

# One-Man/One-Vote

School Committee – November 12, 2014  
Updated from 2011

# HISTORY

- 1987 – State asks regionals to comply
- 1999 – District runs study circles on issue
- 2000 – Option of district-wide elections with 2 members per town, residency requirements fails to win 7 town approval
- 2002 – Weighted option with 2 members per town sent to towns
- 2003 –
  - Weighted vote gets 5 yes votes
  - Joe Boudreau and Dan Jacques form ad hoc committee
- 2004 – Ad hoc committee reports to school committee
- 2005 –
  - Montgomery becomes 7<sup>th</sup> town to vote yes but Worthington rescinds their yes vote two days prior to Montgomery meeting
  - School Committee seeks legislative solution, not moved forward
- 2009 – School Committee revisits issue
- 2010 – Legal counsel seeks input from State DESE
- 2011-2012 – School Committee to meet with towns and select one of five options to move forward for consideration at 2011 annual town meetings. School Committee votes to draft new amendment
- 2012-2013 – School Committee moves forward district-wide vote with residency requirements – was not ratified by 7 towns

## OPTIONS UNDER CHAPTER 71, SECTION 14E

1. Electing committee members by voters in member communities with each community's members representation apportioned according to population
2. Electing members in district-wide elections
3. Electing members in district-wide elections with residency requirements
4. Weighing the votes of committee members according to the population they represent
5. Appointing members by locally elected officials such as school board members

# ATTORNEY'S OPINION

- Most reasonable options, and those being used regularly throughout the state are:
  - District wide elections with residency requirements (Option #3)
  - Weighted votes with local town elections (Option #4)
- Both of these options have been accepted by DESE, including keeping the same town representation as currently under either choice

## OPTION 3 (DISTRICT-WIDE/RESIDENCY)

- Electing members with residency requirements in district-wide elections held during biennial state election.
  - Used by numerous regional districts in Mass
  - Regional agreement determines total numbers of committee members
  - Larger town could determine which candidate from a smaller town is elected to committee
  - No weighted vote required

