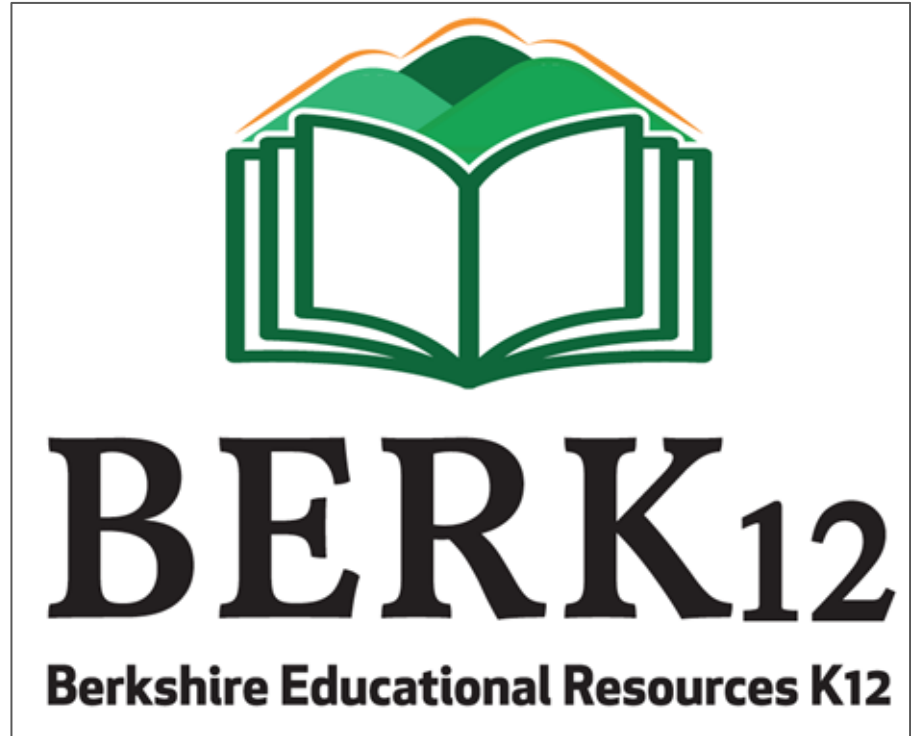


# Our solution.

January 10, 2026

[www.berk12.org](http://www.berk12.org)



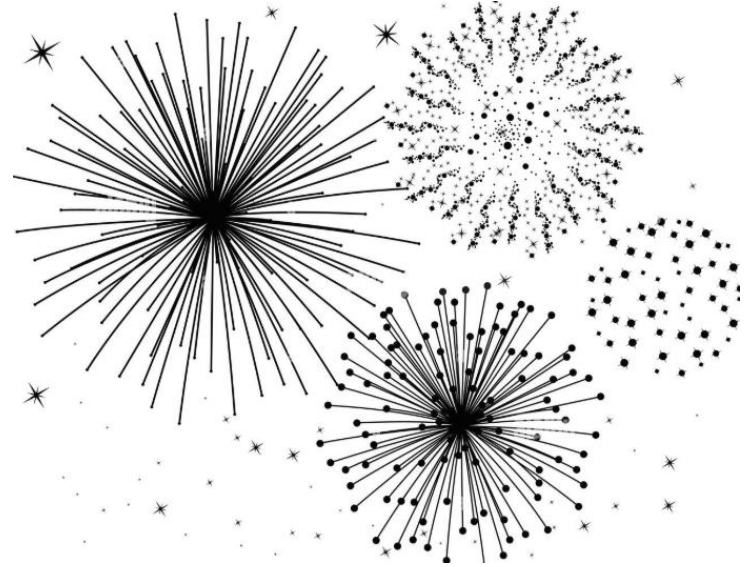
***We bring school and community partners together***



...new starts, high hopes!

# Topics

1. Call to order (B. Cameron)
2. Introductions/welcome (B. Cameron)
3. Approval of minutes
4. Updates from Chair and Exec. Committee (B. Cameron, J. Eberwein)
  - Advocacy for FY27 funding – next steps
  - Rural aid and other pressing issues
  - Note about CPPI funding
5. Budget & funding update (J. Eberwein)
  - FY26 Earmark
  - FY26 Funding/Budget spending plan
  - FY26 Project/Funding Prospects, update
  - Update on contracts, FY26
6. BERK12 Working Domains
  - A. Collaborative projects
    - Portrait of a Graduate: (B. Sheran)
    - BRAINworks: (L. Donovan)
    - Other
  - B. Professional development (W. Ballen, J. Rush, Team)
    - County-wide PD, Update on potential 2026 changes
    - Updates:
      - Mentoring & induction
      - AI “watch”
      - Professional learning networks
      - Paraprofessional training
      - PAL and other PD considerations
  - C. Networking & advocacy (Team)
    - Convening (March 20, 2026 at BCC) – draft agenda and invite
    - BSTA & related efforts
    - Website update
    - Ongoing BERK12 promotion
  - D. Research towards partnerships (J. Eberwein, Team)
    - Mohawk Trail – Hawlemont: Phase III – WORK UPDATE
    - Rowe – Task I Introductory Study - COMPLETED
    - 6 District Partnership (Gill-Pioneer) Support – COMPLETED, ADVISING
    - North Berkshire County Sustainability Study – PREPARING PROPOSAL
    - Other (conversations on restructuring, leadership support, targeted PD)
7. Items raised by BERK12 members (B. Cameron)
8. Public participation ((B. Cameron)
9. Determination of date for next meeting (B. Cameron)
10. Adjournment



## Our aims

A photograph of four light-colored wooden blocks with dark numbers, arranged to spell out the year '2026'. The blocks are set against a dark blue, textured background. The lighting creates soft shadows to the right of each block.

**Berkshire Educational Resources K-12 (BERK12)** brings together districts and community partners to ensure access to high-quality educational experiences across Western Massachusetts.

In light of *declining enrollment and stretched resources* (people and dollars), we believe that connecting partners is imperative to improving student outcomes and the social, cultural, and economic conditions throughout Berkshire County.

# DECLINE IN ENROLLMENT

The diagram is enclosed in a large orange border. At the top, the text 'DECLINE IN ENROLLMENT' is centered. Two vertical arrows point downwards from this text to two overlapping light green boxes. The left box is labeled 'MONEY' and contains the text 'Rising fiscal liability to towns'. The right box is labeled 'COHORT' and contains the text 'Challenge to maintain educational (academic programs, enrichment, services & supports)'. Between these two boxes is a central column labeled 'IMPACTS' which lists 'Students', 'Staff', and 'Towns'. The boxes and the central column are all contained within a larger blue-outlined rectangle.

## MONEY

*Rising fiscal liability to towns*

### IMPACTS

Students  
Staff  
Towns

## COHORT

*Challenge to maintain educational  
(academic programs, enrichment,  
services & supports)*

# **MISSION**

**Our mission** is to support Berkshire County school districts, educators, and community partners by collaboratively offering solutions to short and long-term issues, in order to promote high quality public education, which all children deserve, regardless of background or circumstance.

We are thinking and planning for the future!

