

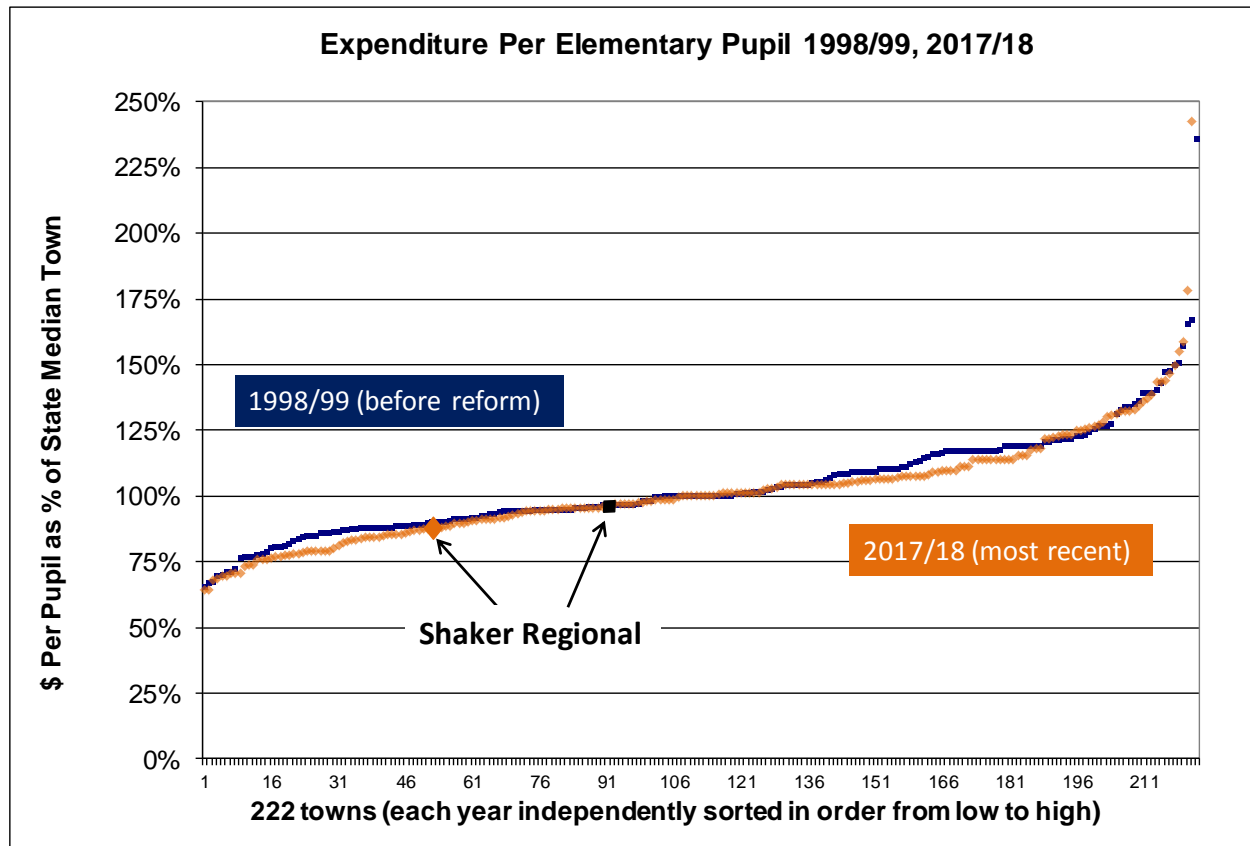
# Shaker Regional School District and School Funding

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## 1. Spending per elementary pupil

