

Allenstown and School Funding

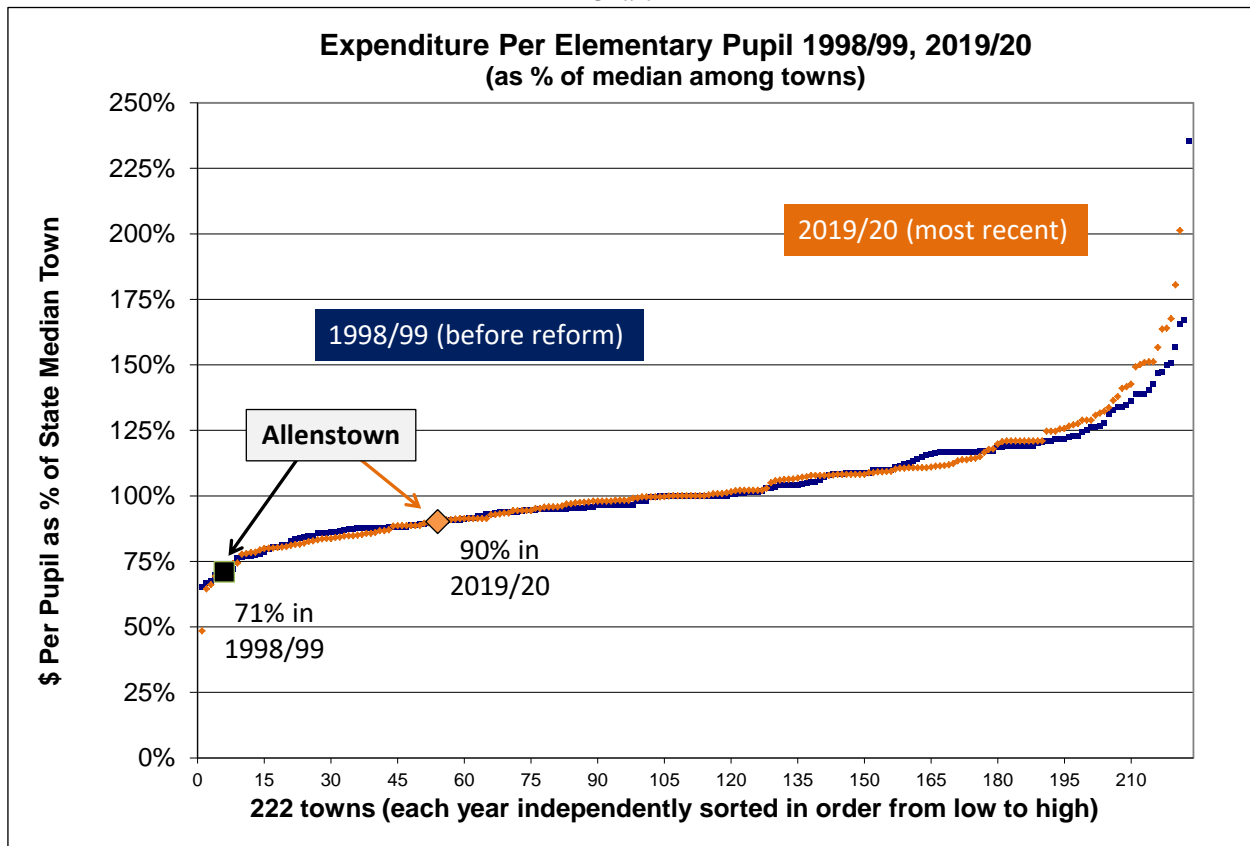
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1. Spending per elementary pupil