**We are Berkshire County's most comprehensive cross-sector organization focused on education!**

# QUOTE OF THE MONTH!



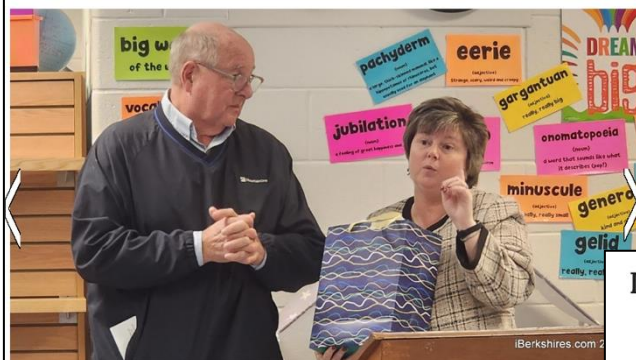
As Hancock Elementary School enrollment drops, a legislative tweak could open door to school choice students

Our Opinion: Legislative fix to school choice is a welcome tweak that nevertheless underscores tougher questions

Berkshire Eagle, Editorial – Dec 13, 2025

*“Districts “compete” for students and the additional aid that comes with attracting them. In practice, it can create a vicious cycle for districts like Pittsfield facing socioeconomic challenges that neighboring communities don’t.”*





Mayor Jennifer Macksey presents a gift to departing School Committee member Richard Alcombricht Tuesday's committee meeting.

# NEWS

## Clarksburg Looking to Reduce Costs of North Berkshire School Union

By Tammy Daniels

iBerkshires Staff

05:43PM / Tuesday, January 06, 2026

[Print Story](#) | [Email Story](#)

CLARKSBURG, Mass. — The Select Board on Monday discussed its planned presentation to Thursday's North Berkshire School Union "super committee."

## If passing MCAS replacement exams won't be a graduation requirement, what will their role be? Educators and lawmakers seek answers

By Greg Sukernik, The Berkshire Eagle | Jan 6, 2025 | 4 min to read

### EDUCATION

## MSBA accepts Gill-Montague, Mohawk Trail into eligibility phase for school construction projects

by Madison Schofield | December 15, 2025



## Central Berkshire Navigating AI in Education

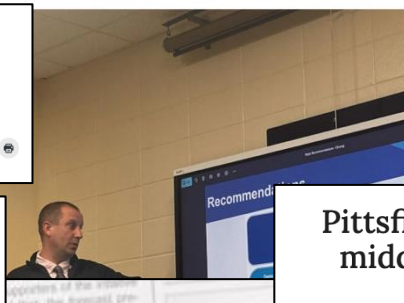
By Sabrina Damms

iBerkshires Staff

05:59AM / Monday, December 29, 2025

[Print Story](#) | [Email Story](#)

DALTON, Mass. — The Central Berkshire Regional School District is researching artificial intelligence and practice.



## Pittsfield School Committee gives go-ahead for middle school changes — but can the district make it work?

By Greg Sukernik, The Berkshire Eagle | Dec 13, 2025 | 6 min to read



### EDUCATION

## Straw poll indicates Rowe not in favor of joining school sustainability study with Mohawk Trail, Hawlemont



by Madison Schofield | December 17, 2025





# Community Feedback Essential During Ed Collaborative

By Sabrina Damms

*iBerkshires Staff*

05:29AM / Tuesday, January 06, 2026

[Print Story](#) | [Email Story](#)

CHESHIRE, Mass. — Ensuring everyone's voices are heard will be a constant during all stages of exploring secondary education collaborative efforts to achieve long-term sustainability in North Berkshire.

Hoosac Valley Regional School District Superintendent Aaron Dean presented an update to at the Select Board last meeting of 2025 on the collaboration to pool resources and explore the possibility of regionalizing the three high schools and the elementary districts in the North Berkshire School Union.

"I think it's something that we have to make sure we bring everybody's voice to the table and bring everybody's concerns to the table through this, so we do it the right way and we don't have a bad taste in people's mouths as we go and take those next steps," he said.

"The communities have learned from some history, unfortunately, on how things have gone. So, I think we have to be mindful of that and kind of make sure that there's a high level of engagement as we go through the process."

NBSU, Hoosac Valley, North Adams Public Schools and the Mount Greylock Regional School District are in the initial stages of the initiative that may take three to five years to complete, he said.

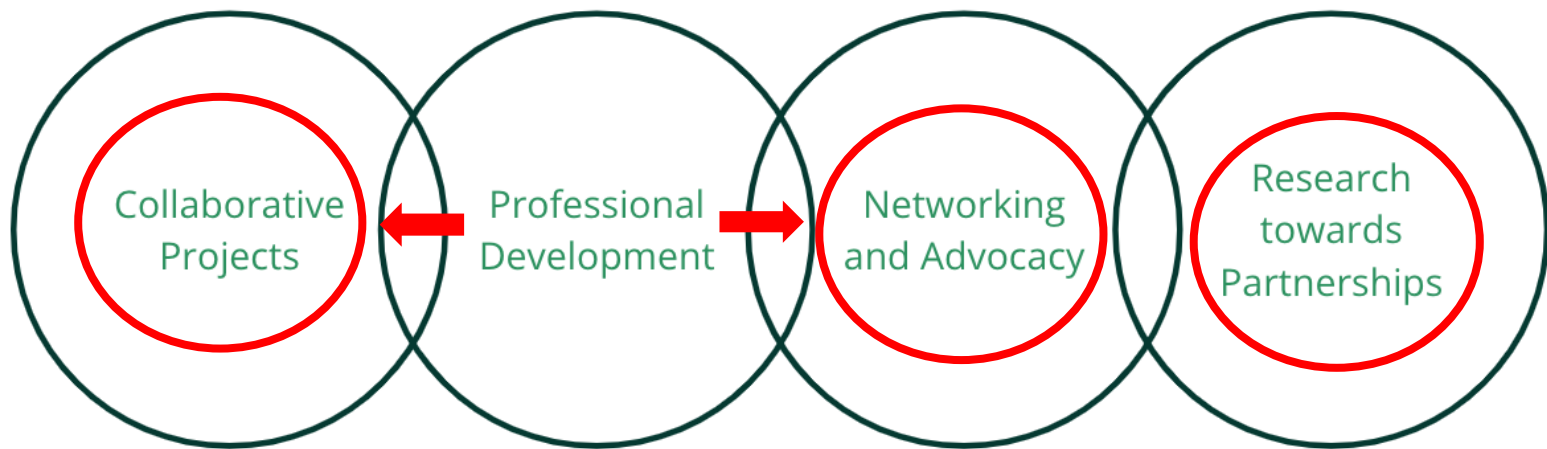
"It's really looking at what are some models, and maybe even what are some different models of regionalization that the communities could utilize, that might be most effective in terms of providing opportunities for kids," Dean said.

With a \$100,000 state grant that Dean referred to as "seed money," the task force [has issued a request for proposals \(RFP\)](#) to hire a consultant. The [bids are due](#) by 4 p.m. on Jan. 20. The resulting study will guide next steps with the goal of maximizing funding and resources while reducing pressure on communities.

More on that...to come.

# How We Work

We bring educators & community partners together through:



+ TARGETED SOLUTIONS (BY DISTRICT/ORGANIZATION)

Increase district capacity

*In order to:*

***TO HELP SCHOOLS MAKE BETTER WHAT CURRENTLY EXISTS.***

***TO HELP EXPLORE WHAT COULD BE.***

*By facilitating:*

- Greater fiscal efficiency
- Greater educational effectiveness
- Greater access, opportunity & equity for students

*Resulting in:*

**The highest quality education across the Berkshires that provides all children with a broad array of high-quality and developmentally appropriate educational opportunities that will enable them to successfully complete postsecondary degrees and/or become productive members of the workforce and citizens in a democratic society.**

**Success**

# CHAIR/EXEC/PM

- Advocacy for FY27 funding – next steps
- Rural aid and other pressing issues
- Note about CPPI funding
- Close out call with Barr Exit (A. Gross)



*Line 7010-1192: provided further, that not less than \$150,000 shall be expended to Berkshire Educational Resources K-12 to perform regionalization and efficiency work with public school districts in Berkshire county and with the Mohawk Trail regional school district in Franklin county.*



## **FUNDING AND BUDGET**

# BUDGET UPDATES:

- **FY25 is closed out**

- FY25 Earmark Report can be accessed [HERE](#).

