

KIMBALL UNION ACADEMY STUDY COMMITTEE

The charge of this committee is to meet with representatives of Kimball Union Academy (KUA) administration to maintain an ongoing review of the relationship between the Academy and the Town, and to report its findings at annual town meeting. This year's committee held four meetings between November and January.

This is the first year in several decades that there has been no optional tax exemption for Kimball Union Academy (RSA 72:23). By mutual agreement the exemption was allowed to sunset at the end of 2017. As a result of this decision, Kimball Union's annual tax liability to the town increased from around \$143,000 to \$236,785 making them the largest taxpayer in the town by more than a factor of three. Kimball Union has continued to share with your committee the school's concern that its local property tax burden is a competitive disadvantage with other private schools in the region. KUA's property taxes will increase as the Academy makes investments in dormitories.

It's too early for our committee to fully understand the impact that eliminating the optional exemption will have on local enrollment at the private boarding school. This year's 8th grade class is small in number and consequently will result in fewer than the normal students attending Kimball Union.

Facts:

- *Kimball Union employs 155 people, 76 live in town (41 on campus, 35 off campus).
- *Currently, 29 local kids attend the private school, 11 of these are children of KUA faculty/staff.
- *It costs \$22,206/year to educate a Plainfield Elementary Student.
- *There are 9 students at PES from families of KUA faculty/staff.
- *The student tuition at Lebanon High School is \$15,579
- *The day student tuition at Kimball Union is \$39,500.
- *The boarding student tuition at Kimball Union is \$61,300.

In 2018 the school received a \$20 million gift toward its endowment. This most generous gift will be used to improve facilities and to reduce the school's annual operating loss.

Kimball Union acquired one of the two remaining properties on Main Street not previously owned by the school.

The private school continues to play a key role in our local fire protection. The Meriden Fire Brigade, made up of KUA students, provides assistance at many fire and accident calls during a school year.

Findings: During the course of this year's work your committee learned, while still an important issue for the school, the Meriden Village Post Office will likely remain in its current location at least for the remaining term of its current lease which expires in 2020.

Kimball Union has continued over the last year to provide local resident access to school facilities, such as trails, meeting space, and the hockey rink.

Kimball Union remains committed to helping to educate those local students who are identified as likely to benefit from its education program, regardless of the student's ability to pay.

The only way for a local student's family to know whether or not Kimball Union is a viable option is to apply to the school. Many of the students attending the school receive significant financial aid.

Kimball Union has a direct interest in maintaining the high quality of the Plainfield Elementary school which educates the children of many staff members.

Plainfield Elementary students have traditionally performed very well at Kimball Union and Lebanon High School.

The town benefits financially from the many local students who choose Kimball Union over our publicly funded high school.

Recommendations: The Committee continues to support and work for the establishment of institutional linkage between the Plainfield Elementary School and Kimball Union. It is your committee's view that these connections provide the best possible educational opportunities for local students and the best opportunities for saving tax money.

The Committee continues to feel that the Kimball Union Study Committee should be continued into the future. There are many issues facing both the school and the town collectively and the existing of this committee provides a platform for discussing issues of common concern.

2018/19 Kimball Union Study Committee **Stephen Beaupre, John Yacavone, Andrea Beuno Keen, Robert Blake, Kate Whybrow, Robert Stewart, Halleran**