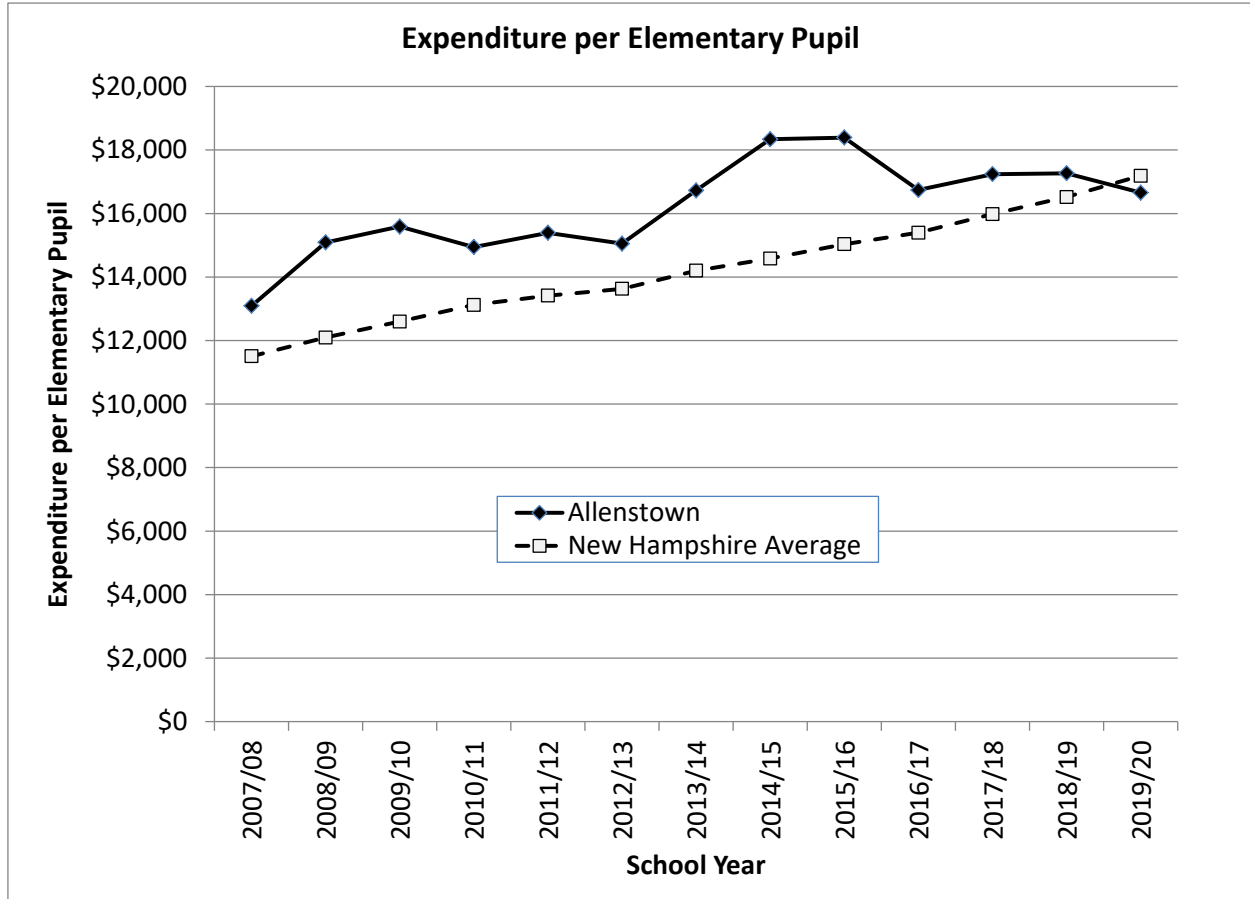
School year 1998/99 was the last year of state aid before the new increased aid to pay for an “adequate” education was introduced after the NH Supreme Court’s *Claremont* rulings. That year, Allenstown reported spending \$4,223 per elementary student, 71% of what the state median town had spent. In school year 2019/20, the most recently completed year for which data is available, Allenstown reported spending \$16,659 per elementary pupil, equal to 90% of the median town.

Chart 1



The following chart compares the spending per pupil for elementary pupils in Allenstown and the state average for the past thirteen years. (State average in a given year is calculated by dividing the total elementary spending of all school districts by the total number of elementary pupils. It differs somewhat from the median town numbers used in the previous chart.)