- **FY26 Revenue (in-hand, or very close by)**

- **FY26 Earmark**
- Barr Portrait (year 2 of 3)
- ~~Barr Exit (will be spent down by Jan 2026) Report~~
- Feigenbaum
- District Agreements
- Various contracts (mentoring, induction, etc.)
- BRAINworks (Berkshire Taconic, Mill Town)
- Carry over MISC/Revolving
- Mohawk-Trail/Hawlemont – **Phase III: NOT ALL FUNDS**
- District Attorney grant
- BUW (for convening)

- **Prospects, FY26**

- Northern Berkshire Sustainability
- Additional CPPI work (In Pittsfield or other communities)
- Professional Development
- Other restructuring/consolidation district needs
- Targeted projects – for example, emergency planning

## Current contracts:

J. Eberwein, 2D8T, BERK12  
B. Sheran: 2D8T, Barr Portrait (only), BERK12 (coming)  
J. Rush: 2D8T, BERK12 support, Mentoring, Induction  
H. Marshall: Mentoring, Induction  
B. Ballen: BERK12 (Feig/Earmark)  
L. Donovan: BRAINworks  
L. Appleget: BRAINworks  
Vendors/faculty-staff – various projects  
Hanover Research: 2D8T

## Upcoming/needed contracts:

M. Nash: 2D8T/BERK12  
Other subcontractors (Odyssey, Abrahams, etc.)

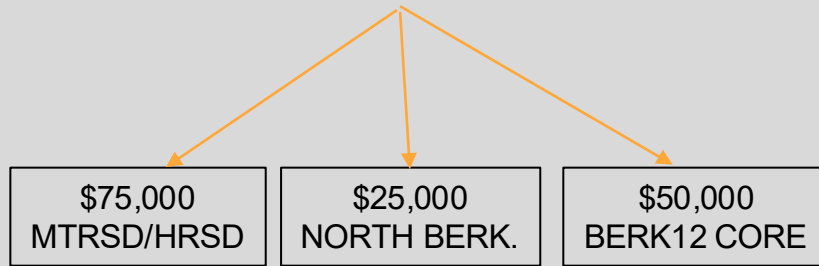
## Banked/Project specific:

Banked: Website, grants, finance  
Needed: Public relations, actuarial, field/lit.,  
legal, grants, transportation – as projects  
emerge

FULL FINANCIAL REVIEW IN MID-JAN



## FY26 EARMARK \$150,000



### \$50,000 core

- BERK12 backbone
- Convening
- PLN/SA
- Website/Dashboard
- Public relations
- Supplies/Travel

# FY2026 Projects

## YES/LIKELY

- Mohawk Trail – Hawlemont Sustainability, Phase III
- Barr Portrait of a Graduate – Year 2 of 3
- November PD Day
- New Teacher Induction/Mentor Training
- Teacher gatherings & low-cost PD
- Website/Dashboard
- BRAINworks (BTCF) – THRU DECEMBER 2025
- Networks (BSTA)
- Ongoing advocacy efforts (for example, rural network)
- 6 Town Partnership (support for community engagement/campaign)
- View book (develop and print)
- Rowe Task I
- Convening
- Professional Learning Networks

## MAYBE

- Northern Berkshire Sustainability (FY26 Earmarks)
- Other restructuring/consolidation district needs
- Study-Action Teams

## FUNDING DEPENDENT

- Additional CPPI or “like” work (In Pittsfield or other communities)
- Other restructuring/consolidation district needs
- Other Professional Development



Work Domains

---

Research Towards Partnerships

---

Collaborative Projects

---

Professional Development

---

Networking and Advocacy

# Research Towards Partnerships

Mohawk Trail-Hawlemont  
Rowe  
Northern Berkshire Districts



Link to last  
slide deck, [HERE](#)

## **AGENDA, JAN 8, 2026**

- I. Review of Minutes from December 18, 2025
- II. Eligibility and Key Next Steps
  - Regional Agreement Process
  - Timeline Revision
- III. Hanover Group: Community Impact Study Parameters
- IV. Update on Other Current Areas of Focus
  - Educational Visioning
  - Pre-K
  - Transportation
  - Financial Advisory
- V. Budget/Finance Update
- VI. Public Comment
- VII. Next Meeting

# ASPIRATION:

**Combine districts and organize into a single, PreK-12 campus at MTRS.**



*will occur over time*

## **2D8T STEERING COMMITTEE/MTRSD & HRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

### **STEP I**

- **Create a single district**, merging Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont, with one school committee.
- **Combine all Grade 6 students into a reorganized middle school** (Grades 6-8) at MTRS.
- **Consolidate some combination of elementary schools**, with assignment of elementary students by geography (closest school) rather than strictly by town lines.
- **Apply to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for funding** to create/remodel space(s) on the MTRS campus for elementary school use.

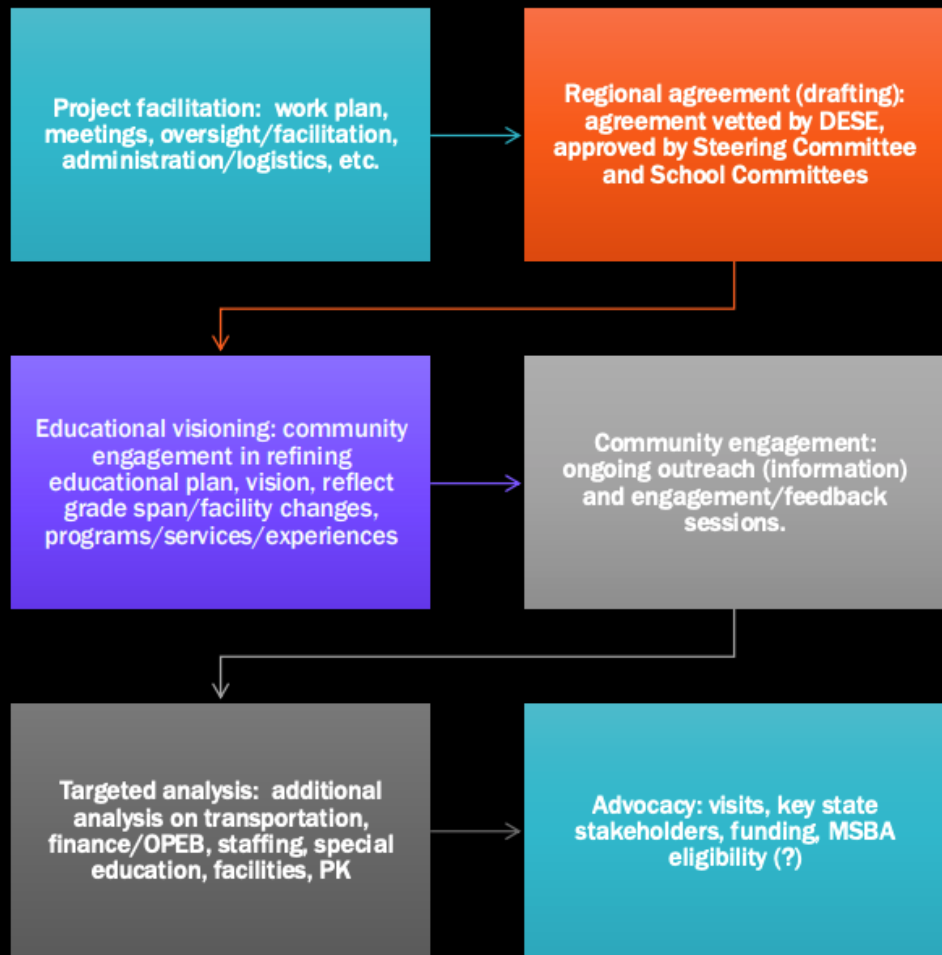
### **STEP II**

- **Move all elementary grades to the remodeled/newly constructed spaces** on the MTRS campus.