## OPTION 4 (WEIGHTED VOTE)

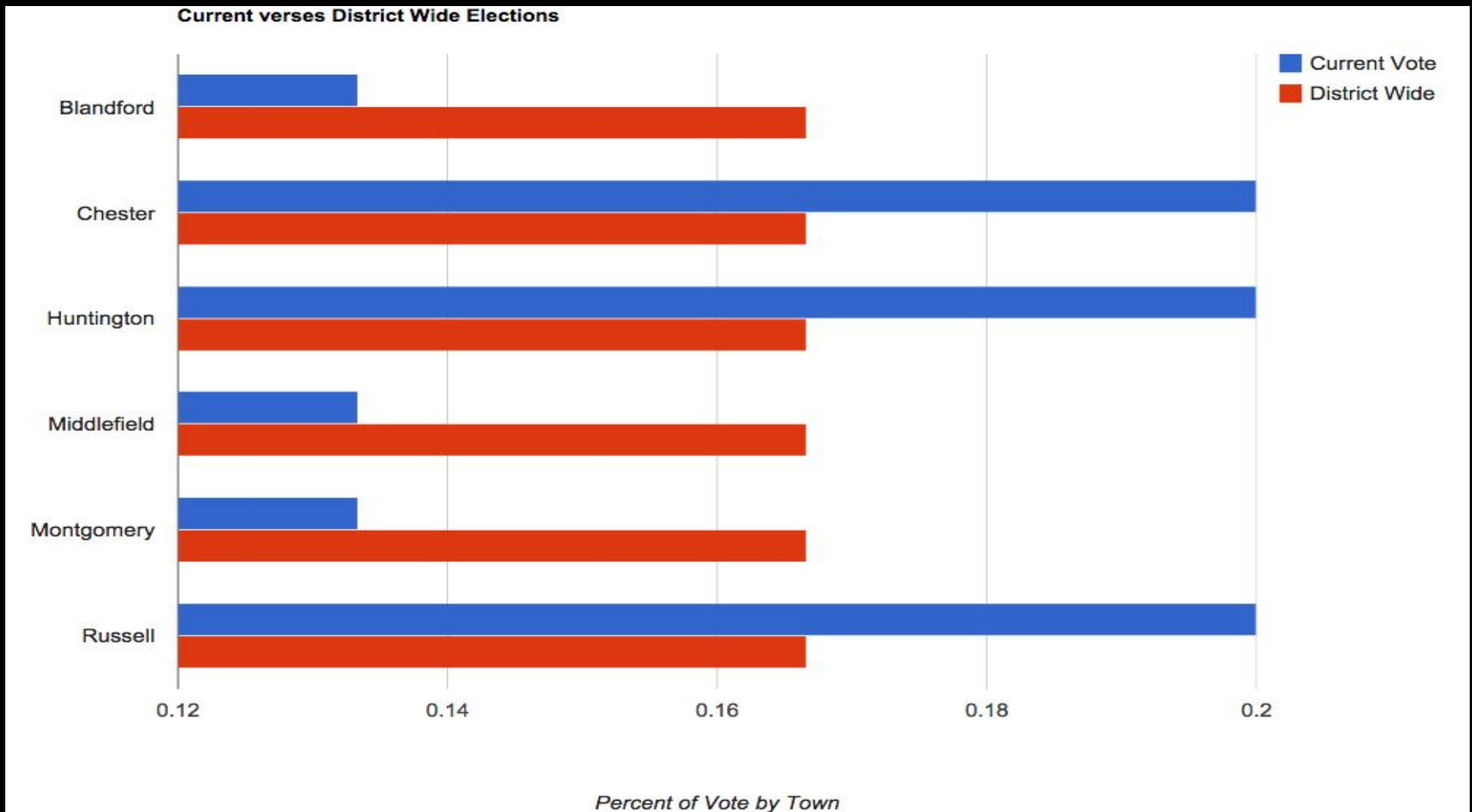
- Weighing the votes of committee members according to the population they represent
  - Used by many regional districts in Mass
  - Weighted vote may be by membership numbers or equal number of members with a weighted vote dependent on population by town
  - Members elected by the towns they serve

# COMPARING OPTIONS

If a 'quorum' is designated to be 50+% of vote, and 50+% of membership, and we move to have two members represent each of the remaining 6 towns, then:

