



# 2Districts8Towns



## 2D8T Steering Committee

March 21, 2024

[2Districts8Towns.org](http://2Districts8Towns.org)

- **Approval of minutes from 2/15/24**
- **Update on work plan (*Jake Eberwein*)**
  - **Community Outreach Overview (*Mary Nash & J. Eberwein*)**
  - **Discussion of one page overview**
  - **Discussion of additional outreach options**
  - **Early themes**
- **Discussion of Advisory Team Structures (*M. Thurber, E. Van Iderstine, J. Eberwein*)**
  - Focus Areas**
    - **Participants**
    - **Charge**
    - **Plan for Organizing Meetings**
- **Budget and Finance Update**
- **Date and Topics for Next Meeting**
- **Public Comment**





**WELCOME**

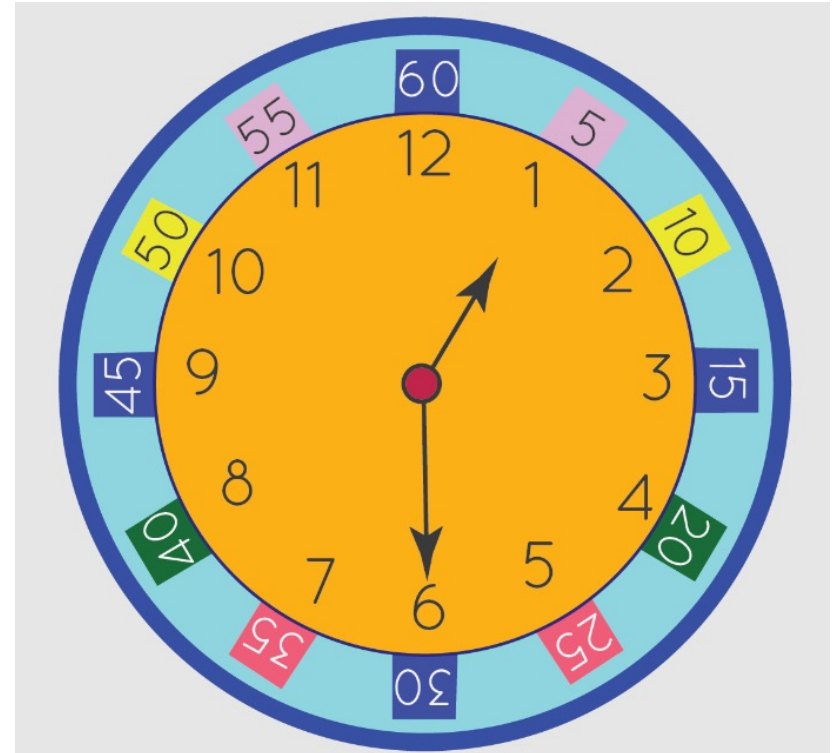
**Greg Lilly, Ashfield**

**Lindsey Sall, Charlemont**

# MINUTES

Approval from 2.15.24

Thanks, Jenny!



# UPDATES FROM PROJECT MANAGER



**WHY** we are here?

**WHAT** is the game plan?

**HOW** are we doing?



# RESOURCES



# 2districts8towns.org



## 2Districts8Towns

[HOME](#)[WHO WE ARE](#)[RESOURCES](#)[CONTACT](#)

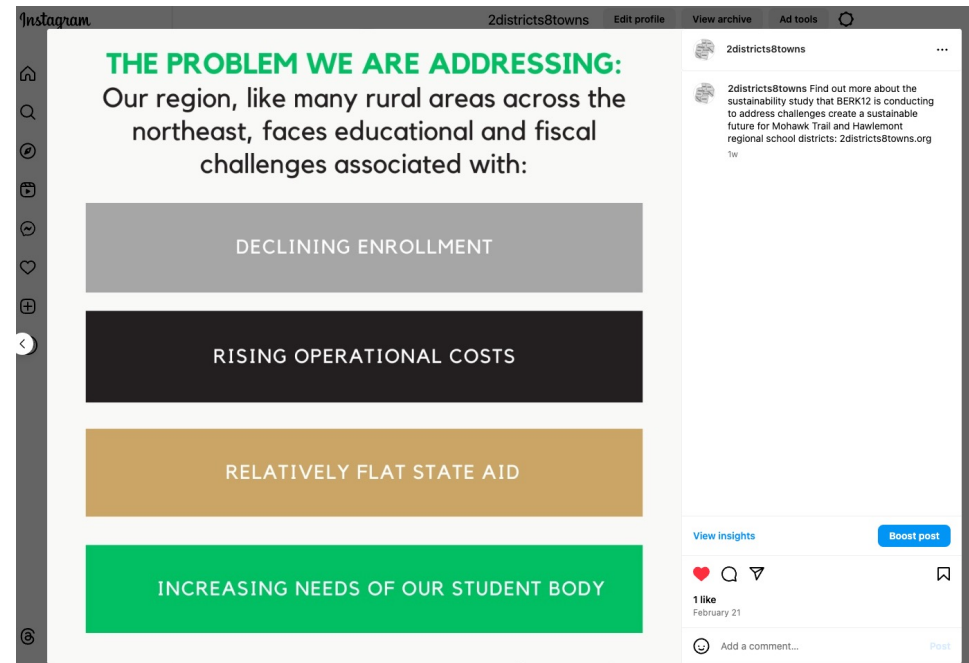
**2 DISTRICTS, 8 TOWNS  
SUSTAINABILITY STUDY**