**[PLAN OF ACTION](#)**

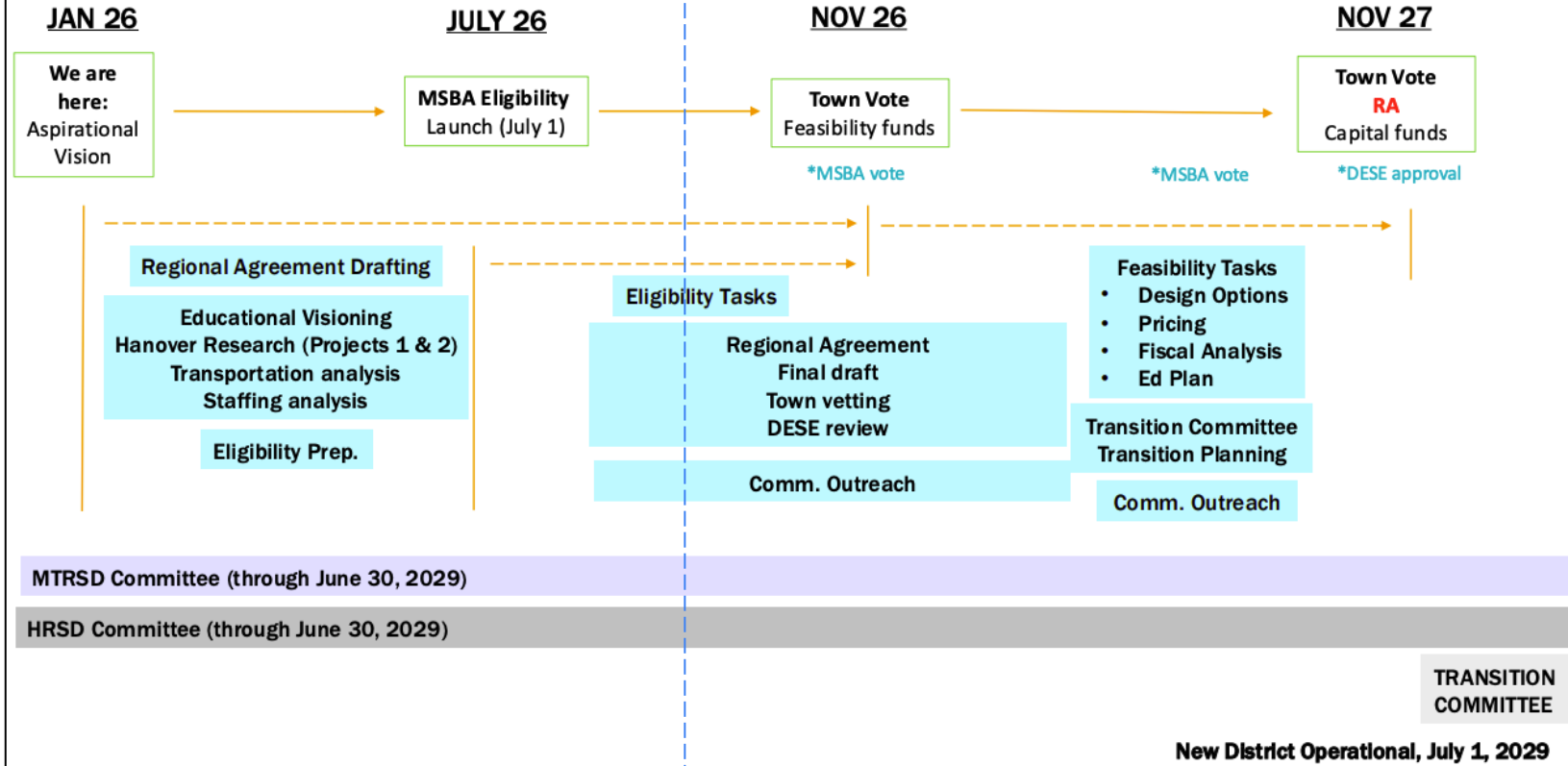


# WORK PLAN – (6) TASK AREAS

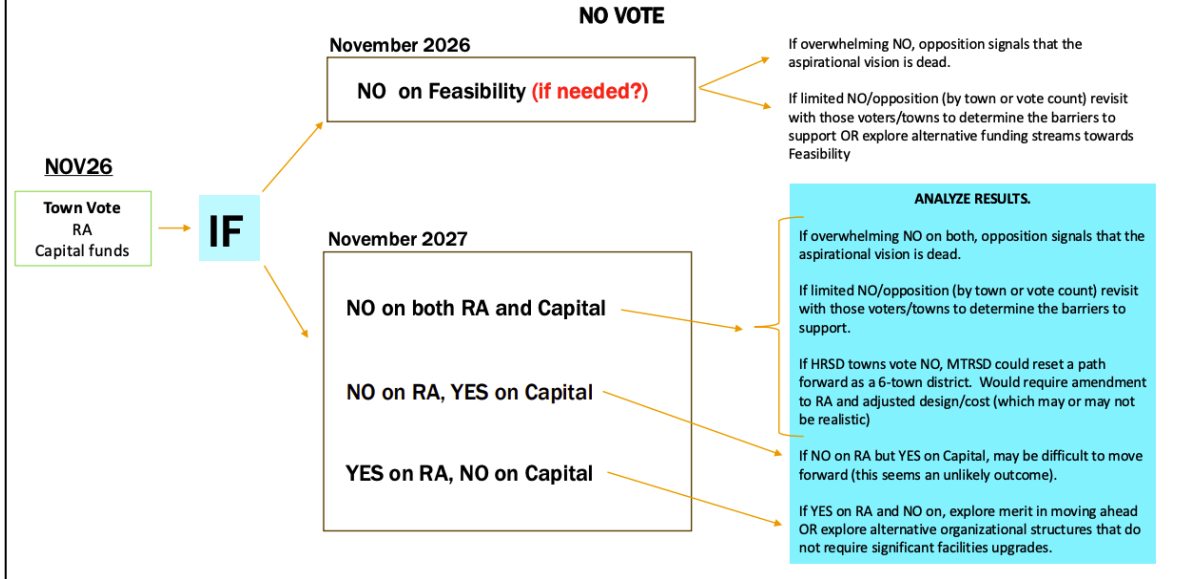


<b>AREA OF ANALYSIS/WORK</b>	<b>PROGRESS (in no particular order)</b>
<b>REGIONAL AGREEMENT</b>	Draft is in progress, 1.8.26 overview and review of decision points. Committee reviews sections starting in late-Jan/early-Feb
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	Baseline completed, single tier is completed, memo is completed. Share with Committee 1.8.26
<b>STAFFING</b>	No movement since last meeting. District has organized information, BERK12 will review.
<b>FACILITIES</b>	No movement since last meeting. BERK12 will organize an updated brief: 1) Best practices, 2) Case studies, 3) What we heard
<b>ECONOMICS/SOCIAL IMPACT</b>	Hanover is contracted. Discussion of key questions, launch on Jan 26, 2026.
<b>PREK</b>	Overview provided 12.18.25 – refer to Educational Visioning
<b>FINANCE</b>	On hold pending more information for updated runs that include capital, enrollment, updated district budgets, etc. Will also need to consider OPEB at some point.
<b>ROWE</b>	Task I completed – status update provided 12.18.25
<b>MSBA</b>	Module #1 completed. Update to Committee on 12.18.25. Launch of Eligibility in July 2026.
<b>COMMUNITY OUTREACH</b>	Fall meetings completed, reported 12.18.25. Advisory is building a 3-6 month plan