Chart 2

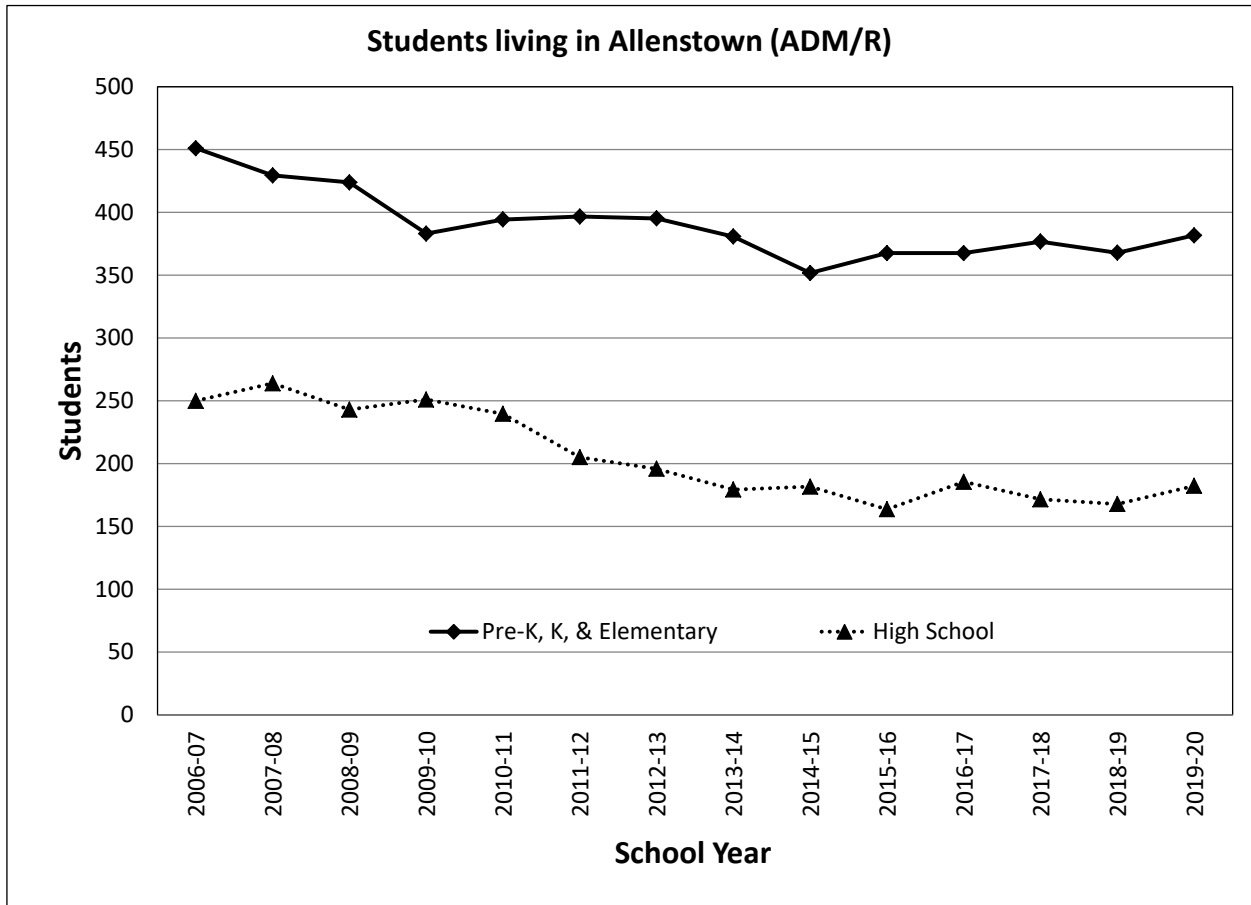


Throughout this period Allenstown had been spending more than the state average and fell below the state average only in the most recent year. At the beginning of these 13 years, Allenstown was spending 114% of the state average. In the most recent year 2019/20, Allenstown was spending 97% of the state average (and 90% of the median municipality as noted previously).

2. Overall enrollment of students

Average Daily Membership in Residence (ADM/R) is one way in which enrollment is measured. It measures the numbers of students attending district schools and, in Allenstown’s case, the high school students who attend Pembroke Academy. Overall in this state ADM/R has been in slow decline in recent years. In Allenstown the decline has been from 703 students to 564 students, a decline of 19.7% since 2006/07. The following chart displays this for elementary (pre-school, kindergarten, elementary through grade 8), and high school for Allenstown for the past fourteen years. The number of elementary students in 2019/20 was 15.3% below the number in 2006/07. The number of high school students was 27.2% below the number in 2006/07. Since 2015/16 the numbers have held relatively constant.

Chart 3



3. School District Spending Pattern

Spending by New Hampshire’s public school districts totaled \$3.25 billion in school year 2019/20. Allenstown’s total K-12 education spending (recurring expenditures) was \$9.98 million. All school districts use the same bookkeeping definitions so it is possible to compare how one district’s spending pattern compares to other districts or the state as a whole.

The table below highlights Allenstown’s spending distribution versus the state average. As shown, Allenstown spend higher percentages of its budget on regular instruction and special education than the New Hampshire average. It also spends less on administration and plant operations than the New Hampshire average.