[News from Our Team](#)

# FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

## 2DISTRICTS8TOWNS





# UPDATED PRESENTATIONS, FYI



Slide deck from  
Community Meetings,  
[HERE](#)



Slide deck from Towns,  
[HERE](#)

**WHY.**



# CHARGE.

Support ongoing study and analysis of the operating and organizational structures of the two Regional School Districts



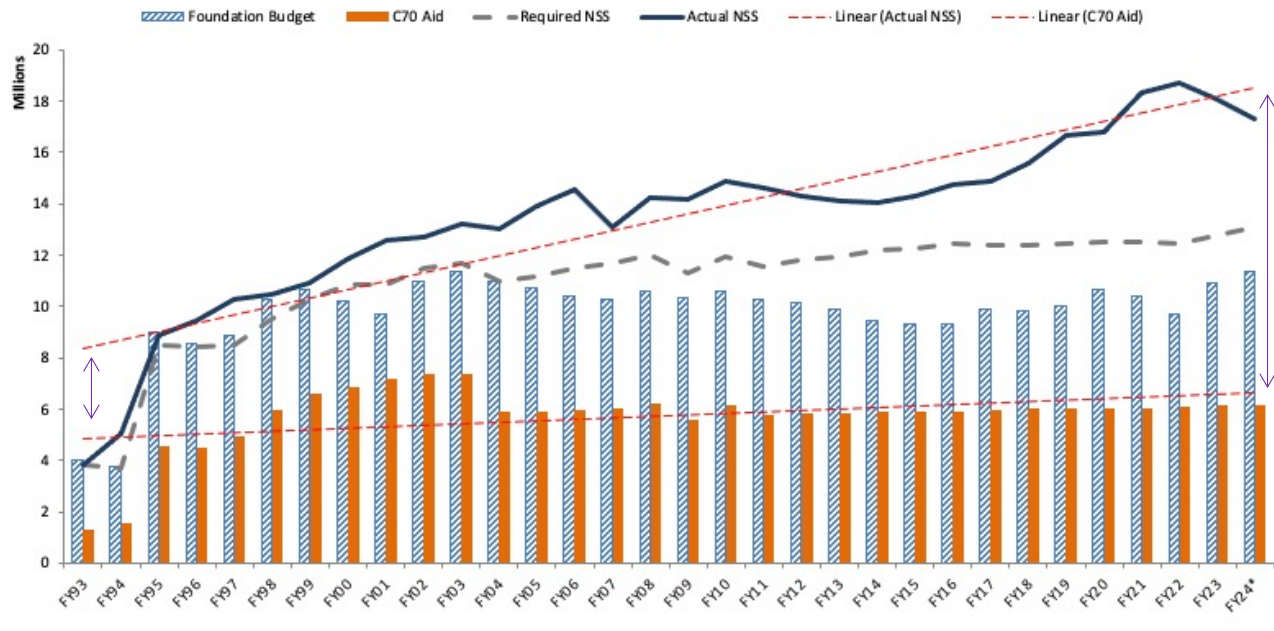
# THE PROBLEM

Our region, like many rural areas across the northeast, faces educational and fiscal challenges associated with:

- declining enrollment,
- rising operational costs,
- relatively flat state aid, and
- increasing needs of our student body.

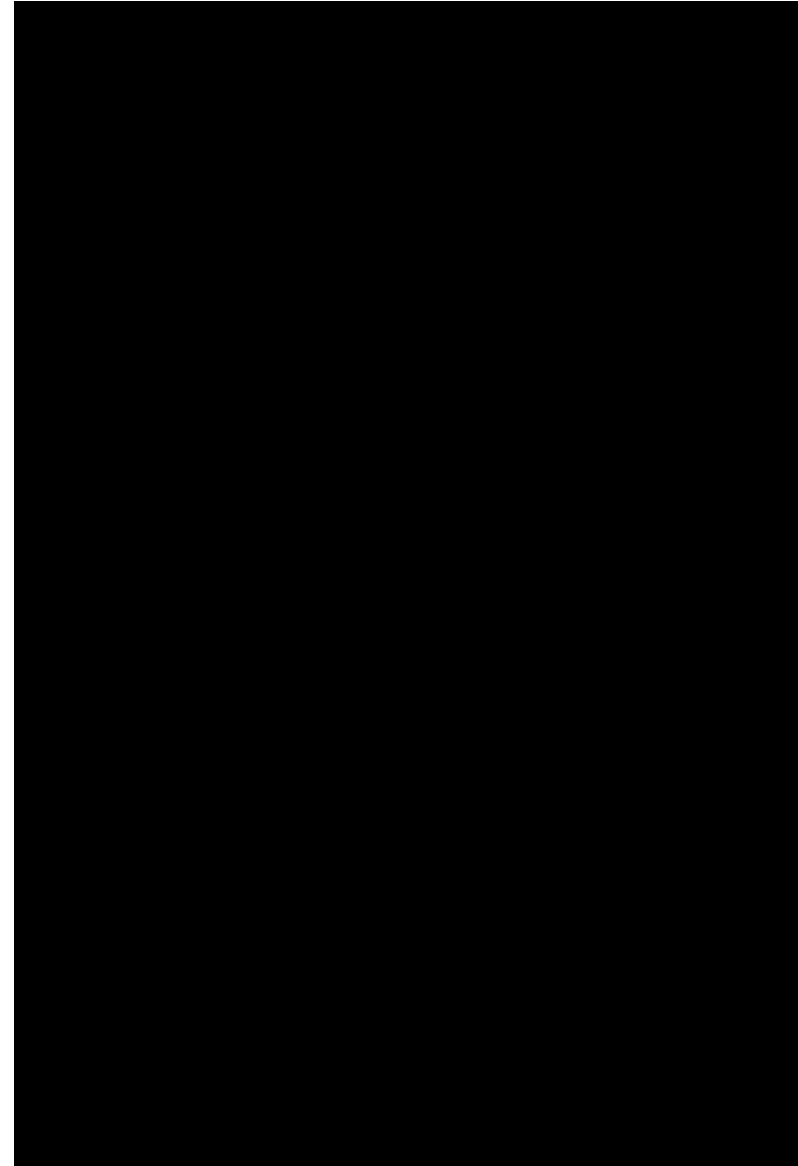
We must continue to explore options and opportunities - in light of these challenges - to ensure our students receive a **high-quality set of educational experiences** (academics, co-curricular, services and supports) they need to ensure success in college, career and life.