## CALENDAR BENCHMARK #1B: RA VOTE - NOV 2027



## CALENDAR BENCHMARK #1B: RA VOTE - NOV 2027



### PLUS

- Design and cost of capital will be known prior to RA vote
- No need to have unwind provisions as RA and capital will be voted at same point
- Longer runway to vet RA
- More transition time prior to launch of new district (July 2029)

### MINUS

- Two years out, concern about maintaining momentum
- Could stall if feasibility vote fails
- Adds another year before new district is launched (July 2029)
- Funding for another year for project support
- Finances could be challenging leading up to consolidation savings

## **I Regional School District**

Type or model of Regional District (grade configuration)

## **II. School Committee**

Composition of Regional School Committee

Terms of office

Voting procedures/voting weights for School Committee members

Filling vacancies on the School Committee

Electing officers on the School Committee

Powers of the School Committee

Quorum and supermajority votes

## **III. Students**

Assignment, tuition, out-of-district

## **IV. Location of Schools**

Identify current school facilities

Ownership (lease) arrangements

Process to close a school

## **V. Budget**

Process for budget hearing and approval

Procedures for use of budget funds

Amendments

Payment schedule

## **VI. Apportionment of Costs**

Operating, transportation, capital

Assessment to towns

## **VII. Incurring of Debt**

Process for approval (16d or 16n)

## **VIII. Transportation**

## **IX. Amendments**

Procedures to change or amend the Regional Agreement

## **X. Admission of New Towns**

Procedures to withdraw from the region or admit a new member

## **XI. Withdrawal of Towns**

Obligations

## **XII. Annual Report**

Updates/documentation to towns

## **XIII. Review of Agreement**

Requirement to review regional agreement at specified intervals (not a legal requirement)

## **XIV. Transition Period**

If needed, if a new district is forming allows for statutory transition period

## **SECTION II: DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

### **A. Composition**

The powers and duties of the District shall be vested in and exercised by a sixteen (16) member Committee, with two (2) residents of each member town. Members shall serve until their respective successor members are elected and qualified.

*Decision Point: Note, this is how the current school committee is composed. The number of representatives could be adjusted by population in order to avoid weighted voting. This decision will affect a variety of provisions in this article. Key questions:*

- *How many school committee members total? Not too big in order to avoid issues of quorum, membership, efficiency.*
- *How many resident members from each town? Members who live in and represent the town.*
- *Will any "at large" be considered? Members who are selected by district-wide election and can be from any town.*
- *How long are terms (range from 2 to 4 years)? If aligned with biennial state elections, and for the purpose of staggering terms at launch of district, 4-year terms would allow for that.*
- *Will voting be "by-town" or "district-wide"? Town votes can happen at annual meetings, while district-wide must occur at state biennial elections.*

*See Appendix I for additional information.*

### **B. Elected members**

In every year in which the term of office of an elected member expires, each member town involved shall, at its annual town election, **select one member** to serve on the Committee for a term of three years. *The election of the initial School Committee is described in XIV.*

*Decision point: This could be changed to 2 or 4 year terms where voting occurs at state biennial elections.*

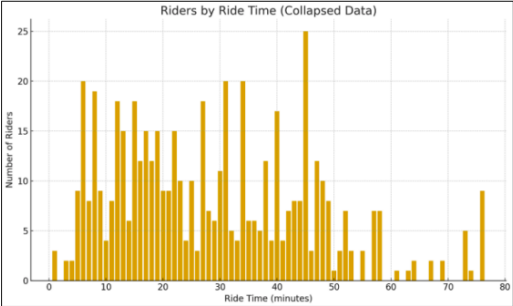
Each elected member shall have a **weighted vote** to be determined by the member town's population as it relates to the total population of all member towns divided by the number of representatives to the Committee from said member town. Each weighted vote shall be determined to the nearest one-tenth and be adjusted every ten (10) years using the population figures as reported in the most recent federal decennial census.

*Decision point: This could be changed depending on the final decision about size of Committee and how representation will be determined.*

# CURRENT TWO-TIER SYSTEM

ALL RIDERS	%	NUMBER
Over 60 minutes	4.3%	23
30 - 60 minutes	40.2%	215
Under 30 minutes	55.5%	297
<b>TOTAL RIDERS</b>		<b>535</b>
<b>ALL, AVERAGE RIDE TIME (TRAVEL TIME ON BUS)</b>		<b>29.1 MINUTES</b>

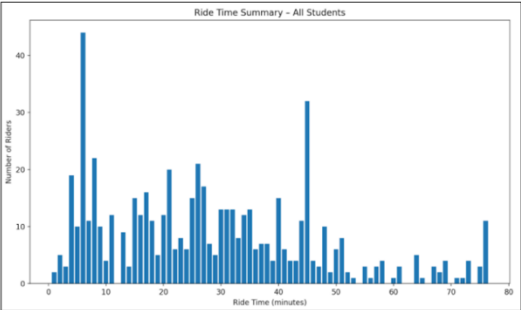
ALL



# SINGLE TIER, SINGLE CAMPUS

ALL RIDERS	%	NUMBER
Over 60 minutes	6.5%	38
30 - 60 minutes	37.3%	219
Under 30 minutes	56.2%	330
<b>TOTAL RIDERS</b>		<b>587</b>
<b>ALL, AVERAGE RIDE TIME (TRAVEL TIME ON BUS)</b>		<b>28.2 MINUTES</b>

← COMPARE TO 29.1





# TRANSPORTATION, CURRENT TWO TIER VERSUS SINGLE TIER, SINGLE CAMPUS

	CURRENT TWO TIER, 5 SCHOOLS			SINGLE CAMPUS, SINGLE TIER			
	ALL	MTRS 7-12	ALL ELEM K-6	ALL	MTRS 7-12	ALL ELEM K-6	K-3
Over 60	4.3%	7.5%	0.0%	6.5%	9.2%	3.5%	5.3%
Over 30	40.2%	37.1%	44.3%	37.3%	38.0%	36.6%	36.2%
Under 30	55.5%	55.4%	55.7%	56.2%	52.8%	59.9%	58.6%
<b>TOTAL RIDERS</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>AVERAGE (MINUTES)</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>26.5</b>

## BROAD FINDINGS

- Systemwide average ride times remain broadly comparable
- Changes in averages are driven by short rides rather than compression of long routes
- Long ride times are concentrated among a small number of students
- Elementary ride times improve on average but show greater variation
- Impacts are shaped more by geography than by tier structure
- A single-tier, consolidated system has the potential to produce a simpler and more efficient transportation network

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Long rides for young students are identifiable and potentially mitigable
- Operational efficiency and equity/age appropriate considerations operate on different scales
- Transportation outcomes should be considered alongside broader goals
- Impact of all students, varying ages in grades K-12, riding on the same bus
- Contractual/Transportation Contractor factors should be further explored

# Educational Visioning Draft Timeline



## **DOCUMENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:**

- [PLAN OF ACTION](#)
- [UPDATED ENROLLMENT REPORT](#)
- [COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN](#)
- [WHITE PAPER ON SCHOOL CLOSURES/REGIONALIZATION](#)
- [TALKING POINTS](#)
- [HISTORICAL SUMMARY](#)
- [DRIVING QUESTIONS](#)
- [TOWN TO-DO LIST – REGIONAL AGREEMENTS](#)

# Rowe community meeting

December 11, 2025



## Why are we here?

Currently, most neighboring communities are engaged in regionalization studies, either new or a restructuring of existing.

Given that Rowe School District isn't a participant in these determinations but will be operationally impacted by them it is imperative that the Rowe School Committee **proactively engages the community** to inform them of these adjacent activities and seek feedback and broad guidance on actions the Committee should take to ensure the continued educational success of current and future students.

