

EXTRA INFORMATION

7/14/08

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Proposed Criteria for determining 'comparable' towns

1) Similar size of town

this include things like physical characteristics: square miles and number of miles of public roads and the number of people living in town

2) Similar demographics

this includes things like the percentage of the population that are students, percentage that are seniors, etc

3) Similar wealth

this should include the eqv per capita (this is the state's way of comparing relative wealth) but it should also include some data on relative income levels - this can be quite different in communities that have similar eqv values

4) Similar services

this probably means we need to only include towns with regional schools but it might be useful to look at other towns that are similar in the other ways mentioned and we can find a way to compute the relative school budgets

full time fire service

5) data on 'big picture' tax issues

percentage of budget that comes from residential property tax (vs state aid and commercial tax base)

I am ambivalent about requiring the 'comparable' towns to be physically near us. I am concerned about limiting the list too much. But I could be persuaded based on the towns that are produced by this criteria list.

It is not necessary (or possible) that the towns we select will match us on all characteristics. But if we collect this data and find a set that is similar in many dimensions, that would be quite useful, I believe.