      | 22    | \$16,479     |
| <i>Boston</i>           | 46001      | 69.8       | 21.5  | 31.9  | 4256     | 10        | 526.1 | \$47,706     |
| <i>Cambridge</i>        | 6627       | 35.3       | 22.9  | 8.2   | 755.9    | 8.7       | 59    | \$34,938     |
| <i>Lexington</i>        | 6845       | 7.6        | 14.7  | 8.5   | 614.5    | 11        | 59.8  | \$21,352     |
| <i>Needham</i>          | 5525       | 8.2        | 18.2  | 3.1   | 438.3    | 12.6      | 51.4  | \$21,790     |
| <i>Newton</i>           | 11882      | 13.3       | 18.6  | 6.6   | 1108.7   | 10.8      | 95.6  | \$23,571     |
| <i>Wellesley</i>        | 4158       | 7.6        | 17.3  | 2.5   | 389.7    | 11        | 42    | \$23,732     |
| <i>Winchester</i>       | 4333       | 6.9        | 15.9  | 3.3   | 355.9    | 12.3      | 30.5  | \$17,022     |
| Brookline               | 7060       | 13.8       | 18    | 11.3  | 627.4    | 11        | 75.4  | \$24,908     |

### DOR DATA

Data pulled 10.18.24

| Communities | Population | Tax Rate<br>(Residential) | Ave. Single<br>Family House<br>Value | Ave. Single<br>Family Tax<br>Bill | Per Capita<br>Income<br>(DOR) | Median<br>Household<br>Income |
|-------------|------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Acton       | 23,829     | 17.56                     | 776,650                              | 13,638                            | 81,081                        |                               |
| Boxborough  | 5,425      | 15.52                     | 764,691                              | 11,868                            | 73,599                        |                               |
| Arlington   | 45,522     | 11.21                     | 912,386                              | 10,228                            | 74,842                        |                               |
| Belmont     | 26,838     | 11.24                     | 1,463,492                            | 26,838                            | 116,207                       |                               |
| Boston      | 654,776    | 10.74                     | 530,865                              | 5,701                             | 61,801                        |                               |
| Cambridge   | 117,090    | 5.86                      | 1,770,346                            | 10,374                            | 74,061                        |                               |
| Lexington   | 34,071     | 13.00                     | 1,347,249                            | 17,514                            | 139,581                       |                               |
| Needham     | 32,048     | 13.04                     | 1,114,084                            | 14,528                            | 131,986                       |                               |
| Newton      | 87,453     | 10.18                     | 1,453,134                            | 14,793                            | 163,628                       |                               |
| Wellesley   | 30,191     | 11.45                     | 1,742,826                            | 18,087                            | 229,263                       |                               |
| Winchester  | 22,662     | 11.8                      | 1,374,167                            | 16,215                            | 136,891                       |                               |
| Brookline   | 62,535     | 9.97                      | 2,138,613                            | 21,322                            | 91,400                        |                               |

Population: US Census Bureau figures including civilian non-institutional population of the City/Town/District and members of the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post, excluding all other members of the Armed Forces.

Residential Tax Rate: The actual tax rate set by the City/Town or District for those properties classified as residential.

Avg. Property Values: The total of all property tax bills in the City/Town or District divided by the total number of properties.

Average Single Family Tax bill: The total of all families tax bills in the City/Town or District divided by the total number of families

Per Capita income: The total income of each town/District divided by the total number of people in the City/Town or District.