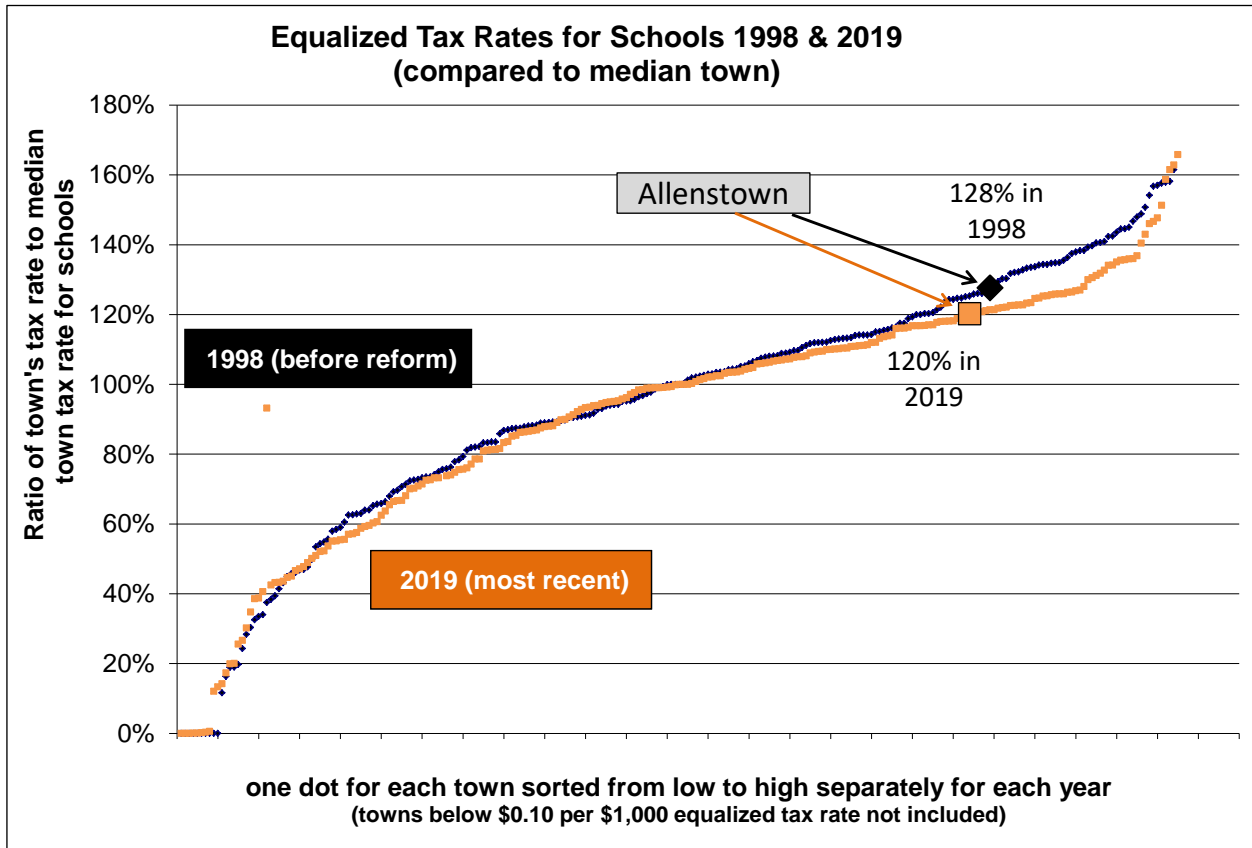
Table 1

Spending by Type	Percentage	
	Allenstown	NH Average
Regular Instruction	43%	40%
Special Programs	26%	20%
Vocational Programs	0%	1%
Other Instructional Programs	0%	1%
Student Support Services	10%	8%
Instructional Support Staff	1%	3%
Administration	9%	11%
Plant Operations	5%	8%
Pupil Transportation	4%	4%
Food Services	1%	1%
Bond & Note Interest	0%	1%
Other Expenses	1%	0%
Total Expenses	100%	100%

4. 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, the equalized tax rate for Allenstown schools was \$24.46. This was 128% of the state median town. In 2019, the equalized tax rate was \$16.32 (\$14.49 local tax plus \$1.83 state tax that is retained by the town). This was 120% of the state median town.