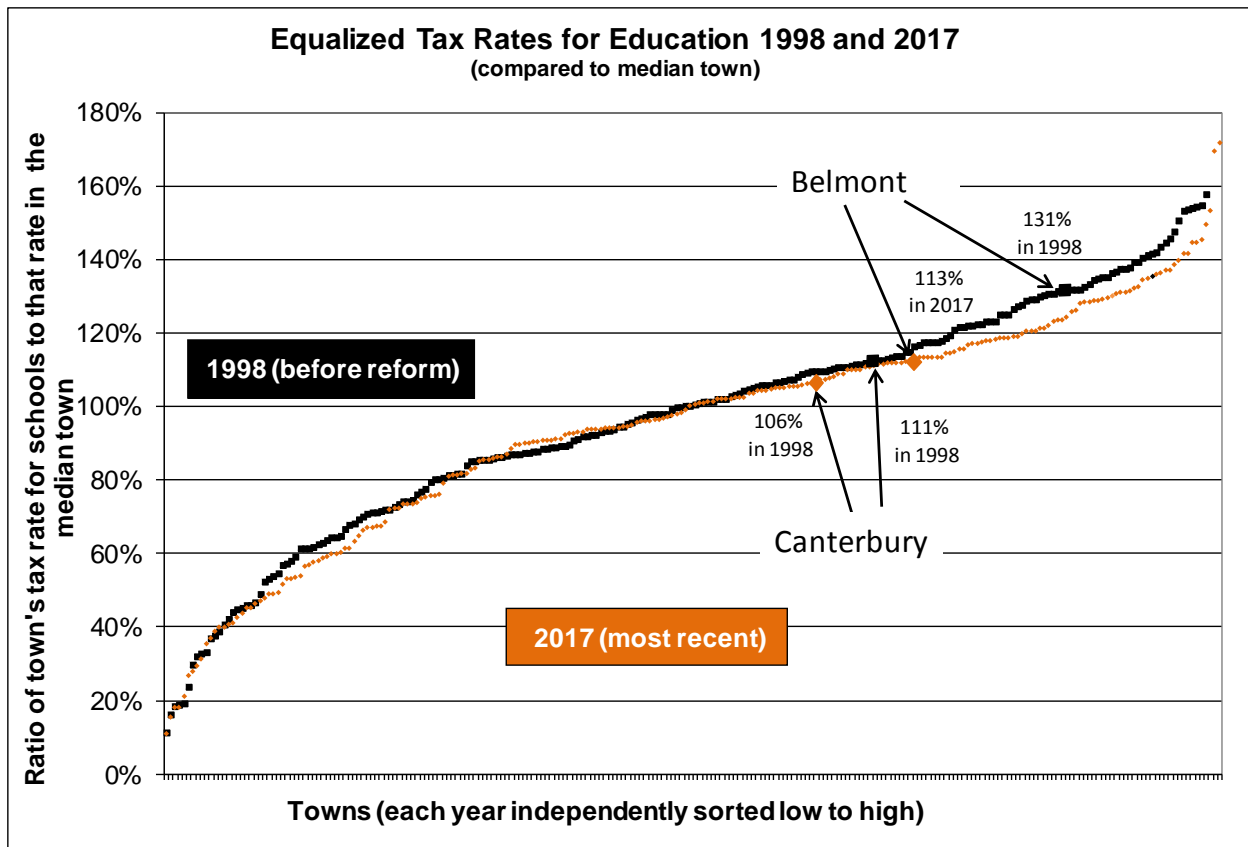
School year 1998/99 was the last year of state aid before the new increased aid to pay for an “adequate” education was introduced after the NH Supreme Court’s *Claremont* rulings. That year, Shaker Regional reported spending \$5,736 per elementary student, 96% of what the state median town had spent. In school year 2017/18, the most recently completed year, Shaker Regional reported spending \$15,301 per elementary pupil, 87% of what the median town had spent.



## 2. Property tax rates for schools

1998 was the last tax year before the new aid to pay for an “adequate” education was introduced after the NH Supreme Court’s *Claremont* rulings. That year, Belmont’s equalized tax rate for the Shaker Regional schools was \$25.74. This was 131% of the state median town. In the same year Canterbury’s equalized tax rate for the Shaker Regional schools was \$21.72, 111% of the median town.

In 2017, Belmont’s equalized tax rate was \$16.54 (\$14.33 local plus \$2.22 state and retained by the town). This was 106% of the state median town. Canterbury’s rate was \$15.54 (\$13.52 local plus \$2.01 state and retained by the town), 106% of the median town.



The tax rates for schools in both Belmont and Canterbury have declined in comparison to other towns. In addition, the difference in rates between the two towns has also declined. In 1998 Belmont's tax rate of \$25.74 was 19% higher than Canterbury's rate of \$21.72. In 2017 Belmont's rate was only 6% higher than that of Canterbury.

### **3. Property value for each pupil**

Over the intervening years, Shaker Regional's spending per elementary student and its equalized tax rate for its schools have both declined relative to other towns in the state.

The most important statistic that relates the ability of different towns to raise taxes for the purpose of their schools is Equalized Property Value per Pupil.

