



January 10, 2024

Dear Members of the Berlin Finance Committee and Berlin Select Board:

We trust that your holiday season brought to each of you an opportunity for joyful moments with family and friends. We are back to work once again on all things related to the FY25 budget. Please know that we continue to look forward to working collaboratively with our town boards and committees and welcome any opportunities to meet with you to discuss and clarify our position.

This past fall, the Berlin-Boylston School Committee members, Superintendent of Schools, and Finance Director participated in two workshops presented by the MA Association of Regional Schools (M.A.R.S.), in an effort to better understand the budget process for regional schools and to prepare a budget that best reflects the needs of our schools.

One of the outcomes of that workshop was a clearer picture of the timeframe that our School Department should be following in terms of releasing budget information. The recommendation was to hold our preliminary level service budget from distribution until we felt confident that the numbers we were providing to the towns were as accurate as possible. Last year, we found that the early release of this information may have caused confusion and misunderstandings over time between the parties as we worked to adjust financial figures based on the ever-changing state and federal predictions.

We look forward to meeting with the Finance Committee in February to provide updates on our budget progress.

Kindest regards,

Carol L. Costello

Superintendent of Schools on behalf of the Berlin-Boylston Regional School Committee