Chart 4

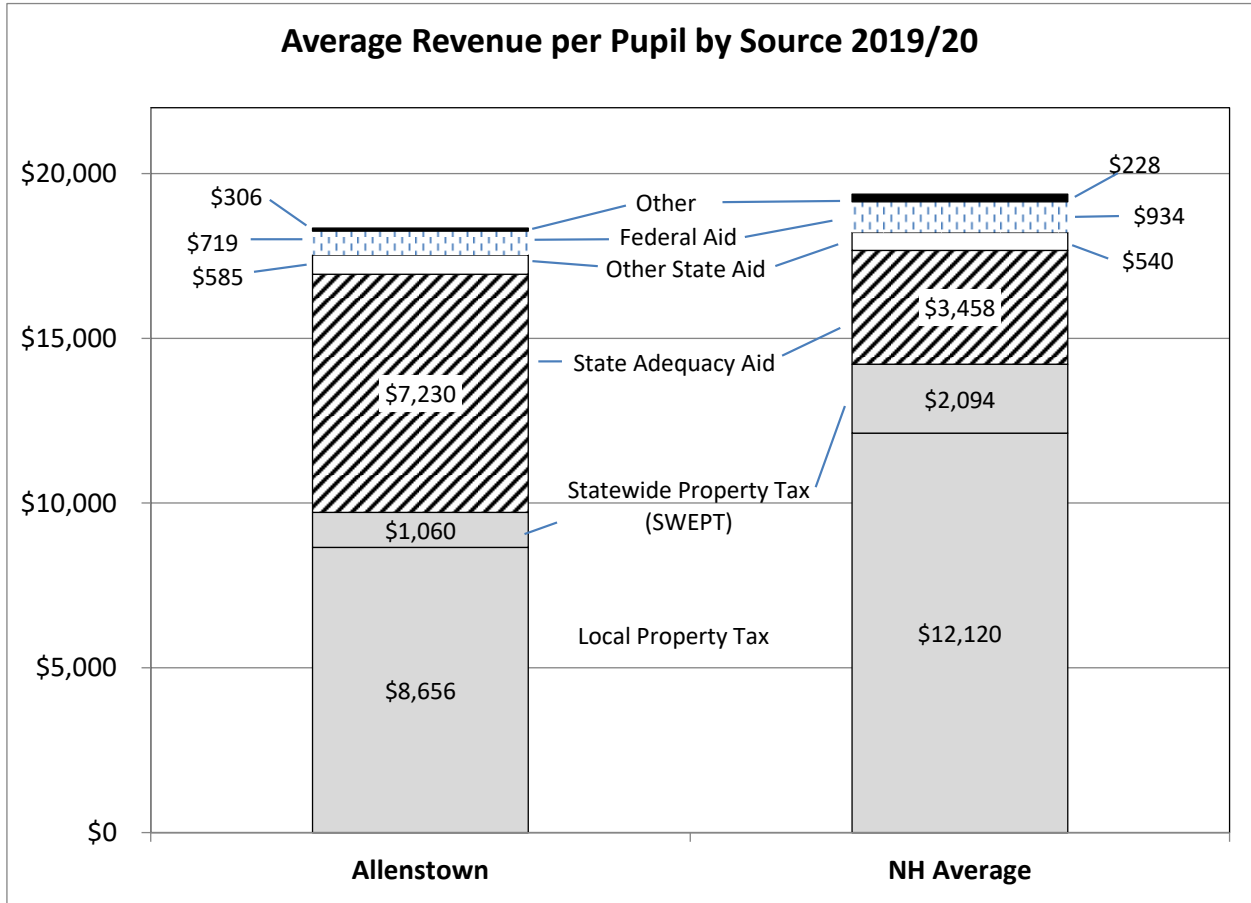


Allenstown's position is well above the median among towns. It has not changed much relative to other towns and is now 120% of the median town's equalized tax rate for schools. Like many other towns its equalized tax rate for schools in 2019 was much lower than it was in 1998.

5. School District Revenue Patterns

Similar to spending patterns, it is possible to compare the revenue sources of one district with that of others or the state average. Below is a bar chart that shows the revenue distribution of the Allenstown school district compared to the state average.