#### **Belmont**

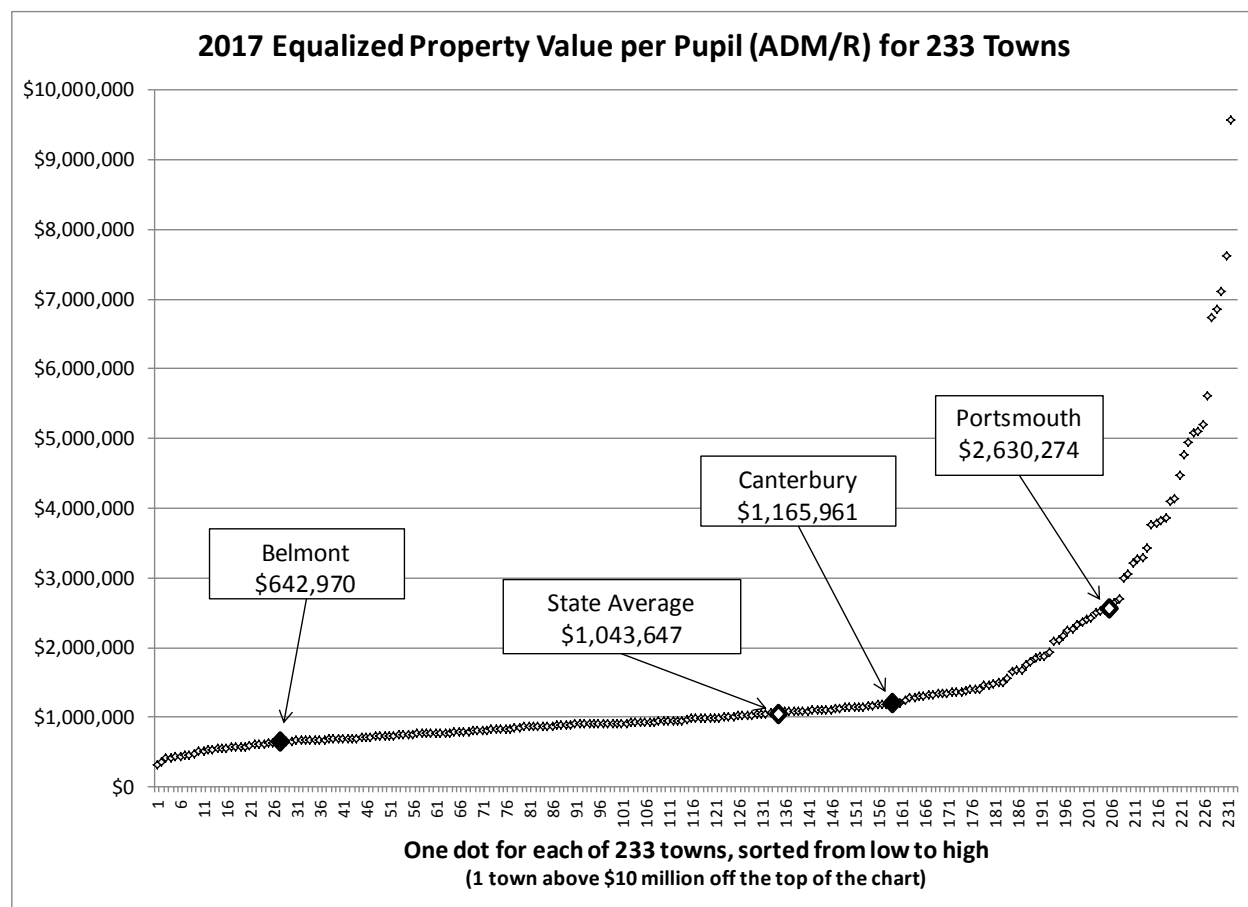
Belmont has \$675.2 million of equalized property valuation and 1,050 average daily number of students (ADM/R). This means that Belmont has \$642,970 of property value for each pupil.

If Portsmouth and Belmont were to raise the same amount per pupil for their schools, Belmont's school tax rate have to be about 4 times higher than that of Portsmouth.

Of course, that is not what happens. Portsmouth raises \$17,340 per pupil with only a \$6.59 equalized school tax rate while Belmont can only raise \$10,635 per pupil with an equalized school tax rate of \$16.54. Portsmouth raises from its tax base \$6,704 more for every pupil in its schools than does Belmont.

This difference continues with only slight variation year after year. In the 13 years from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, Portsmouth will raise locally \$87,000 more for educating each of its children than will Belmont.

Think of a classroom of 20 students. Portsmouth raises \$134,000 more per classroom at a tax rate only 40% that of Belmont. And will continue to do so year after year.



