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# Amherst/Pelham Regionalization Study

— Implications of Potential K-6 Study —

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# Votes of Elected Officials

- The Pelham School Committee voted unanimously on August 3, 2017 to put the warrant article below on the Pelham Fall Town Meeting Agenda
- The Amherst School Committee voted unanimously on September 12, 2017 to put the warrant article below on the Amherst Fall Town Meeting Agenda

*Shall the Town of Pelham/Amherst form a Regional School District Planning Committee (RSDPC), consisting of three (3) members, one of whom must be a member of the school committee as per M.G.L. Chapter 71, Sections 14, 14A and 14B. The RSDPC may choose to join with a corresponding Committee(s) from another town(s) to form a Regional School District Planning Board (the Board). The purpose of the Board is to perform a detailed exploration of and recommendation as to forming a Regional School District for our K-6 school.*

# Rationale of Completing a K-6 Regionalization Study

- Both districts are facing upcoming financial challenges and are looking for new external revenue streams to maintain essential educational programming
- Both districts currently share a Central Office, including Superintendent, Human Resources, Information Systems, Curriculum, Facilities and Business Office functions.
- The study is not a commitment to regionalize, but simply an exploration to understand the implications for both towns of this option with real data.
- The prior Regionalization study involved four towns studying the revision of an existing Regional agreement with a change to a K-12 system; the proposed study is significantly different in terms of the scope, the number of towns involved, and lack of connection to any existing Regional agreements or the Regional secondary school district in general.

# If both warrant articles pass, what happens?

- A Regional School District Planning Board will be formed. According to MGL, each town will have 3 members, one of which must be a member of the School Committee. All members are appointed by the Town Meeting Moderator.
- The Board studies regionalization, focusing on issues such as finances, governance, and educational implications.
- The Board submits a draft Plan to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for feedback
- The Board submits its recommendation and (if consistent with the recommendation) draft Regional Agreement to the School Committee and Board of Selectmen in each town
- Local officials in each town can choose to place the Regional Agreement on their Town Meeting warrant
- If passed in both towns, the Regional Agreement goes back to DESE for final approval

# Major Areas of Focus for a K-6 Regionalization Study

## **Governance** *(examples below)*

- Regional School Committee  
Composition
- Voting districts for Regional School Committee elections
- Required voting majority needed for votes that affect one town more than the other
- Staff seniority and transfer rights
- Implications for 7-12 Regional District with potential sunseting of Union 26

## **Educational** *(examples below)*

- Enrollment zones for each community
- Implications for school choice students and policy between two towns
- Student transportation

## **Financial** *(examples below)*

- Formula for assessments to members towns
- Split of new revenue between member towns
- Prior debt payments (such as MSBA payments)

# Potential Financial Impact

Approximate financial savings to be shared among towns:

- \$240,000 transportation reimbursement (annually)
- \$63,650 (Bonus aid phased out over a few years)