0717 Mohawk Trail





**WHAT.**



# OUR AIMS.

We believe the aim of the Phase II study, the deliverable, is to clarify the current state of the district, to project into the future, and to generate viable alternatives/solutions that result in a sustainability plan that is actionable and will be supported by community stakeholders.

1

Analyze data as provided in Phase I

ANALYSIS

2

Project enrollment, finance, educational factors, and buildings in developing alternative options/solutions (regionalization, consolidation, other possibilities)

PROJECTION

3

Assist a community group representing the 8 towns to determine the impact of doing nothing (*status quo*) as well as study, consider, and evaluate possible alternatives

OPTIONS

4

Refine options that ensure high-quality educational delivery that are fiscally sustainable

MODELING

5

Create and lead a communications/engagement plan that ensures a consistent stream of information and affords for broad public involvement

ENGAGEMENT

# OUR PLAN.

CONTEXT

**Stage 1.** Process Organization, Context Setting, Community Engagement (A)  
*Target dates: January 1, 2024 through close of school, 2024 (spring)*

OPTIONS

**Stage 2.** Deep Data Dive & Analysis, Option Generation  
*Target dates: May 1, 2024 through August 1, 2024 (summer)*

MODELING

**Stage 3.** Preferred Models, Community Engagement (B), Final Report/Next Steps  
*Target dates: August 1, 2024 through January 15, 2025 (fall/winter)*

***Final Report Delivery: SPRING, 2025***

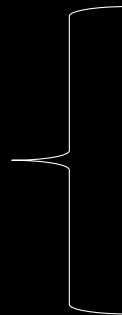


**Future Town Actions**

**CONTEXT**

**Stage 1. Process Organization, Context Setting, Community Engagement (A)**  
*Target dates: January 1, 2024 through close of school, 2024*

# STAGE 1



- **Setup**
- **Initial Community Outreach**
- **Historical/Literature Review**
- **Launch Data Collection**

# STAGE 1. ORGANIZATION, CONTEXT, INITIAL ENGAGEMENT



## Deliverables

- Established Committee (and subcommittees if appropriate), meetings
- Evidence of meetings and interviews (question protocol)
- Approved work plan
- Published website
- Protocol for stakeholder meetings and evidence of meetings
- Draft and final stakeholder survey, distribution of survey, data collection
- Literature/Historical review
- Communications plan
- Press/Monthly updates





