



FAQ: Other Questions People Ask

Could the town help solve its problems by collecting more fees?

The school department has increased kindergarten, instrumental music, and athletic fees to among the highest levels in the region. The town has increased fees for renting its properties. Fee increases, even if substantial, would not cover the looming deficit.

In addition, there are practical as well as philosophical reasons for not charging more high fees for public services. If schools, roads and safety are all public goods that benefit everyone, then public resources are needed to maintain them. The more you charge families for kindergarten, sports, music and other activities that used to be part of the public school experience, the fewer who will be able to participate.

Isn't there any option other than a property tax?

Town Leaders evaluated the possibility of instituting a trash fee, known as "Pay as You Throw." The Town Manager has the authority to institute a trash fee but it would not generate enough revenue to cover our deficit.

Does the override contain a provision for PAYT?

No. There is a warrant article at Town Meeting asking that Pay as You Throw be implemented, but the members of the Board of Selectmen have indicated that they will not support it.

What are the schools doing to contain Special Education costs?

Arlington has cut its out-of-district placements by one-half over the past five years. This has helped to contain special education cost increases. The district will continue to try to bring more out-of-district programs within the district to further control costs.

The schools were cut in 2011 but there was a fundraiser to restore positions. Will there be another fundraiser?

No. This was a one-time volunteer effort to raise funds for the schools.

It's up to us. Vote Yes on June 7.