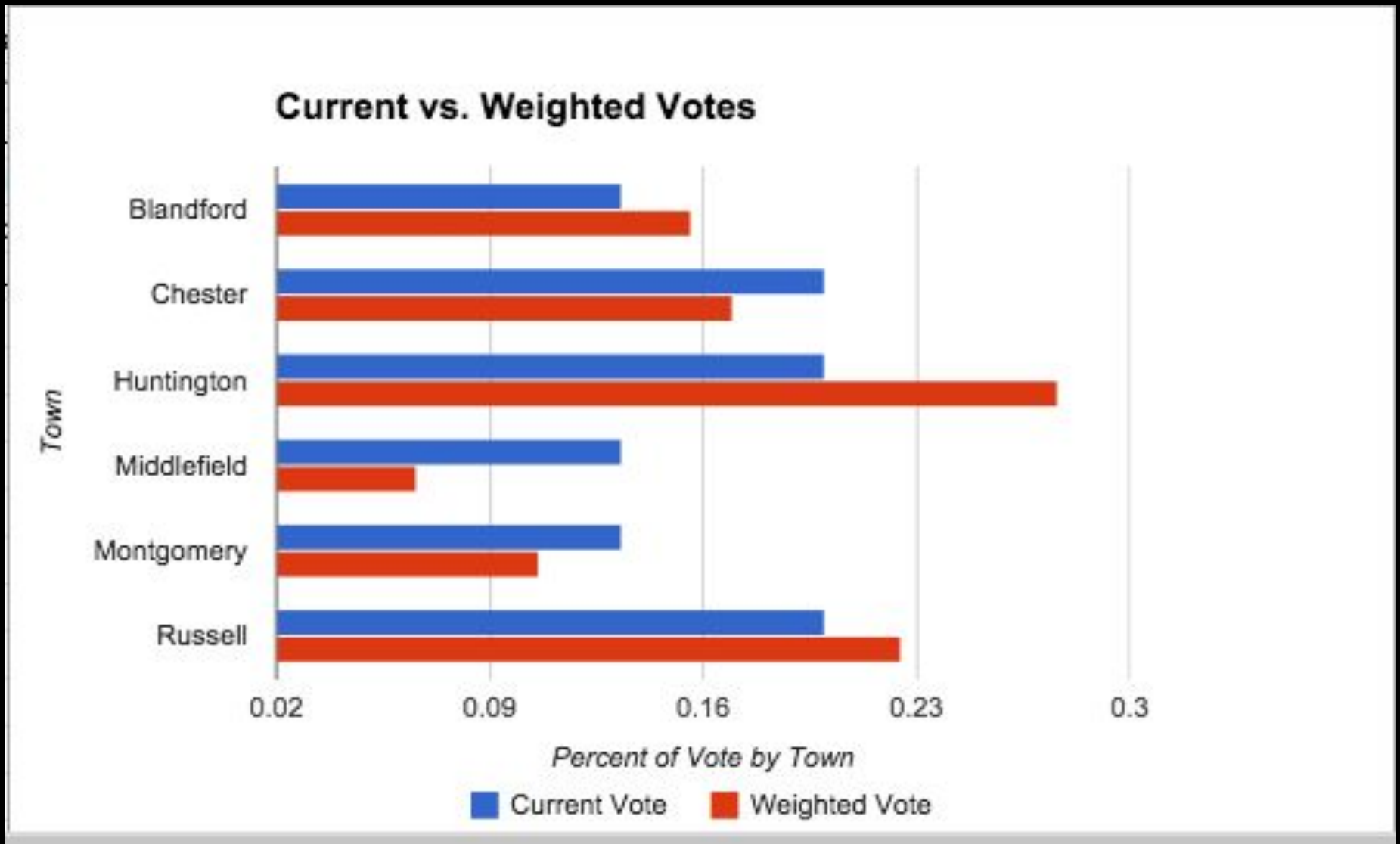
- Under the District-Wide/Residency option
  - The two biggest towns would not constitute a quorum
  - The four smaller towns would constitute a quorum
- Under the Weighted Vote Option
  - The two biggest towns, or the four smallest towns, would not constitute a quorum

# DIFFERENCE IN VOTING REPRESENTATION/WEIGHTS WITH 6 TOWNS AND 12 MEMBERS (OPTION 3 - DISTRICT-WIDE/RESIDENCY = EQUAL VOTING WEIGHTS DUE TO DISTRICT WIDE ELECTIONS WITH RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT) VS 15 MEMBERS





# DIFFERENCE IN VOTING REPRESENTATION/WEIGHTS WITH 6 TOWNS AND 12 MEMBERS (OPTION #4-WEIGHTED VOTES) VS 15 MEMBERS



## OPTIONS GATEWAY HAS PUT FORWARD

### District-Wide/Residency

(Option #3)

- Voters elect representatives from each town through district-wide vote
- No weighted votes
- Equal weight/number of representatives from each town
- Failed twice

### Weighted Vote (Option #4)

- Voters elect representatives from their town at their town elections
- Votes (and attendance for Quorum) are then weighted based on town population (census)
- Failed once (due to reconsideration)

THESE ARE THE TWO MOST FREQUENTLY USED BY OTHER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

# NEXT STEPS – QUESTIONS – RECOMMENDATIONS

- THE DESE IS RECOMMENDING THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE COMPLY WITH MGL C71,S14E
- SCHOOL COMMITTEE SHOULD MOVE FORWARD A POTENTIAL SOLUTION FOR MEMBER TOWN APPROVAL AS A REGIONAL AGREEMENT AMENDMENT
- BOTH WEIGHTED (ONCE) AND DISTRICT WIDE ELECTIONS WITH TOWN RESIDENCY (TWICE) HAVE FAILED
- WEIGHTED VOTE CAME CLOSEST TO PASSAGE WITH ALL TOWNS VOTING FOR IT AT ONE POINT