**HOW...  
ARE WE DOING?**

<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>TASK</b>
Done, ongoing adjustment	<b>Project Planning:</b> Work with the leadership team/committee to define the work plan, priorities, any remaining questions, consulting team, and schedule.
Done, ongoing processing	<b>Administration.</b> Establish budget, invoicing/accounting processes, contracts and processes for subcontractors.
Done, advisories to launch	<b>Committee:</b> Identify/Recruit/Establish membership and subcommittee structure, if any. Hold meetings to orient and launch.
Done, ongoing content	<b>Website:</b> Draft website framework for review. <b>Website:</b> By close of Stage 1, launch a website and establish social media (FB/IG) presence. Curate mailing lists and mechanisms for public submissions.
<b>Done</b>	<b>Tours/Visits (2 days):</b> Site visits to schools, district offices, facilities - initial meetings with administration & staff.
In progress (60%)	<b>Key Stakeholders:</b> Following site visits, schedule meetings with established groups such as staff, PAC/School Council, union leads, select boards/finance committees. Use question protocol to collect perspectives, early thoughts/ideas, aspirations/opportunities, challenges, and non-negotiables.
To be developed, May-June	<b>Community Survey:</b> Develop a community survey to be distributed electronically through school/community listservs. Aggregate data.
Done, ongoing	<b>Develop communications plan:</b> In concert with PM and Committee, draft a communications plan for 12 months forward, by the close of Stage 1.
Done, ongoing	<b>Press/Update:</b> Jointly develop press release/updates to send to stakeholders as part of monthly outreach.
First meeting, more to be had	<b>Delegates:</b> Meet with the local delegation to review aims of the Study, seek input and support, and build a foundation for advocacy.
In progress, target for May/June	<b>Historical review:</b> Complete a review of collaboration/regionalization/sustainability studies in the district, include recent and relevant literature as relates to rural districts and parallel sustainability efforts (mergers, collaboration, regionalization).
Mostly done, still bumping into additional resources	<b>Review completed reports:</b> Carefully review and synthesize the most recent district studies including MARS Phase I, BEST, and Jetzon Data, etc. Present synthesis to Committee.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enrollment, draft</li> <li>2. Finance baseline, draft</li> <li>3. Ed Quality, visits launched</li> <li>4. Personnel, lists organized</li> <li>5. Buildings, in planning</li> <li>6. RA analysis, about done</li> </ol>	<p>Using specialized consultants, organize and launch a process to begin a deep dive into a number of functional domains with the aim of establishing a deep understanding of the current state of the district. In doing so, options explored in Stage 2 &amp; 3 can be evaluated for impact (the value proposition) within each domain. Note: a particular emphasis will be placed on finance, educational indicators, and buildings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Enrollment.</b> Review NESDEC, update enrollment projections independently, examine student flow (choice/tuition).</li> <li>2. <b>Educational Quality.</b> Use school/district review protocol when meeting with key district leaders, reviewing plans, examining outcomes, cataloging programs, services and supports, student activities, specialized programming (special education, ELL, alternative education, career education), etc.</li> <li>3. <b>Finance &amp; Operations.</b> Build a model for budget projections (revenue and expenses for both operating and capital based on actuals) that can be manipulated based on varying options, examine select operational systems (facilities, food, technology) as time/funds allow.</li> <li>4. <b>Personnel.</b> Establish clarity of organizational charting, roles/responsibilities, assignments (load), longevity, salary/benefits, etc.</li> <li>5. <b>Buildings.</b> Advance MARS work in clarifying physical plant needs, capacity, appropriateness of educational spaces.</li> <li>6. <b>Contracts/Agreements.</b> As is useful towards understanding the present and future state of the district, review contracts and regional agreement to establish key considerations.</li> </ol>



# HIGHLIGHTS

# EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS/ QUALITY

March 18 <sup>th</sup> :	Hawlemont/Colrain
March 27 <sup>th</sup> :	BSE/Sanderson
April 26 <sup>th</sup> :	MT MSHS

Educational Indicators,  
5 year historical

Classroom observations at each  
school

Teacher focus groups

Springpoint classroom visit tool

Educational Quality report  
completed by the end of June

# Mohawk Trail - Hawlemont

BASELINE ANALYSIS  
MARCH 2024

## Mohawk Trail FY 2025 Budget

REVENUES

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	%
CHAPTER 70 STATE AID REVENUE	\$6,201,914	23.7%
CHARTER SCHOOL REIMBURSEMENT	\$88,978	0.3%
TUITION REVENUE	\$321,555	1.2%
MEDICAID TUITION REVENUE	\$25,000	0.1%
INTEREST INCOME	\$50,000	0.2%
USE OF E&D RESERVE FUNDING	\$250,000	1.0%
MINIMUM STATE REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION	\$7,258,681	27.7%
ABOVE MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION	\$5,339,502	20.4%
TRANSPORTATION REVENUE FROM STATE	\$511,742	2.0%
TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT TO TOWNS	\$1,389,338	5.3%
TRANSPORTATION REVOLVING	\$2,641	0.0%
TOTAL REVOLVING AND OTHER OFFSETS	\$4,732,574	18.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,171,925</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

EXPENDITURES

FUNDS BY DESE USE	AMOUNT	%
ADMINISTRATION (1000)	1,076,964	4.1%
INSTRUCTIONAL (2000)	11,934,540	45.6%
TRANSPORTATION (3300)	1,953,636	7.5%
FOOD SERVICES (3400)	292,458	1.1%
ATHLETICS (3510)	349,332	1.3%
STUDENT ACTIVITIES (3520)	107,182	0.4%
OPERATIONS (4000)	1,868,144	7.1%
BENEFITS (5000)	5,275,369	20.2%
EQUIP/LEASES (5300)	58,500	0.2%
TUITIONS OUT (9000)	1,520,000	5.8%
SCHOOL CHOICE ASSESSMENTS (9110)	673,158	2.6%
CHARTER ASSESSMENTS (9120)	655,630	2.5%
ATTENDANCE/HEALTH (3100/3200)	353,466	1.4%
OTHER (6000,7000,8000)	53,546	0.2%
OPEB	-	0.0%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>26,171,925</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
March 14, 2024

Throughout all the data presented in this report, the reader should focus on the magnitude and trends and not the actual numbers. The numbers presented here are primarily from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The data is based on reports from the two districts, but minor differences can occur between the DESE reports and the district reports. However, the magnitude of these errors is relatively small and inconsequential to the overall picture of what is happening within the two districts.

Existing Overall Enrollment

According to the enrollment data from DESE, the 2024 enrollment at the combined Mohawk Trail / Hawlemont district is 862 students. This enrollment has declined by 211 students since 2015, an average of 21.1 students per year. This decline is not equal throughout the grades, as the high school has lost more than the elementary schools. The high school went from 454 students in 2015 to 300 students in 2024, a decline of 154. Meanwhile, the elementary schools have declined from 619 students in 2015 to 562 students in 2024, a decline of 57.

