



APRIL UPDATE ON MOHAWK TRAIL/HAWLEMONT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

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April 10, 2024 -- Berkshire Educational Resources K12 (BERK12), in partnership with the 2districts8towns Steering Committee, is gathering input from community members for an ongoing study and analysis of the operating and organizational structure of the Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont regional school districts. The 2districts8towns Sustainability Study encompasses the towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Hawley, Heath, Plainfield, and Shelburne. Upcoming events in April will focus on learning more about the needs of the schools and gathering perspectives and feedback from families and community members.

During February and March, the BERK12 team met with local select boards, town administrators, and legislators to brief them on the project, answer questions, and solicit their thoughts. Community engagement sessions are being held at each of the district's schools to provide an opportunity for families and community members to engage with the research team. Initial sessions were held at Buckland-Shelburne Elementary School on March 11 and at Colrain Central School on April 9. Sessions coming up include:

- April 11, Sanderson Academy Cafeteria, 6:00 to 7:30 pm, childcare available
- April 24, Mohawk Trail Regional School, superintendents' conference room, 6:00 to 7:30 pm
- April 25, Hawlemont School Cafeteria, 5:30 – 7:00 pm, dinner served and childcare available

School families as well as any interested community members are invited to attend one of the community engagement sessions and are asked to register in advance [HERE](#). Participants will be asked to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont Regional School Districts, identify things the districts can't live without, propose options and solutions for high quality cost-effective education, and state their ultimate vision for the districts in 10 years.

Members of the BERK12 research team are also visiting each of the schools to observe students and teachers in action. These visits include classroom observations and focus groups with teachers to learn more about their views on academics and instructional practices. A comprehensive study of both enrollment and fiscal patterns and trends is in progress, as well as a synthesis of past studies in order to learn and build from the past.

The 2districts8towns steering committee continues to meet monthly to provide ongoing guidance and oversight. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held on April 18, 5:30 – 7:00 pm. Members of the public are welcome to attend either in person at Mohawk Trail Regional School (superintendent's conference room) or virtually by accessing the meeting agenda posted on the website (2districts8towns.org). The steering committee has assembled advisory teams in the areas of community outreach, educational quality, finance, and facilities to help guide the BERK12 research team in its research and analysis. Community members interested in serving on these topic specific advisories can submit their names and interest through the CONTACT link on the website.

The website also provides past and current presentations and reports, a full schedule of upcoming community engagement meetings, a list of steering committee members, links to the project's Facebook and Instagram pages, and other relevant project information. A one page project overview is available [HERE](#).

The team is developing community surveys that will be issued later this spring. The surveys will gather input from students, teachers, community members, and families, including those that have chosen to send their students to schools outside of the district.

For more information, contact project manager H. Jake Eberwein, jakeeberwein@gmail.com.