

Extra Info
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September 4, 2003

Mr. Gim Hom
Fincom Chairman
14 Robert Rd
Acton, MA 01720

Gim, I note that you have set the date of September 16 for the meeting on Minuteman's assessment. This is the night posted for our Minuteman School Committee meeting in our August notification to each town board. So I cannot attend the Acton meeting but would have Tom Markham represent me if you want an administrator from Minuteman.

Meanwhile, I offer these suggestions for your consideration:

1. A legal process has been followed that makes the FY'04 assessment legally binding now. Acton has already paid two proper installments. I assume therefore that everyone will concentrate on the future.
2. Looking at the future, there are two possible major options:

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
Joining forces (as I have asked others to do) to again fight for a fair assessment system.	Considering negative actions directed at the budget supporting students or at enrollment even though MM is not causing the problem.

I am recommending "A" to the School Committee. Conversely, I would certainly do everything in my power to convince any and all towns to pursue "A" and actively and strongly resist "B" in the interests of youngsters. The young people of our towns are going to be served properly only if towns unify on a constructive approach. Given the figures we have shared with you and the service we are providing to regular, special, and middle school students, it is difficult to see why anyone would not be willing to invest energy and time in pursuing "A."

3. You are 100% correct in labeling the state minimums as the primary cause of discrepancies. However, everyone needs to be aware that there are other factors leading to assessment changes for individual towns also. As one example, Sudbury eliminated its middle school program for FY'04 (an action now regretted I'm told); Acton did not.

Good luck with your September 16th meeting. I'll let you know the outcome of our School Committee's deliberations.

- c 1. Chairperson, Board of Selectmen
2. Town Manager
3. MM Acton Representative

Sincerely,

Ron Fitzgerald
Superintendent