Student Enrollment - Hawlemont / Mohawk Trail Regional School Districts (Pre-K-12)

	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SP	Total
2010	39	77	95	68	101	92	81	113	108	103	97	94	84	85	2	1,239
2011	47	55	74	95	70	94	89	84	115	107	87	92	87	76	2	1,174
2012	72	58	60	73	87	67	96	87	85	117	93	77	90	80	3	1,145
2013	65	79	60	62	76	91	70	101	81	82	85	93	68	85	5	1,103
2014	72	63	79	56	61	78	87	72	89	90	61	80	89	76	4	1,057
2015	86	91	68	80	68	57	78	91	66	95	73	57	77	86	0	1,073
2016	130	90	91	66	79	66	58	83	92	68	75	69	58	81	1	1,107
2017	115	91	84	94	65	79	65	55	76	92	58	67	67	58	4	1,070

Foundation Enrollment (PreK-12)

Municipality	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ashfield	199	181	162	147	146	152
Buckland	220	234	216	192	210	201
Charlemont	170	163	148	134	140	139
Colrain	204	197	202	169	185	178
Hawley	34	34	37	28	26	26
Heath	107	107	98	92	97	91
Plainfield	68	70	67	62	62	65
Shelburne	185	195	186	177	180	166
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,187</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>1,001</b>	<b>1,046</b>	<b>1,018</b>

Projecting foundation enrollment uses a methodology similar to projecting school enrollment, except it is town-based instead of school-based. The projected foundation enrollment continues to decline steadily over the next decade. This decline is further evidence that school enrollment changes are primarily due to decreasing births in the eight towns.

Projected Foundation Enrollment (PreK-12)

Municipality	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Ashfield	152	148	142	139	138	134	133	129	118	111	106	99	95
Buckland	201	203	193	184	176	168	159	149	135	127	116	104	101
Charlemont	139	135	129	123	123	118	110	99	91	83	76	66	58
Colrain	178	169	168	171	170	163	155	152	150	138	140	136	133
Hawley	26	25	22	24	25	23	24	24	25	24	26	27	27
Heath	91	90	84	86	86	85	80	74	69	71	68	67	70
Plainfield	65	68	68	68	70	69	67	66	66	63	68	73	76
Shelburne	166	154	152	149	150	149	147	141	134	128	120	119	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>671</b>



**HISTORICAL REVIEW OF REGIONALIZATION AND COLLABORATION EFFORTS OF ASHFIELD, BUCKLAND, CHARLEMONT,  
COLRAIN, HAWLEY, HEATH, PLAINFIELD, AND SHELBURNE TO IMPROVE EDUCATION AND ACHIEVE GREATER  
EFFICIENCY**

*“The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future.”*

Theodore Roosevelt

The purpose of this document is to review documents, newspaper articles, research, and studies pertaining to consolidation, regionalization, and shared services among the towns comprising the Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD) and the Hawlemont Regional School District from the time of formation to the present. The aim is to provide historical context for the work of the current 2District8Towns initiative in the belief that there are lessons to be learned from previous efforts.



**2Districts8Towns**  
 Ashfield, Buckland, Colrain, Heath, Plainfield, Shelburne  
 Mohawk Trail Regional School District  
 Hawley, Charlemont  
 Hawlemont Regional School District

**Regional Agreement Analysis**  
 March 2024  
 J. Eberwein

**Purpose.**

The purpose of this brief is to provide an overview and simple analysis of the two existing regional agreements for the Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont regional school districts. This will provide a foundation that identifies similarities, differences, and gaps that exist and may be of consideration as part of the Phase II Sustainability study. As potential models, options and opportunities are explored, implications (changes) to the regional agreements may surface and be required.

**What is a regional district?**

A school district is an administrative unit responsible for managing primary and secondary school services within a defined geographical boundary defined by one city or town or by multiple municipalities.

As stated in the [Introduction to Regionalization](#), regionalization is a "political, economic and educational marriage that fulfills a constitutional responsibility to educate children in public schools....It is a process that demands goodwill, compromise and dedication. Most importantly, the process demands the trust of everyone involved albeit a citizen, a parent, or a political leader."

A public school district consists of one or more public schools operated under the supervision of an elected or appointed school committee and a superintendent. The majority of school districts serve a single city or town, and are considered a department of the municipal government. **Two or more municipalities can also join together to form a regional school district, which is considered a separate and independent unit of local government.** A regional school district can offer all grades (PreK-12), just certain grades (for example, just elementary grades or just high school), or just certain types of instruction (for example, vocational and technical programs). Direct citation from [DOR](#).

# Regional Agreements

**Analysis of Existing Agreements:**

The following section provides an overview of each of the two agreements side-by-side. Additional detail can be gathered by a more detailed review of each document. This analysis is intended to illustrate key agreement elements, surfacing where the agreements are in alignment or not. Where items are relatively "standard" they are not included.