**Susan Zavotka**, *Chair Rowe School Committee*  
**John Franzoni**, *Superintendent, NBSU*

## ROWE: TASK I STUDY

### Objectives of Task I

We anticipate the following will be accomplished in Task I, BERK12 will:

1. Prepare a concise overview of Rowe's **district baseline profile** (enrollment, staffing, finances, educational quality, student performance, etc.).
2. Host opportunities for community engagement, including **two focus groups** (faculty/staff and parents/families) and a **community meeting**.
3. Organize and facilitate the **community meeting** to review baseline and engagement findings, and discuss the possibility of Rowe joining the nine-town region.
4. Conduct a **straw/non-binding poll** to measure readiness and community sentiment regarding participation in the 2D8T study.
5. Identify areas where **additional data or information** may be required before advancing to Task II.

DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> – FACILITATED COMMUNITY MEETING

**? DECISION TO MOVE AHEAD WITH 2D8T?**

## ^ ROWE SCHOOL

### THIS AREA PROVIDES INFORMATION RELATED TO THE ROWE TASK I STUDY:

[COMMUNITY MEETING, SLIDE DECK: DEC 11, 2025](#)

[ENROLLMENT BRIEF](#)

[FINANCE BRIEF](#)

[STAFFING BRIEF](#)

[TRANSPORTATION BRIEF](#)

[FACILITIES BRIEF](#)

[EDUCATION REPORT](#)

[FLYER FOR FOCUS GROUPS, SURVEY AND COMMUNITY CONVENING \(RELEASED 11.18.25\)](#)

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## INTRODUCTION

Rowe is a school community with many **enduring strengths**—strong relationships, a modern and well-maintained facility, dedicated staff, and consistent local investment. At the same time, the district faces the common pressures confronting small rural schools: declining resident enrollment, high per-pupil costs, underutilized space, limited educational offerings tied to small cohort sizes, and operational vulnerabilities inherent to scale. **These factors should be weighed carefully within the broader regional planning context.**

6

8

4

VOTE	WHAT YOUR VOTE MEANS	CONSIDERATIONS
YES	<p><b>You support Rowe joining the Sustainability Study</b>, organized by Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont, which explores creating a single PreK–12 regional district with all students eventually located on one shared campus at MTRS.</p> <p>All current elementary schools—including Rowe—would ultimately close, with students consolidated into a single campus/school at MTRS.</p>	<p>Rowe would need to raise additional funds to participate in the study.</p> <p>Rowe would join the Steering Committee as planning continues for a potential single regional district and single PreK–12 campus at MTRS.</p> <p>The study and planning process will occur over the next 12–18 months and would culminate in a “regional agreement” that must pass by majority vote in each participating town.</p>
NO	<p><b>You do not support Rowe joining the Sustainability Study</b>, organized by Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont.</p>	<p>Rowe will continue operating as it does now.</p> <p>The challenges presented—related to enrollment, finance, and educational opportunities—will remain.</p> <p>Neighboring districts may move forward with their own regionalization plans, which could affect Rowe’s long-term options.</p>
NOT SURE	<p>You do not feel you have enough information to support or oppose joining the study <u>at this time</u>.</p> <p>You want to continue researching and exploring alternate options.</p>	<p>If Mohawk Trail, Hawlemont, or other Northern Berkshire districts reorganize in the future, there may still be an opportunity for Rowe to “join” at a later stage.</p> <p>Fully evaluating all potential pathways will require additional study—either conducted by the school/town or by external consultants.</p>

## Request for Proposals:

### North Berkshire Secondary Sustainability Study

26 Union Street, STE 1A, North Adams, Massachusetts 01247 Ph: (413) 664-9292

John Franzoni, Superintendent of Schools NBSU

December 18, 2025

This document and the Sustainability Study Scope of Services are available to all interested proposers at the North Berkshire School Union Central Office at 26 Union Street STE 1A, North Adams, MA 01247, or upon request to [cburnett@nbsunion.com](mailto:cburnett@nbsunion.com).

#### Introduction

##### General

The North Berkshire School Union, North Adams Public Schools, Hoosac Valley Regional School District, and Mount Greylock Regional School District invite qualified consultants to submit proposals to conduct a comprehensive Sustainability Study focused on grades 6–12. The purpose of this study is to evaluate long-term sustainability options that maintain or enhance educational quality, diverse programming, and fiscal efficiency through shared services, program consolidation, and/or regional collaboration.

This work will be done in collaboration with a Steering Committee composed of four representatives from each District, representing School Committees, town or municipal government, and community representation from each town or city, with the superintendents of each entity serving *ex officio* as non-voting advisory members.

##### Objectives

The objectives of the study include:

1. Assessing current and projected enrollment, programs, staffing, facilities, and finances for secondary education across the four districts, identifying strengths, opportunities, challenges, and inefficiencies.
2. Facilitating transparent, inclusive stakeholder engagement, prioritizing and incorporating community identity in collaboration with the Steering Committee.
3. Identifying at least four realistic sustainability models with a focus on the secondary level. These models may follow past practice of regionalization efforts or employ creative, innovative solutions. Models may include shared services, grade reconfiguration, and/or regionalization.
4. Forecasting legal, fiscal, operational, programmatic, and governance implications of each proposed model for discussion with the Steering Committee.
5. Synthesizing findings into a comprehensive report.

## Due Jan 20, 2026

- Focus on grades 6-12
- 12-month runway
- Funds current: \$125,000
- Includes:
  - Project initiation/data collection
  - Baseline analysis
  - Community engagement
  - Option development
  - Final recommendations/implementation

*Feedback: This will take longer than one year*



# Rough plan

16 months (March 26 – June 27)



- **Phase I (This Proposal): Engagement, Baseline, and Options Development**  
Phase I focuses on inclusive community engagement, high-level baseline analysis of grades 6–12 conditions, and the generation and prioritization of sustainability options. Phase I concludes with a shortlist of preferred options (1–3) and a clear roadmap for deeper analysis.
- **Phase II (Subsequent Phase): Analysis, Modeling, and Evaluation**  
Phase II would advance the preferred options identified in Phase I into detailed technical work, including enrollment, financial, facilities, transportation, governance, and legal analysis, supported by targeted community engagement focused on tradeoffs and implications.
- **Phase III (Subsequent Phase): Implementation and Decision-Making**  
Phase III would move from planning to action and would likely include advancing a preferred model; drafting and vetting a regional agreement (if applicable); implementation and transition planning; required school committee, municipal, and state approvals; preparation for and support of any necessary town votes; and coordination with DESE and other state agencies.

# Rough plan

16 months (March 26 – June 27)

## Phase I (our proposal) would include:

- **Task 1:** Project Management (work planning, subcontracting, facilitating meetings, etc.)
- **Task 2:** Community Engagement and Listening Tour (meetings, surveys, focus groups);
- **Task 3:** High-Level Baseline Analysis (basic indicators without the burden of our crazy long reports);
- **Task 4:** Sustainability Option Development and Prioritization (work to refine and evaluate options with 1-3 chosen to move forward into Task 2)

# Collaborative Projects

- Portrait of a Graduate, Barr
- BRAINworks



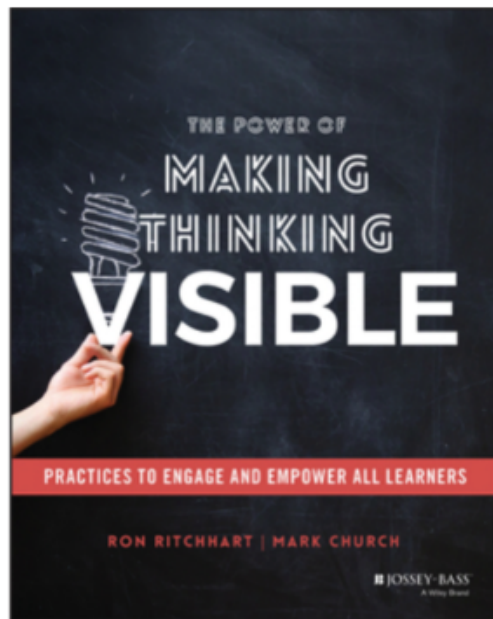
# **Berkshire Portrait of a Graduate**

# Berkshire Portrait of a Graduate - Project Updates

- Theme for the Year - ***Building Bright Spots*** - supporting effective instructional practices through PD, coaching, classroom observation, and peer exchanges
- Positive school based visits in December. Discussed work plans, PD plans, and school team needs
- Productive check in with district leaders in December, further discussed project goals, instructional vision/model development
- Successful student summits - full school participation at each site
- Starting this week - 25 educators participating in the next Harvard Project Zero Course
- Evaluation planning, data gathering, and instructional rounds