Chart 5



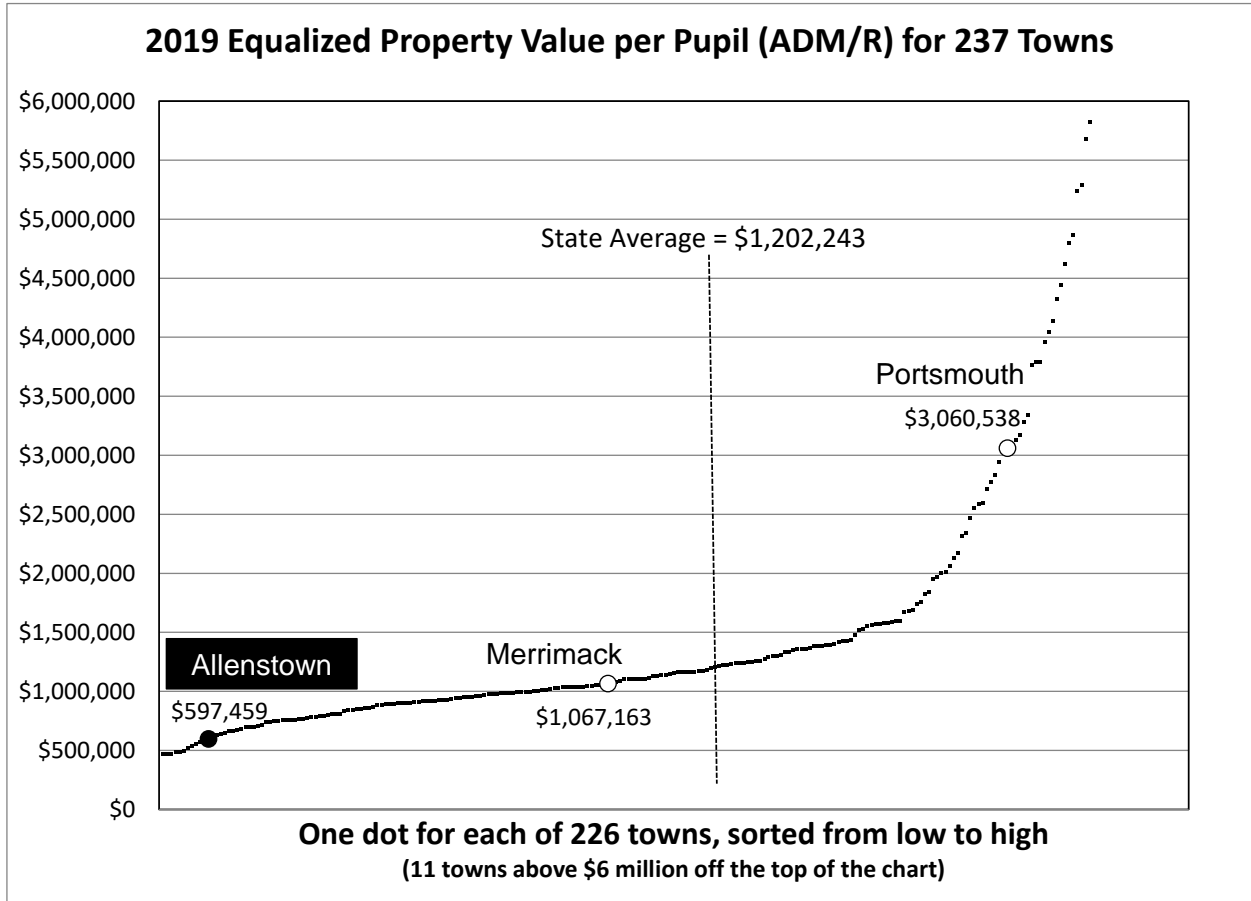
On average, 74% of the revenue for New Hampshire public schools comes from the property tax (local plus the statewide education property tax, better known as SWEPT). In Allenstown, the property tax accounts for 53% of the revenue. 46% of the revenue for Allenstown schools comes from state and federal aid.

6. Property value for each pupil

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.

In 2019, Allenstown had \$337 million of equalized property valuation and 564 average daily number of students (ADM/R). This meant that Allenstown had \$597,459 of property value for each pupil. The state average was \$1,202,243. Allenstown was less than half of the state average.

Chart 6



Portsmouth's property value per pupil is more than 5 times that of Allenstown. This means that in Portsmouth, each \$1.00 in equalized tax rate raises \$3,060 per pupil. In Allenstown, each \$1.00 in equalized tax rate raises only \$597 per pupil.