Area	Mohawk Trail	Hawlemont	Analysis/Questions/Considerations
Link to full document	<a href="#">HERE</a>	<a href="#">HERE</a>	None
Length	22 pages	21 pages	None
Last approved	Noted as approved by DESE on October 25, 2022  There are current RA changes proposed pertaining (mostly) to counting students. These changes while not approved (they will be considered at town meeting in spring 2024) and are noted below in blue.	Last amendment on May 5, 1992	<b>Considerations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Hawlemont document is a bit confusing as the original document is followed by amendments including the dissolving and transition to the new Mohawk Trail RSD</li> </ul>
Organization	Table of Contents, Section I through XVI (mostly aligned with recommended DESE format)	Organized as a series of amendments that begin in 1952 and end in 1992  Last half of the document (beginning with Amendment 10) is organized into five sections. This amendment was (in effect) the dissolving of the district and new relationship with Mohawk Trail  Below, elements will be described as Original (1952) or Amended (dates noted)	<b>Considerations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The MTRSD document more closely conforms with contemporary Regional Agreement Architecture, although there are some updates that could be made and approved by a RAC and in partnership &amp; with approval by DESE</li> <li>The HRSD document is a bit challenging to read and understand and could use a full redrafting. Historical language could be retained with a more contemporary layout and architecture. Would require RAC and in partnership &amp; with approval by DESE</li> <li>Some current practices (such as</li> </ul>

			composition & terms of school committee) are not consistent with the RA  <b>Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HRSD Committee (as reported by the Chair) is undergoing a policy and RA review</li> <li>The MTRSD Committee has a proposed amendment to the RA pertaining to apportionment of operating funds over required/minimum</li> </ul>
School Committee	<b>SECTION I</b> IA. 16 members (2) from each town IB. 3 year terms IB. Weighted voting (10 year population to 1/10th) IC. Vacancies (by selectboard and remaining member, until next election for balance of term) ID. Voting. Member from Hawley and Charlemont don't vote on matters pertaining to Grades PK-6 IG. Voting weights. Sets member weights by town.  Note: Members are elected by residents of their town only, the elections are not district-wide.	<b>Original:</b> 2) Six members, three from each town. 3a.) Appointed by moderator for one year 3b.) Vacancies filled by moderator for remainder of term.  <b>Amendments:</b> 1992: Section III - Allows for composition for one year  <b>Per Chair (March 2024):</b> HRSD-SC members are elected for a 3 year term, 3 from each town, staggered, and each town votes for their members. This does not appear to be reflected in any RA language.	<b>Similarities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have 2 members from each town.</li> <li>Members are elected by the resident town voters only (this could be clarified in the RA language).</li> <li>Members serve three-year terms.</li> <li>Both have organizational processes (chair, etc.)</li> </ul> <b>Differences:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MTRSD uses weighted voting, it appears HRSD uses 1 person 1 vote.</li> <li>Vacancies filled by 3rd member in MTRSD, vacancies filled by moderator in HRSD</li> </ul> <b>Considerations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HRSD needs to formalize the amendment to reflect current practice.</li> </ul>

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Meetings with town managers

Meetings with school committees, individually and joint

Met with legislative delegation

Meetings with all eight select boards/finance comm.

Regular updates to local press (monthly update)

Community Outreach Advisory Team

Met with faculty/staff

Community engagement sessions at each school

Website and social media

Surveys to come



Contact: H. Jake Eberwein  
Project Manager  
jakeeberwein@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY STUDY UNDERWAY IN MOHAWK TRAIL/HAWLEMONT DISTRICTS

**March 1, 2024** -- Berkshire Educational Resources K12 (BERK12) is working with the Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont regional school districts to conduct an ongoing study and analysis of the two districts as they seek ways to ensure their long-term sustainability. The project, branded as 2districts8towns, encompasses the Western Massachusetts towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Hawley, Heath, Plainfield, and Shelburne.

The purpose of the study is to identify the best options for providing a high-quality education that prepares students for future success in college, career, and life while considering educational and fiscal opportunities, challenges, and options. Like many rural areas across the Northeast, the region faces challenges associated with declining enrollment, rising operational costs, relatively flat state aid, and increasing student needs. The study builds upon previous data collection.

“Our communities care deeply about our schools and want the best possible education for our youth,” said Sheryl Stanton, superintendent of Mohawk Trail/Hawlemont Regional School Districts. “I’m proud of the work the community has done over the last two decades and am excited and hopeful about identifying the best possible options for a sustainable future for our districts through the BERK12 study.”

The first stage of work focuses on collecting data on current educational programming, enrollment, fiscal conditions, and building infrastructure. Additionally, over the next few months, BERK12 consultants will engage with the community by meeting with teachers and administrators, students, school committees, select boards/finance committees, family members, and community members to provide an overview of the project plan and gather their perspectives about the districts and schools.

Following the data collection and community engagement efforts, BERK12 will present potential operating models that offer a more sustainable future for the schools and member towns. These models will then be presented and discussed in community settings throughout the eight towns. By early 2025, BERK12 will generate a final report that identifies preferred models for moving forward and recommended next steps.

A steering committee has been formed to provide ongoing guidance and oversee the work. The

## MONTHLY UPDATE



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OUR SCHOOL DISTRICTS, TOGETHER.

### 2 DISTRICTS 8 TOWNS STEERING COMMITTEE

Ashfield, Buckland, Colrain, Heath, Plainfield, Shelburne  
Mohawk Trail Regional School District

Hawley, Charlemont  
Hawlemont Regional School District

2Districts8Towns.org

**OUR COMMITTEE REPRESENTS YOU IN THE WORK WE ARE DOING.** Our goal is to ensure that all students in the 8 towns are provided with a broad array of high-quality educational opportunities that prepare them for success (college, career, and life) in whatever path they choose after high school – and to do so in a sustainable way that our rural towns can afford.

