



Office of Business, Finance and Planning
100 Walnut Street
Newtonville, MA 02460
617-559-9025

TO: School Committee

FROM: Kathleen Browning, Director of NECP
Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent / Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

DATE: November 20, 2023

RE: Vote for FY25 NECP Tuition Rate Increase

We are requesting a vote for the proposed recommendation of a tuition increase for NECP commencing the 2024-2025 school year as presented at the November 6th School Committee meeting.

The memo detailing this recommendation is attached for reference.



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TO: School Committee

FROM: Kathleen Browning, Director of NECP & Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent / Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

DATE: November 6, 2023

RE: FY25 NECP Tuition Rate Increase Recommendation

As part of our early budget planning process, we would like to recommend increasing the Newton Early Childhood Program (NECP) tuition rates by 5% from the current year. This tuition is paid by our community-peer families that register in our integrated preschool program. We are requesting School Committee approval for this recommendation as the tuition is a revenue source for NECP with overarching NPS budget implications

As you are aware, like our revenue from fee programs, the tuition revenue that we receive at NECP offsets a portion of direct NECP staffing expenses to help lower the overall cost to the NPS budget. We currently budget \$625,000 in tuition revenue to offset a portion of NECP salaries and benefits.

We are requesting School Committee approval ahead of the budget season to align with the NECP registration process and to allow us to incorporate this anticipated revenue in our FY25 budget assumptions.

NECP Overview and Current Offerings

NECP is the integrated preschool program for the Newton Public Schools. NECP believes that an inclusive education provides all children with the opportunity to learn with and from each other. All children gain valuable experiences in an environment where children are different in their abilities. NECP believes our inclusive program builds a lifelong foundation for respecting human differences, compassion, empathy and kindness.



NECP has 3-hour and 5-hour community peer placements. With NECP’s current classroom structure of 11 integrated classrooms and 2 substantially separate preschool classrooms, there are 88 community peer placements in total with the breakdown of:

49, 5-hour placements (23-23.5 hours/week with the Wednesday early release)

39, 3-hour placements (15 hours/week)

Recent History of the Fee

2016-2017 (move to 150 Jackson) No tuition change due to status of building at the time (window replacement/construction)

2017-2018: 2% increase

2018-2019: 3% increase

2019-2020: 3% increase (and stopped collection April 2020 on due to Covid)

2020-2021: No increase with Covid considerations

2021-2022: 2% increase

2022-2023: No increase (due to move/addition 4 days off to pack and unpack)

2023-2024: 5.6% increase - new building

Comparable Fees with peer districts*

DISTRICT	Newton	Needham	Lexington	Wellesley
	15 hrs/wk - \$6,260	18 hrs/wk - \$9,900	15 hrs/wk - \$4,866	15.75 hrs/wk - \$5,985
	23/23.5 hrs/wk - \$9,150	24 hrs/wk - \$13,200	25 hrs/wk - \$9,208	24 hrs/wk - \$8,640

*These are public school integrated preschool programs. Private preschool programs can cost \$10,000-\$25,000 and above.

Fee Recommendation Chart

School Year	3-hour (15 hours/week)	5-hour (23-23.5 hours/week)
2022-2023	\$5,960	\$8,630
2023-2024	\$6,260	\$9,150
Proposed 2024-2025 (5%)	\$6,580	\$9,610



Impact of the fee revenue

The current fee generates approximately \$625,000 in revenue which covers salaries and benefits of 6.7 FTE paraprofessionals, and 1.5 FTE teachers, for a total of 8.2 FTE. We expect the proposed fee increase would increase our total revenue by approximately \$31,000 which will help keep pace with our rising costs.

As part of our future budget planning, we would like to explore aligning the hourly rates and want to ensure that we maintain the revenue that can match expected rising expenses. The proposed 3-hour program rate equates to \$11.53/hour and the proposed 5-hour program rate equates to \$10.99/hour. In subsequent years, we will look to bring this up to \$12.00 per hour for both programs but are not recommending that at this time.

Financial Assistance

NECP is able to provide financial assistance to several Newton families enrolled at NECP on a first come first serve basis. There is a cap on the total amount of tuition assistance we can offer each year. We are currently able to offer financial assistance up to 6% of our total tuition revenue (i.e. if our total tuition revenue for the year is \$100,000.00 we are able to offer up to a total of \$6,000 in financial assistance to families) to Newton residents.

Conclusion

We respectfully request that the School Committee vote on our proposed recommendation for a tuition rate increase for NECP commencing next school year (2024-2025) at the November 20th, 2023 School Committee meeting.