

Dear Community Members,

We are presenting an opportunity for the community of Orleans to take action, and implement, a pre-K support package for our young families in this fiscal year. There is an Article currently on the upcoming Warrant to be voted on at the Special Town Meeting on October 25th, 2021 (6:00 p.m.), and then at the polls on November 2, 2021.

This stand-alone program is not linked to the school district's budget and would be supported by the Town of Orleans. Orleans has been incredibly supportive of the elementary school. This additional support for young Orleans families is a natural evolution to great education that is already evident in Orleans.

Several of our neighboring towns have implemented a similar program and have seen immediate success with it. We commend our friends in Truro, Provincetown, Eastham, Wellfleet, Chatham, and Mashpee who have supported their families with comparable town programming and funding.

As the Town of Orleans evolves, we witness young families fiscally struggling within our community. Costs continue to be an ever-present challenge for our families. We believe that making a move to support our youngest learners is pivotal to the ongoing health and growth of our community.

What we are proposing will provide immediate relief and fiscal, educational, as well as child-care support to our families with three and four-year-olds. We see this as a win-win situation for our community, families and young learners. It is an all-encompassing action for our community to take.

We reviewed methodologies used by neighboring towns to arrive at their fiscal projections and we took a similar approach. The number presented this evening is based on a collective number of 66 anticipated children.

We feel that this number provided in the proposed Article is realistic to cover the costs we are projecting. With this initiative in place, parents may choose any pre-K licensed provider, and once deemed appropriately eligible, payment would be made directly to the service provider up to a maximum amount of \$10,000 per year per four-year-old, and \$5,000 per year per three-year-old.

We appreciate the Orleans Select Board and the Orleans Finance Committee for their collective support to move this article forward to the Special Town Meeting:

Orleans Select Board (3-0-0)

Orleans Finance Committee (8-0-0)

The upcoming vote presents an opportunity to let the voters of Orleans decide whether to support and implement this program.

Sincerely,

Gail M. Briere

Orleans School Committee Chair