#### WHAT AND WHO IS THE 2 DISTRICTS 8 TOWNS (2D8T) STEERING COMMITTEE?

In 2023, the Hawlemont and Mohawk Trail Regional School Committees applied for and received a grant to support ongoing study and analysis of the operating and organizational structures of the two regional school districts. In early 2024, the Steering Committee was formed to work with a research team to advance this study and explore potential options and opportunities.

→ **Fact:** Our Committee has volunteer representatives from each town. We are town officials and community members who are committed to excellence in education in our community. We represent you: residents, parents, taxpayers, school employees, and students.

#### WHY IS THIS STUDY NEEDED?

To address these challenges:

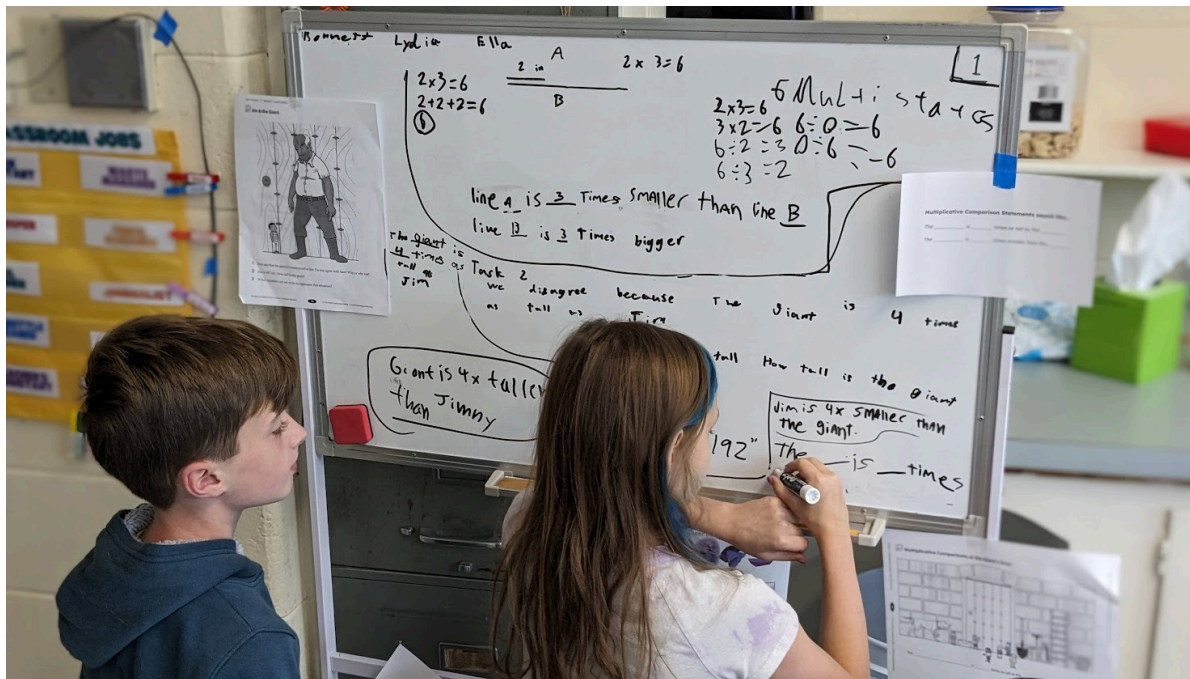
- From 1997 to 2024 enrollment in our two districts has dropped 59%, from 1,880 to 780 students. While the drop in enrollment is slowing, further declines are expected.
- Meanwhile, both districts have faced rising costs in operations, transportation, technology, employee benefits, and special education. However, we have not received additional funding from state education aid, which is tied to enrollment. We have had no meaningful increase in 20 years. As a result, towns (taxpayers) bear an increasing share of school costs.
- As enrollment drops and the needs of our students increase, the imperative to offer a range of high-quality programs and supports becomes more challenging.

#### WHAT ABOUT PAST STUDIES? HAVEN'T WE ALREADY DONE THIS?

This study will continue the analysis started in 2023, while building upon historical efforts conducted by former working groups over the last two decades. This previous work serves as a foundation towards addressing the rising urgency of challenges we face today. All former studies can be accessed [HERE](#).

## ONE PAGE OVERVIEW

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES





# STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICTS

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Community engagement and collaboration

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Teachers and staff are caring and committed to student success

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Small class sizes and individual attention

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Tight-knit communities, engaged families

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Enrichment opportunities: art, music, phys ed, outdoors

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Beautiful natural settings and outdoor spaces

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# **WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES**

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**Declining enrollment**

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**Lack of clear protocols for addressing learning disabilities**

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**Operational inefficiencies and financial strain**

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**Block scheduling limits choices**

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**Resource allocation (cost reductions in arts, music, CVTE)**

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**Families less engaged in middle/high school**



# NON-NEGOTIABLES, WOULD PROTECT AT ALL COSTS



Small class sizes

Maintain K-6 model

Community  
engagement and local  
involvement

Commitment to  
student success and  
well-being

Educational  
opportunities and  
enrichment (academic  
challenge, athletics,  
art, music, libraries)

Quality of  
teachers/need to  
maintain their salaries  
and benefits to attract  
talent

Preservation of  
community and school  
identity, tight-knit  
community

# OPTIONS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Enhance curriculum and extracurriculars – unique programs that attract students

Centralize elementary schools at existing campuses or construct new elementary school

Optimize transportation: smaller buses, central pickup points, shared resources

Have themed schools (farming, outdoors, etc.)

