

GET THE FACTS. BE INFORMED. YOU DECIDE.



8 Town Regional School District Planning Board | 8Towns.org

Egremont | Alford | Sheffield | New Marlborough | Monterey
Southern Berkshire Regional School District | SBRSD

Stockbridge | Great Barrington | West Stockbridge
Berkshire Hills Regional School District | BHRSD

OUR BOARD HAS BEEN FOLLOWING A PROCESS.

→ **FACT:** For the last two years, our Board has been studying the feasibility of some form of regionalization to address the challenges of declining enrollment in our two districts. YOU will have the final vote on the best future for education in our communities.

WHAT'S THE PROCESS FOR OUR 8 TOWN BOARD?

We first studied maintaining **two separate districts “as is.”** The “as is” challenges we found led us to study and evaluate **three options** for our school districts.

- 1) **Full-regionalization** into a single regional district, or
- 2) Formation of a **single, regional 9-12** high school, or
- 3) Increasing formal **collaboration** between two independent districts

WHAT PROCESS HAS TAKEN PLACE SO FAR?

We've engaged research experts to compile and evaluate data: from educational to financial information, facilities reports and community input – and much more. They have developed detailed reports on:

- Enrollment, education quality, transportation, buildings and capital considerations, special education, information technology, and career vocational technical education (CVTE). Link to reports and presentations [here](#).
- Results from [surveys and focus groups](#) among students, school staff, alumni, and community members about education in our two districts.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS?

- In Spring 2022, the research team presents its **findings/recommendation** to the 8 Town Board.
- Board participates in **facilitated discussion** on findings/recommendations. (April/May 2022)
- The 8 Town Board votes on the next **step**. (May/June 2022)

Depending on the **next step** decision:

- Additional **community outreach** and feedback on the recommended plan.
- **8 Town Board votes** on the recommended model.
- Recommendation is **presented to Selectboards** in the 8 Towns.
- 8 Town Board **conducts outreach** to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).
- Develop a long-range plan and, potentially, a regionalization agreement.
- Voters in 8 Towns **vote at town meetings** to accept or reject the plan.

WHAT'S THE STATE'S ROLE?

- The structure for examining any possible school regionalization is governed by state law, but decision-making takes place at the town level.
- If towns decide to form one regional school district, the state gets more involved in this process.

HOW IS THIS WORK FUNDED?

Our Board has received a total of **\$255,000 from the state** to fund our work (**\$125,000** in FY21 and **\$130,000** in FY22). The 8 Towns have collectively contributed **\$64,000**. The two districts collectively contributed **\$6,000**, and Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation awarded **\$2,500** toward facilitating discussions.

WHAT IS THE TIMING IF A NEW REGIONAL STRUCTURE IS APPROVED?

If a regional agreement is approved by towns, the implementation process begins. From start (2020) to finish this process will likely have spanned 4-5 years.

Do you want to learn more about our work? Visit the 8towns.org website