

## **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. The committee held three meetings between November and January.

This year your committee was pleased to become acquainted with Tyler Lewis, KUA's new Head of School. Tyler and Renee Lewis hosted a dinner at Monroe house for the committee. The Lewis family includes three young children who are attending the Plainfield Elementary School. The Lewis family is genuinely interested in playing an active part of the Plainfield Community. It is our belief that the town/gown relationship is always made stronger with these types of connections.

This is the second 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. 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 is still 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. At this time there are 15 non KUA affiliated Plainfield students attending the school. The eleven year average for local non KUA affiliated students attending the school is 25. Again this year the 8th grade class is relatively small in number and consequently will result in fewer students attending Kimball Union. Local students attending Kimball Union continue to be about 30% of the town's total high school population. This is an extraordinarily high number when compared to other towns that are home to a private school.

### **Facts:**

- \*Kimball Union employs 157 people, 86 live in town (50 on campus, 36 off campus).
- \*Currently, 26 local kids attend the private school, 11 of these are children of KUA faculty/staff 15 are children of Plainfield residents
- \*It costs about \$22,000 per year to educate a Plainfield Elementary Student.
- \*There are 18 students at PES from families of KUA faculty/staff.
- \*The student tuition at Lebanon High School is \$16,262
- \*The day student tuition at Kimball Union is \$41,100.
- \*The boarding student tuition at Kimball Union is \$63,750.

The Meriden Fire Brigade, made up of KUA students, continues to provide assistance at many fire and accident calls during a school year.

**Findings affirmed by your committee again this year:**

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. This committee provides a platform for discussing issues of common concern.

2019/20 Kimball Union Study Committee **Stephen Beaupre, John Yacavone, Andrea Beuno Keen, Robert Blake, Kate Whybrow, Robert Hewett, Stephen Halleran**