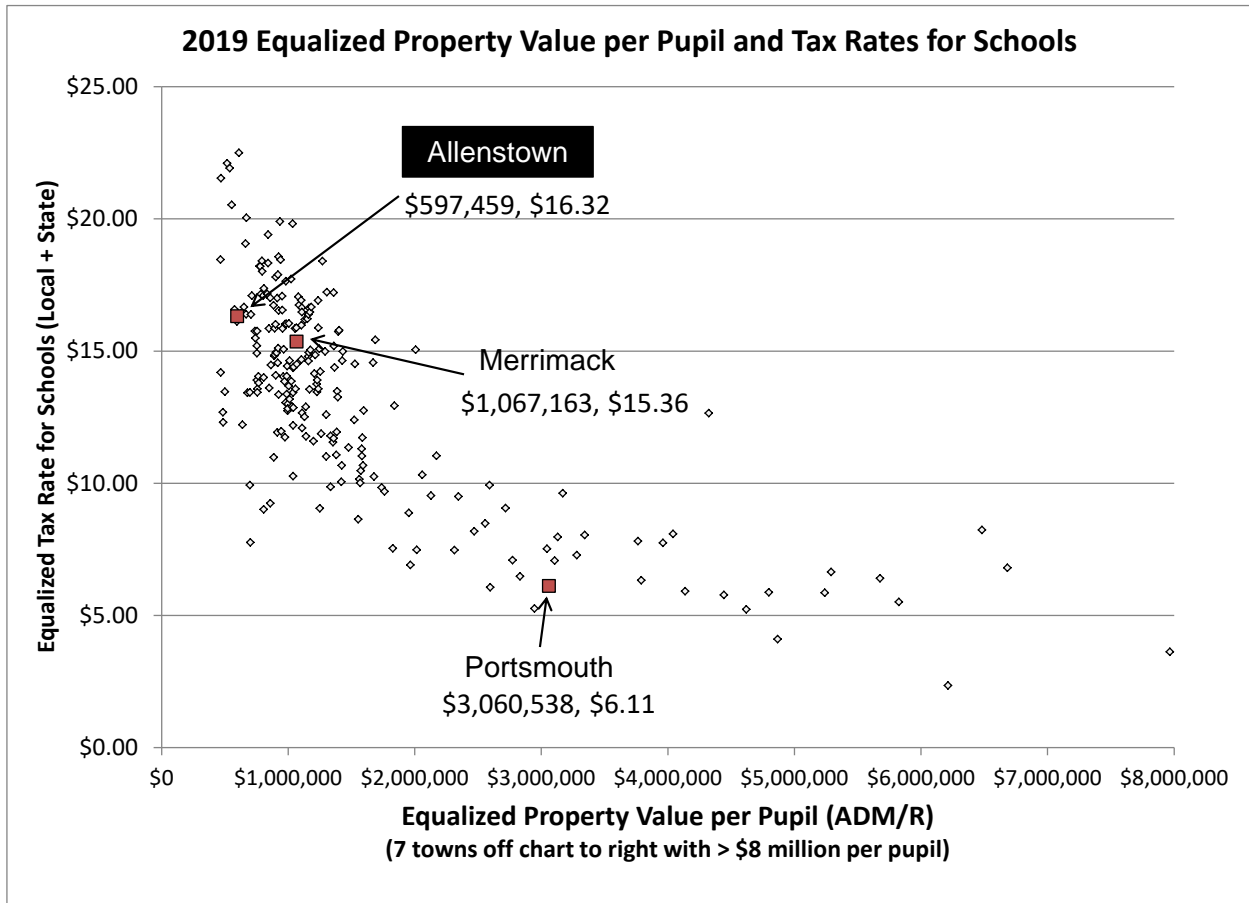
Portsmouth raises \$18,700 per pupil with only a \$6.11 equalized school tax rate while Allenstown can only raise \$9,751 per pupil with an equalized school tax rate of \$16.32.

This difference continues with only slight variation year after year. In the 13 years from kindergarten through 12th grade, Portsmouth will raise locally \$116,300 more for educating each of its children than will Allenstown.

Think of a classroom of 20 students. Allenstown raises \$179,000 less per classroom at a tax rate 2.7 times that of Portsmouth. And will continue to do so year after year.

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

Chart 7



Note: Data are taken from reports and spreadsheets of the NH Department of Education: (Equalized Valuation per Pupil, Cost Per Pupil By District, Average Daily Membership Based Upon Attendance and Residence (ADM), and DoE25ExtractforStateProfileData for various years. Such data are reported by NH school districts to the DoE. 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 among town tax rates and property values.