Decrease administration positions, reallocate funds to AP and CVTE

Have sister/buddy schools that collaborate and share resources

Increase connections to community colleges

Look at feasibility of potential mergers or consolidations

Potential mergers with higher achieving schools

Extended learning days to provide more academic support and enrichment



# 10-year vision

Fiscally responsible

Schools are hubs for community resources

Wide range of enrichment opportunities: arts, music, phys ed, outdoor activities

Schools are in beautiful natural settings

Strong sense of pride

Support for students with diverse needs

Internships, apprenticeships

Early college pathways

Steady enrollment

Teachers and staff are caring, committed, dedicated

High staff retention

Families are engaged and involved



## **MORE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS COMING UP**

**APRIL**

**9**

**COLRAIN CENTRAL SCHOOL**  
Library, 6-7:30 pm  
snacks & childcare provided

**APRIL**

**11**

**SANDERSON ACADEMY**  
Cafeteria, 6-7:30 pm  
snacks & childcare provided

**APRIL**

**24**

**MOHAWK TRAIL  
REGIONAL SCHOOL**  
Superintendent's Conference  
Room, 6-7:30 PM  
snacks provided

**APRIL**

**25**

**HAWLEMONT SCHOOL**  
Cafeteria, 5:30-7:00 PM  
dinner & childcare provided



# **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**WHAT ARE WE MISSING?  
DISTRIBUTION?**





**ROWE**

# ADVISORY TEAMS

Community  
Outreach

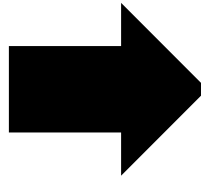
Publicity  
Engaging the community  
Social media, website  
Surveys

Finance

Baseline/Projections  
School costs  
Financial models  
Town contributions

Educational  
Quality

Data (indicators)  
Academics  
Vocational education  
School activities



## DISCUSSION

- Participants
- Charge
- Plan for organizing meetings



# ADVISORY TEAM



2Districts8Towns

HOME WHO WE ARE RESOURCES CONTACT

SEARCH



Interested?



## 2 DISTRICTS, 8 TOWNS SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

### OUR CHARGE.

To support ongoing study and analysis of the operating and organizational structures of the two Regional School Districts: Mohawk Trail & Haverment



### News from Our Team

- **ADVISORY TEAMS.** The **2D8T Steering Committee** will be assembling advisory teams in the areas of Community Outreach, Educational Quality, and Finance. If you are interested in learning more and providing feedback on these topics... drop us a note [HERE](#).

**BUDGET UPDATE**

<u>REVENUES</u>	
CHARLEMONT (COMMUNITY COMPACT)	\$250,000
TO BE RAISED	\$33,000
<i>BERK12</i>	<i>PM HOURS, ADDITIONAL IN-KIND (THROUGH 7.24)</i>
<b>OVERALL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$283,000</b>

<u>EXPENSES</u>	
PROJECT MANAGER	ON TARGET, BERK12 CONTRIBUTION
PROJECT FACILITATOR	ON TARGET, BERK12 CONTRIBUTION
COMMUNITY OUTREACH	OVER TARGET
EDUCATION QUALITY	ON TARGET
FINANCE/FACILITIES	UNDER TARGET
LITERATURE	UNDER TARGET
ENROLLMENT	ON TARGET
WEBSITE	UNDER TARGET
LEGAL	UNDER TARGET
SUPPLIES/MATERIALS	UNDER TARGET
<b>OVERALL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$283,000</b>

**NOTES**

- MONTHLY TRANSFERS VIA CHARLEMONT.
- FUNDS HAVE TO BE MANAGED THROUGH MARCH-ISH 2025

# ....THE NEXT MONTH.



## **Finish up Engagement Meetings** (Towns, Schools, Faculty/Staff/Union) (Mary & Jake)

- Synthesize feedback
- Draft community survey

## **Move along the following Documents**

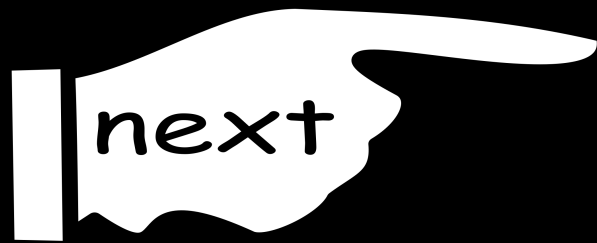
- Historical/Literature Review (Rob)
- Regional Agreements (Jake)
- Enrollment (version #1) (Jake & BRPC)

## **Complete School Visits - Educational "Look"** (Judy/Brendan)

- Facilities visits (Dave)

## **Draft documents as foundation for Modeling**

- Educational Indicators Judy/Brendan)
- Baseline Financial & Projections (Abrahams)
- Baseline Facilities



**MEETING  
SCHEDULE,  
NEXT?**

# QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION/CONTACT.



# 2Districts8Towns



## 2D8T Steering Committee

March 21, 2024

[2Districts8Towns.org](http://2Districts8Towns.org)