

**Forming a New Region
or
Making a Regional Change**

Massachusetts Association of Regional
Schools

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First Steps

- Keep in contact with DESE on the legal steps that must be followed.
- Establish a communication plan
- Establish a community relations plan
- What are the Legal Steps?

Steps to forming Regional School School District

Formation of Regional School District Planning Committee

- The regional school district planning committee is a special unpaid committee created by vote in town meeting. (See Appendix A) Its main purpose is to join with a similar committee (or committees) from other towns for the purpose of forming a regional school district planning board. The committee consists of three members, including one member of the school committee to be appointed by the moderator. (NOTE: An existing regional school district may create its own planning committee by following the terms in the regional agreement for initiating amendments.)

Steps to forming Regional School School District

Formation of Regional School District Planning Board

- The Regional School District Planning Board refers to the combination of two or more regional school district planning committees. The Board has the following duties:
- Elect chairperson and secretary-treasurer;
- Study fiscal and educational advisability of establishing a Regional School District, its organization, operation and control; and of constructing, maintaining and operating a school or schools to serve the needs of such a district;
- Develop a Long-Range Plan; *See Appendix D*
- Request *Reorganization Needs Conference* with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; *See Appendix D*
- Submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the selectmen of respective towns. *See Appendix B*

Steps to forming Regional School School District

Recommendation to form a Regional School District

- If the regional school district planning board recommends that a regional school district be established, it shall submit a proposed agreement. The agreement is the constitution under which the regional school district will operate. The Planning Board must then:
 - File an application* with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
 - Secure approval of towns at special or annual town meeting by printed ballots if a new agreement or, if required, for amending an existing agreement.

Steps to forming Regional School School District

*Regional School District Application**

- Record of Reorganization Needs Conference held with Department of Education staff.
- Long Range Educational Plan
- Regional School District Agreement.
- Certified votes of all appropriate municipalities or duly constituted authorities

Communication Plan

- Establish a communication process for the Regional School District Planning Committee Members or Planning Board
- Establish a communication process between the current Superintendents
- Establish a communication process between the School Committees
- Establish a communication process between the Selectmen and Finance Boards

Community Relations Plan

- Know the demographic of the communities
- Identify the leaders in each community
- What will it do for the education of the children?
- How can this change be a benefit to citizens who do not have children in the schools?

Community Relations Plan

- Have meetings with the parent groups and citizens at large
- Do focus group meetings
- Develop information on how the education for students will be improved

Community Relations Plan

- Provide them the financial information
- Involve the press in reporting on your meetings.
- Provide the press with press releases that you write

Regional Agreement

- From the focus groups, write your regional agreement or admendment
- The Regional Planning Committee, School Committees, Board of Selectmen, and Finance Boards need to be all involved and support the Regional Agreement or admendment that is finally drafted.
- Present the agreement or admendment to all demographic groups in the communities

Establish Process for Approval from the Towns

- Who will provide the information to the Communities
- Hold Informational meetings
- Brochures
- Campaign and Finance Laws
- Approval process in each town—Town Meetings

Next Steps

- Legal Process
- DESE
- Communication Plan
- Community Relations Plan
- Approval Plan

What to you want to Do?

- PreK – 6 District?
- High School students?
- Join another District?
- Need to define your choice