## ***What's Next...***

- Preparations for site visits with Barr/Learning Agenda
  - January 27 and 28th
  - Visit a bright spot classroom and school support session
- Preparations for Bart Peer Visit on March 10th and network visits (i.e. Lowell for Pittsfield on Feb 11th)
- Barr Spring Convening in Franklin, NH - May 6 - 8



Project Zero Course Textbook

# Spotlight: Pittsfield High Student Summit

## On eve of winter break, Pittsfield High students pack 10,000 meals for neighbors

By Greg Sukienik, The Berkshire Eagle | Dec 19, 2025 | 3 min to read



During the annual Student Voice Summit at Pittsfield High School — part of the "Portrait of a Graduate" initiative — students take time to do community service projects, including filling and sealing 10,000 meal bags for people in need on Friday.

STEPHANIE ZOLLGREN — THE BERKSHIRE EAGLE





BERKSHIRE  
COUNTY  
MAKES  
ART WORK



# Leveraging Change: Increasing Access to Arts Education in Rural Areas

Lisa Donovan  
Maren Brown

WORKING  
PAPER



**Coming Soon:**

**“Keep”  
Leveraging  
Change:**

**Ten Years of  
Increasing  
Access to Arts  
Education in  
Rural Areas.**



# Strategic Planning Conversation with MCC, 12/19/25: Areas of Focus

## 1. **Cross-Sector Translation**

Make visible how arts work advances health, workforce readiness, education, and community wellbeing.

## 2. **Career Pathways & Workforce Alignment**

Strengthen internships, shadowing, and career readiness efforts in alignment with workforce agencies and schools.

## 3. **Health & Wellbeing Partnerships**

Explore arts prescription models, opioid settlement funding, and prevention-focused collaborations.

## 4. **Network Sustainability**

Prioritize communication, shared storytelling, and relationship maintenance across leadership transitions.

## 5. **Collective Visibility & Advocacy**

Tell a regional story that “lifts all boats” and positions the arts as essential civic infrastructure.

AMERICA



YEARS IN THE MAKING

A black and white photograph of the Massachusetts State House dome, a classical building with columns, and modern city buildings in the background. A dark horizontal band across the bottom contains white and pink text.

**MASSACHUSETTS**

**CREATIVE SECTOR ADVOCACY WEEK 2026**

**MARCH 2 - 6, 2026**

# Professional Development/Networking

Bill:

- November PD Planning, Thanksgiving week?
- BSTA
- Hate has no home here

Judy (Jake):


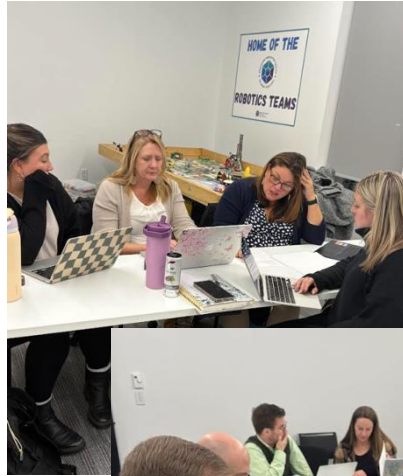
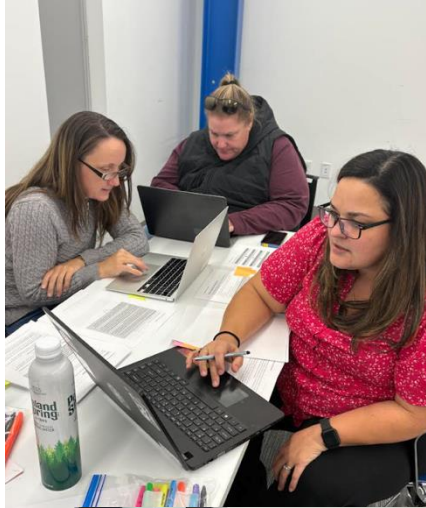
- Mentoring and Induction
- PAL study
- CBRSD Paraprofessional Training

Brendan (Judy):

- March 20<sup>th</sup> Convening
- AI efforts




# PAL (Performance Assessment for Leaders)



**What is this task asking us educators to demonstrate or produce?**

- build a professional learning group (2-5 educators) with the goal of improving educator practice in a priority academic area
- priority academic area must align with school and district plans and goals
- working together- group members identify new curricula, instructional approaches, assessments, student engagements strategies
- group members share results collectively
- candidate must establish group norms and practices, promote professional learning, lead the group in exploring curriculum
- use structured group building and group process
  - prepare, facilitate, support and assess groups collective learning



# **BERK12 COMMUNITY CONVENING**

Connecting People. Aligning  
Purpose. Creating Impact.

*March 20th 8:30 - 1:30  
At Berkshire Community College*





Berkshire Educational Resources K12 ([BERK12](#))  
**The Berk12 Community Convening**  
**Connecting People. Aligning Purpose. Creating Impact.**  
March 20, 2026  
Berkshire Community College  
8:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Engage • Explore • Connect • Activate	
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	<b>Registration, Light Breakfast, and Community Conversation</b> <i>Engage: We invite you to engage with colleagues at your table using the conversation prompts.</i>
9:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	<b>Opening Remarks</b> <i>Dr. William Cameron, BERK12 Chair</i>
9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	<b>World Café Experience: Listening, Learning, and Visioning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore shared challenges and opportunities</li><li>• Surface perspectives across education, business, and community sectors</li><li>• Capture collective insights and emerging themes</li></ul> <i>This session centers on curiosity, voice, and shared understanding.</i>
10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	<b>Break: Pause &amp; Reflect</b>
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<b>Inform &amp; Connect:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Panel Discussion: Opportunities and Tensions</li><li>• Focus: The Emerging State High School Graduation Requirements</li></ul> <i>This session is a moderated panel discussion with audience reflection questions.</i>
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	<b>Closing Keynote Address</b> <i>The Positive Shift: Mastering Mindset to Improve Happiness, Health, and Longevity (Catherine A. Sanderson)</i>
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	<b>Activate: Lunch &amp; Cultural Partner Showcase</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lunch served</li><li>• Cultural and community partners host tables highlighting programs, resources, and opportunities.</li><li>• Participants are encouraged to circulate, ask questions, and make connections.</li></ul> <i>This final segment turns inspiration into action.</i>

