

Welcome back to school to the students, staff and parents of the Georgetown School, also a hardy hello and thank you to the citizens of Georgetown for supporting the school. This year the Georgetown School Committee is reaching out to the community by writing occasional entries in the Georgetown Central School Newsletter. Please look for future newsletters online at the Georgetown Central School website. You can also find minutes and agendas for the meetings under the board members tab. Our meetings are on the first Tuesday of the month at 6pm until January when we will switch back to morning meetings.

We have had some feed back from community members that they do not feel informed about how the school and the school committee function. To that end we would like to introduce our occasional articles in the school newsletter. These articles will appear when we have exciting news to share about school policy, events happening about the state and federal level that affect our school, curriculum and budgets. Shawn Carlson assistant superintendent will be assisting me with some of the more nitty-gritty details of policy and curriculum. The first article in this series will focus on school funding and referendum Question 2 on the November 2016 ballot.

Question 2

The question will appear on the ballot as follows.

“Do you want to add a 3% tax on individual Maine taxable income above \$200,000 to create a state fund that would provide direct support for student learning in kindergarten through 12 grade public education.”

Maine funds schools with local, state, and federal monies. Question 2 addresses the state’s share of education funding. Georgetown receives the minimum funding established in the funding formula also known as Essential Programs and Services or EPS. Read a summary of the development of Maine’s EPS formula [here](#) and [also here](#). Visit [here](#) to see the State of Maine’s web page concerning school funding.

What is a minimum receiver?

As many of you may already know Georgetown is a minimum subsidy receiver. This means that the property values in the town of Georgetown are high. When property values themselves are high the mil rate (% of taxes based on \$1000.00 of property value) is lower. The state allocates subsidy money based on the mil rate of the community. The lower the mil rate the less state subsidy.

Some communities have such a low mil rate that they receive no state subsidy at all these towns are referred to as minimum receivers.

Does Georgetown receive any educational funding other than from local property taxes?

Minimum receivers do receive a reimbursement for a portion of the money that they spend on special education services.

According to the 2004 education referendum, (which promised funding of education at 55% state wide and 100% reimbursement for state recognized special education services) Georgetown should be receiving 100% reimbursement for the period two years prior. However we have never received the 100% reimbursement from the state and neither have any of the other minimum receivers. Currently we receive about 30% of our special education costs in reimbursement.

Why is this important?

As a minimum receiver, Georgetown, as the ballot question is worded would receive no increased funding from passage of question 2.

What can I do to increase state and federal support for education in Georgetown?

Should the ballot question pass, the legislature will pass a bill to enact the requirements of the question. The details of this bill will be decided by the legislature. If you would like to see a distribution of funds that includes Georgetown and other minimum receivers, please contact your state legislator. Since the election to decide our local representative and the election for the referendum will not be decided until November we suggest that you contact both the incumbent representative Jeff Pierce at 441-3006 and the candidate Will Nielsen 841-7543.

While discussing this bill with your legislator, you might inquire about the percentage of special education costs reimbursed through the state. Any increase in percentage reimbursed would help defray Georgetown's costs.

Other information:

The Maine School Management Association has released the following white paper on Question 2. [MSMA WHITE PAPER](#).