



Preschool

LINCOLN PRESCHOOL

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Lynn Fagan

Preschool Coordinator

To: Dr. Rebecca McFall, Superintendent
Buckner Creel, Administrator for Business and Finance
From: Lynn Fagan, Preschool Coordinator
Date: March 11, 2015
Re: Proposed Tuition Increase for the Lincoln Preschool

I was asked to provide information regarding the Lincoln Preschool tuition costs relative to those of comparable surrounding communities as well as private preschool programs within Lincoln. This memo provides historical information regarding the tuition as well as comparable tuition costs. The data applies only to the inclusive preschool day and does not take into account the tuition for the child care extended day program. In addition, information is not included about the longer day that is provided to children with disabilities as tuition does not apply.

Program Description

The Lincoln Preschool is a publicly administered program that provides early care and education for students ages 2.9 years to five years. The preschool program was developed with the primary charge to provide inclusive educational services to children with disabilities. The Lincoln Preschool operates under the philosophy of inclusion, which is a foundational belief that all children can be educated together, and therefore, supports and aspects of the program, from staffing to curriculum, are designed with inclusion in mind.

Tuition Fees

Parents of students who do not require specialized instruction may choose to enroll their children at the Lincoln Preschool and pay tuition. Students who qualify for special education are provided with a free public education and are not charged tuition. Some parents have demonstrated a financial need for a reduction in tuition, and the district has utilized a state approved sliding scale fee. The formula for the sliding scale was adopted from the Department of Education's Tuition Policy for Quality Full Day Kindergarten and Transition Planning Grants and was based on the Department of Early Education and Care Financial Income Eligibility Table from 2006. The table is used to determine eligibility for reduced tuition based on a family's income and size upon the provision of income verification to the Preschool Coordinator's office.

The current tuition, based on a four-hour day, was proposed and approved by School Committee in 2007 and implemented in September 2008. This rate continues to be implemented to date. The maximum tuition for five days per week is \$3000; three days per week is \$1800; and two days per week is \$1200. Tuition represents enrollment for the entire school year (180 days from September

through June) and is prorated for children who enter the program after September. Parents have a choice of three payment options: full year, semester, or monthly payments. At this time, there is no reduction for payment of the full year or semester.

Tuition Increase Recommendation

In a comparison with several comparable integrated public preschool programs, the Lincoln Preschool tuition is well below other program costs. At this time, the program has the lowest hourly tuition (\$4.17) with the average program costing \$9.34/hour. I am recommending an increase of 33% (\$1000) to be applied over the 2016-2017 school year and an additional increase of 15% (\$600) for the 2017-2018 school year (for a total of \$1600 over a two-year period.) It is also recommended that an increase of 15% (\$500) is applied to the current Extended Day program annual cost of \$3500 for the 2016-2017 school year. The increase would result in additional revenue while continuing to support families who require financial assistance to access the preschool program. Increasing the tuition would be fiscally responsible as it would contribute to the cost associated with running the preschool program. As the cost of tuition has remained the same, the cost of operating the preschool program has increased with most of the funding going to professional and paraprofessional salaries. The increased tuition would generate a small amount to offset a portion of the costs while enabling families to access a preschool education that is affordable. With the recommended increases over the two-year period, the Lincoln Preschool will continue to have the lowest cost of programming.

The following table provides information on tuition rates of nearby public and private preschools to support my recommendation for an increase.

PRIVATE				
Program Name	Type	Program Details	Hourly Cost	Average
Lincoln Nursery School	Private	3 half days (3 hours) \$5700 annual	\$17.60	\$17.16
		4 half days (3 hours) \$7400 annual	\$17.13	
		5 half days (3 hours) \$9050 annual	\$16.76	
Drumlin Farm	Private	2 half days (3 hours) \$3735 annual	\$17.30	\$16.80
		3 half days (3 hours) \$5420 annual	\$16.73	
		5 half days (3 hours) \$9150 annual	\$16.95	
		5 full days (7 hours) \$16,795 annual	\$13.33	
Lincoln Country Day	Private	3 half days (3 hours) \$4950 annual	\$15.28	\$13.68
		4 half days (3 hours) \$5850 annual	\$13.54	
		5 half days (3 hours) \$6600 annual	\$12.22	

PUBLIC				
Program Name	Type	Program Details	Hourly Cost	Average
Wayland	Public	3 half days (3 hours) \$4636 annual	\$14.30	\$13.29
		4 half days (3 hours) \$6060 annual	\$14.03	
		5 half days (3 hours) \$7462 annual	\$13.81	
		3 full days (7 hours) \$9782 annual	\$12.94	
		4 full days (7 hours) \$12554 annual	\$12.46	
		5 full days (7 hours) \$15342 annual	\$12.18	
Magic Garden	Private	3 half days (7 hours) \$11,904 annual	\$11.33	\$11.34
		4 half days (7 hours) \$15,876 annual	\$11.34	
		5 half days (7 hours) \$19,848 annual	\$11.34	
Weston	Public	5 half days (4 hours) \$7400 annual	\$10.28	\$10.28
Maynard	Public	4 half days (2.5 hours) \$3927 annual	\$10.90	\$ 9.99
		4 full days (6 hours) \$7854 annual	\$ 9.09	
Sudbury	Public	3 half days (2.5 hours) \$3050 annual	\$11.29	\$ 9.33
		4 half days (2.5 hours) \$4050 annual	\$11.25	
		5 full days (5 hours) \$4900 annual	\$ 5.45	
Acton	Public	4 half days (2.75 hours) \$3530 annual	\$ 8.91	\$ 8.11
		4 full days (6.5 hours) \$6,830 annual	\$ 7.30	
Bedford	Public	3 half days (3.5 hours) \$3,175 annual	\$ 8.40	\$ 8.01
		5 half days (3.5 hours) \$4800 annual	\$ 7.62	
Concord	Public	4 half days (2.5 hours) \$3000	\$ 8.33	\$ 7.96
		4 full days (5.5 hours) \$6000	\$ 7.58	
Boxboro	Public	4 full days (5 hours) \$5000 annual	\$ 6.94	\$ 6.94

PUBLIC				
Program Name	Type	Program Details	Hourly Cost	Average
Lincoln	Public	2 half days (4 hours) \$1200 annual	\$ 4.17	\$ 4.18
		3 half days (4 hours) \$1800 annual	\$ 4.17	
		5 half days (4 hours) \$3000 annual	\$ 4.17	
		5 half days (2.5 hours) \$1800 annual	\$ 4.00	
		4 half days (2.5 hours) \$1575 annual	\$ 4.38	