## Together we will...

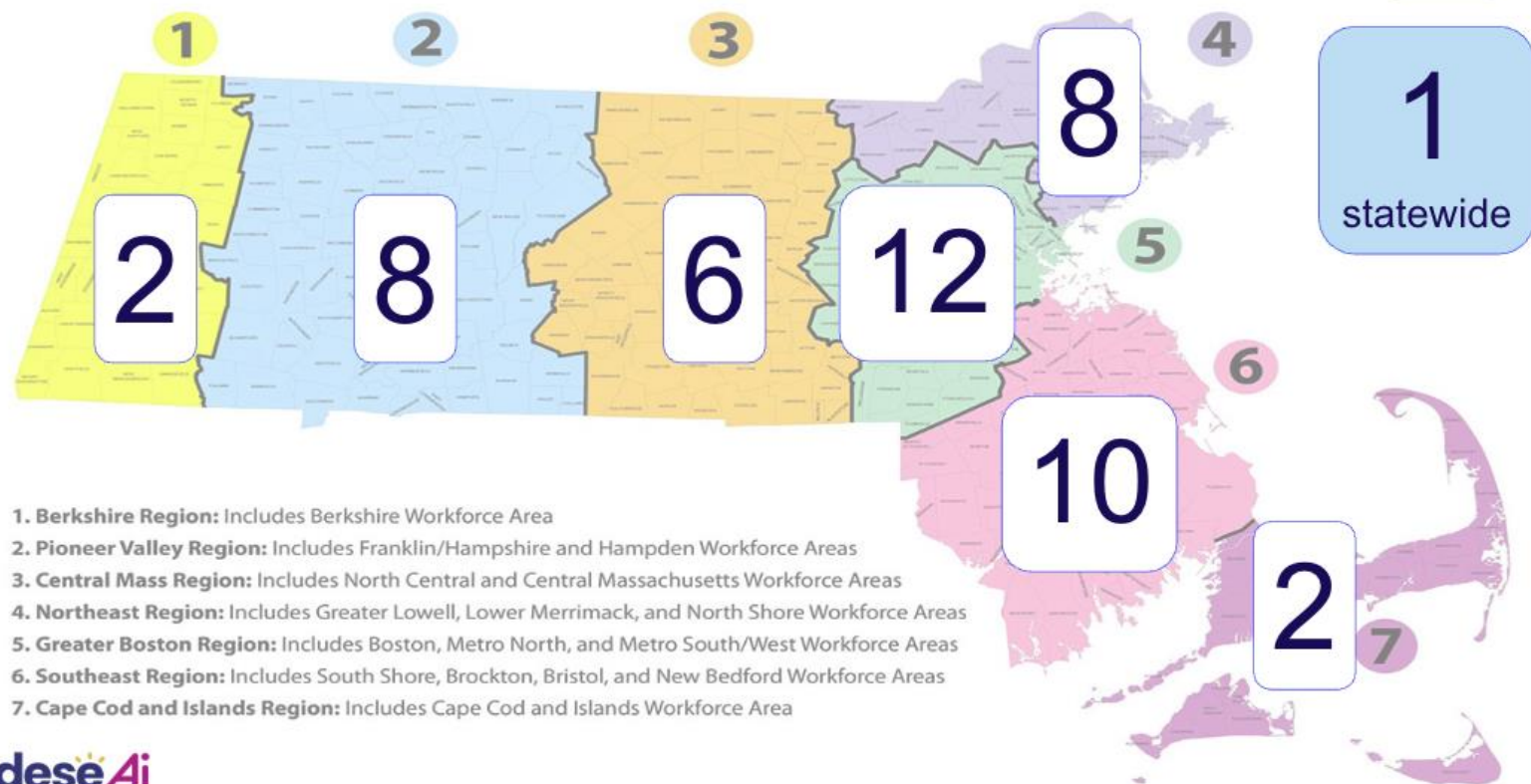
- Explore shared challenges and opportunities
- Surface perspectives across education, business, and community sectors
- Capture collective insights and emerging themes

# **MA DESE AI TASK FORCE**



## SY 25-26 Task Force Members Statewide Representation by Region

N=49



# DESE's AI Journey

How might DESE support schools and districts as they address the opportunities and challenges presented by artificial intelligence?

# SY 2024-2025 AI Task Force

**Task Force Charge:** Provide recommendations for ways the state can support schools and districts as they address the opportunities and challenges presented by artificial intelligence.

**RECOMMENDATIONS WERE SYNTHESIZED INTO 8 ACTIONS ACROSS THREE PRIMARY CATEGORIES.**

I. Resource Creation and Curation	II. Professional Development	III. Policy Supports
a) Create resources for stakeholders to build AI literacy	a) Offer a variety of professional learning opportunities	a) Create sample district guidelines and policies
b) Develop a list of recommended AI tools and resources	b) Provide turnkey training on student data privacy laws	b) Embed tech integration, including AI, into educator preparation programs
c) Create or recommend an enterprise AI tool		c) Incorporate AI literacy into MA curriculum frameworks



# SY 2025-2026 AI Task Force

## Task Force Charge:

1

Develop goals and monitor progress for statewide integration of AI

2

Provide input and feedback on resources and **implementation support**

3

Develop a strategy for the state to support schools with AI tool selection

# DESE Resources

## POLICY GUIDANCE

### Massachusetts Guidance for Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Education

#### desesAi Massachusetts Guidance for Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Education

Integrating AI into education is not a single decision or one-time effort. It is an ongoing design process that requires clear priorities, standards, and professional growth and development of all stakeholders. This is not about replacing the right use of current technology with artificial intelligence. It is about building a meaningful future. Integrating AI into education requires a thoughtful, intentional, and ongoing process. This guidance provides a framework for AI use in education, and is intended to be a living document that evolves over time.

- 1. ADDRESSING HARMFUL BIAS AND ACCESS
- 2. LEGAL FOUNDATIONS FOR AI USE
- 3. AI LITERACY TEACHING ABOUT AI
- 4. AI LITERACY TEACHING WITH AI
- 5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
- 6. DISTRICT OPERATIONS

desesAi Mapping the Current AI Landscape Self-Assessment

Rate the extent to which your organization is currently using AI in the following areas. (1 = Not at all, 2 = Somewhat, 3 = Moderately, 4 = Extensively)

1. Teacher

2. Curriculum

3. Instruction

4. Student assessment

5. District operations

6. District leadership



desesAi

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edtech/ai>

desesAi AI Literacy for Educators

AI Literacy for Educators: Certificate of Completion Version

desesAi AI Literacy for Massachusetts Educators

FACILITATION & DISCUSSION GUIDE

Curriculum resource for the *desesAi Literacy for Educators* course. Includes 45-minute sessions - Sample Appendix

collaborative.org

desesAi AI Literacy for Massachusetts Educators

Facilitation & Discussion Guide

desesAi

## AI LITERACY



## Berkshire Educational Resources K-12 (BERK12)

# Website redesign

## Berkshire Educational Resources K-12 (BERK12)



### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Check out the (Sept. 2025) BERK 12 VIEWBOOK [HERE](#)
- Read about BERK12's effort to support the CPPM grant, Berkshire Eagle, [HERE](#)
- Read about the impending northern Berkshire regionalization study, [HERE](#)

### UPCOMING EVENTS



#### COMMUNITY MEETING

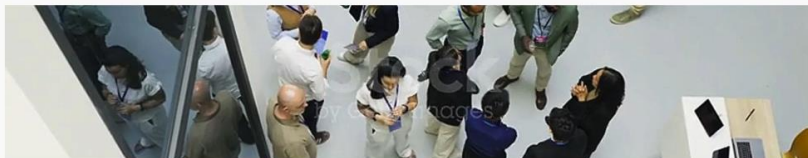
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Jan 5, 2026



#### STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

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Jan 6, 2026

[BLOCK CALENDAR OF EVENTS](#)



## Our Services

BERK12 is our region's most comprehensive cross-sector organization focused on education. We are eager to collaboratively improve educational systems and structures in our schools. Services can be customized to meet the needs of districts.

[MEET WITH US](#)

✓ PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND FACILITATION

✓ RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

✓ PROGRAM EVALUATION

✓ TEAM BUILDING, MEDIATION, AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

✓ NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

✓ POLICY ANALYSIS



# BERK12



## Sponsors and Funding Supporters



# BERK<sub>12</sub>

**Berkshire Educational Resources K12**

January 10, 2026

[www.berk12.org](http://www.berk12.org)

info@berk12.org



Next meeting....?