### Canterbury

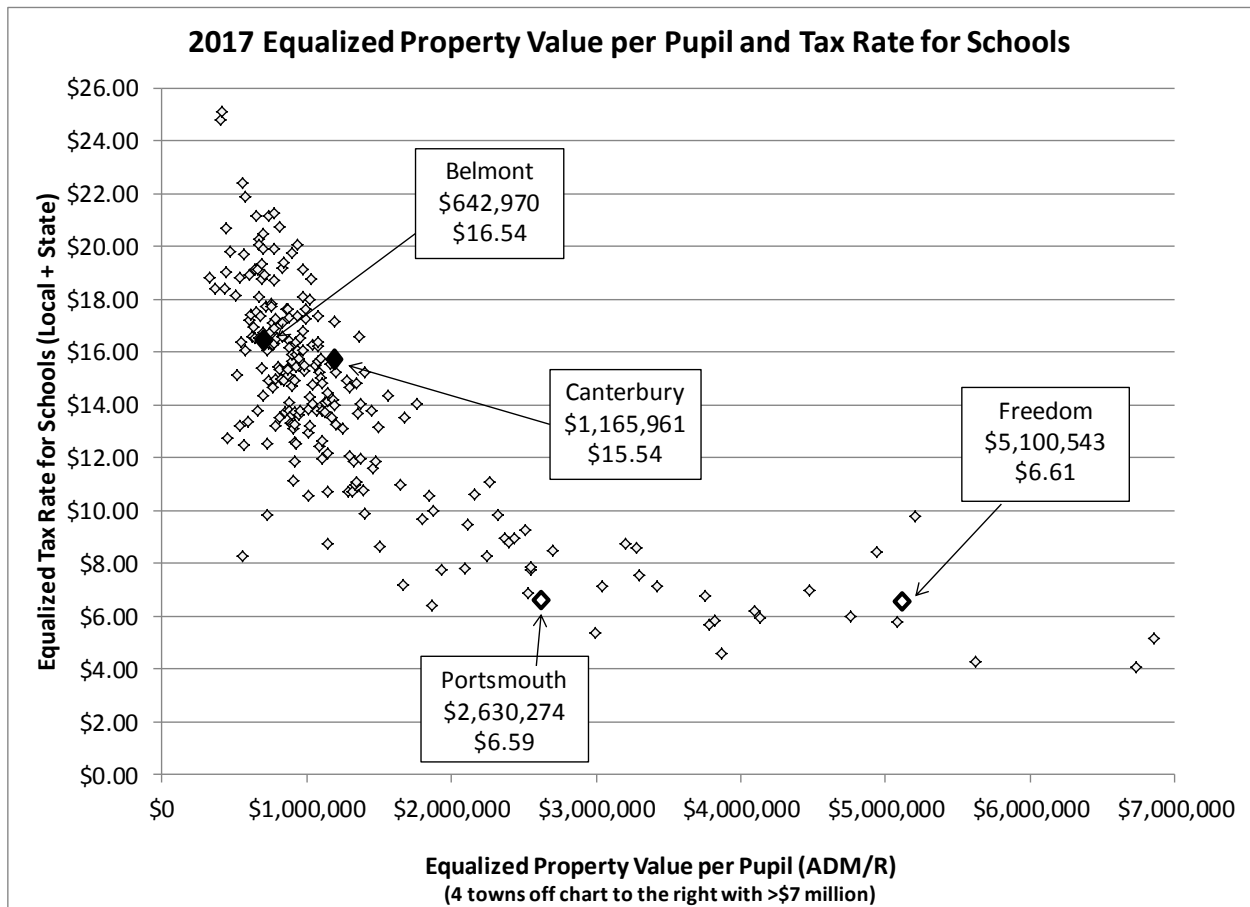
Canterbury has \$284.8 million of equalized property value and 244 students. This means that Canterbury has \$1,165,961 of property value for each pupil. The state average was \$1,043,647.

If Portsmouth and Canterbury were to raise the same amount per pupil for their schools, Canterbury's school tax rate have to be about 2.25 times higher than that of Portsmouth.

Of course, that is not what happens. Portsmouth raises \$17,340 per pupil with only a \$6.59 equalized school tax rate while Canterbury raises \$18,117 per pupil with an equalized school tax rate of \$15.54.

Think of a classroom of 20 students. Canterbury raises \$15,540 more per classroom than Portsmouth but its tax rate to do so is 2.6 times that of Portsmouth.

Clearly there is not a level playing field when it comes to the ability of towns' property tax bases to support their schools.



*Note: Data used in this report are taken from the NH Department of Education's reports, "Equalized Valuation per Pupil 2017-18" and "Cost Per Pupil By District, 2017-18." Equalized property values and tax rates are for tax year 2017. Count of pupils is from September 2018. Tax rates printed on town tax bills are not equalized and cannot be compared between towns. Using equalized rates allows an apples-to-apples comparison.*