

Our solution.

September 13, 2025

www.berk12.org



BERK₁₂

Berkshire Educational Resources K12

We bring school and community partners together



...fall in the busy season!

Topics

1. Call to order (A. Wadsworth)
2. Introductions/welcome (A. Wadsworth)
3. Approval of minutes
4. Updates from Chair and Exec. Committee (A. Wadsworth, J. Eberwein)
5. Budget & funding update (J. Eberwein)
 - FY26 Funding/Budget, spending plan – as it stands
 - FY26 Project/Funding Prospects, update
6. BERK12 Working Domains
- A. Collaborative projects
 - Portrait of a Graduate: (B. Sheran)
 - BRAINworks: (L. Donovan)
 - CPPI – Closing out: Pittsfield (Team) – Press release/Eagle articles
 - Other
- B. Professional development (W. Ballen, J. Rush, Team)
- Bill:
 - County-wide PD for 2025
 - Professional learning networks (funding contingent)
 - Study action teams (discussion of plans for coming year, if funded)
- Judy:
 - PD ideas and planning for 2025-26 (convening, PD series, topic-specific, PAL)
 - Mentoring & New Teacher Induction (2025-26)
 - Convening (Engage. Empower. Transform. A BERK12 Day for Connections, Belonging, and Breakthroughs) – Target is January 23, 2026
- C. Networking & advocacy (Team)
 - BSTA/DA's Office
 - Website transition & Dashboard
 - View Book - Final draft and plan to distribute
- D. Research towards partnerships (J. Eberwein, Team)
 - Mohawk Trail – Hawlemont: Phase III
 - North Berkshire County Sustainability Study – iBerkshire/Eagle article
 - 6 District Partnership (Gill-Pioneer) Support
 - Belchertown
 - Other
7. Items raised by BERK12 members (A. Wadsworth)
8. Public participation (A. Wadsworth)
9. Determination of date for next meeting (A. Wadsworth)
10. Adjournment



Our aims



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 arrows point downwards from this text to two overlapping light blue rectangular boxes. The left box contains the word 'MONEY' in a green box, followed by the text 'Rising fiscal liability to towns'. The right box contains the word 'COHORT' in a green box, followed by the text 'Challenge to maintain educational (academic programs, enrichment, services & supports)'. A central box, labeled 'IMPACTS' with a blue underline, is positioned between the two main boxes and contains the text 'Students', 'Staff', and 'Towns'. This central box overlaps with both the 'MONEY' and 'COHORT' boxes.

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!

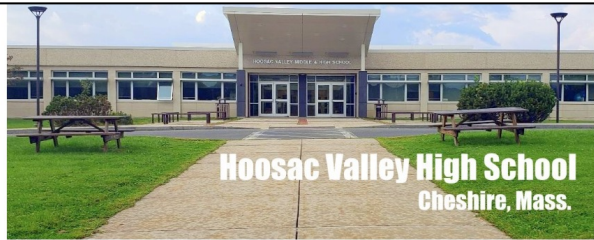
QUOTE OF THE MONTH!



"We know that the opportunities for Grade 7 through 12 students are diminishing as our schools have fewer and fewer high school students,"

said North Adams Superintendent Timothy Callahan.

"I think it was pretty clear, based on the newspaper articles about the graduating classes last year, that those numbers are small across Berkshire County."



Hoosac Valley High School
Cheshire, Mass.

North Berkshire School Districts Participating in Regionalization Study

By Tammy Daniels

Berkshires Staff

05:26AM / Friday, August 29, 2025

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

CLARKSBURG, Mass. — Three North Berkshire school districts are embarking on a state-funded study of secondary education options.

The collaboration's been percolating between Hoosac Valley Regional School District, Northern Berkshire School Union and North Adams Public Schools for more than a year. An application deadline was missed by North Adams last year but state Rep. ... to obtain \$100,000 for the project in this fiscal budget.

NEWS

EDUCATION

A new Nation's Report Card shows drops in science, math and reading scores

SEPTEMBER 9, 2025 - 5:00 AM ET

HEARD ON MORNING EDITION



Sequoia Carrillo

3-Minute Listen

+ PLAYLIST

TRANSCRIPT



carried out by ...
recent weather phe-
and the globe may be noth-
inn more than nature behaving the way it
do today to protect the ...
have any effect on future atmospheric
conditions, or to ensure that our children

Pittsfield Public Schools

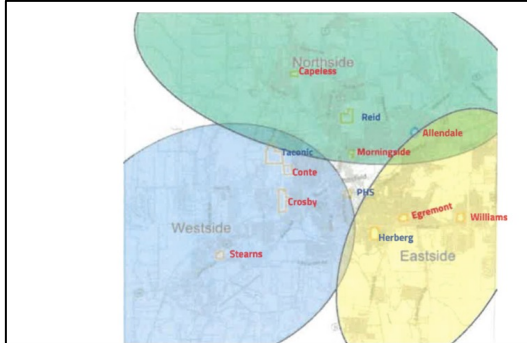
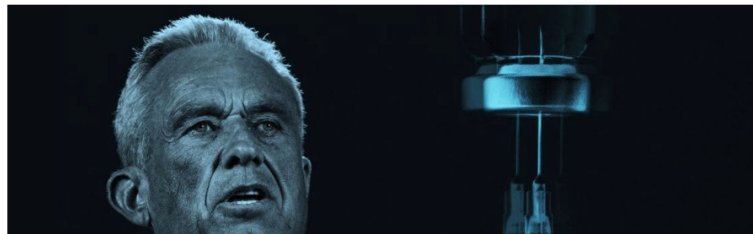
A significant portion of early childhood education seats in Pittsfield go unused. A state grant is funding efforts to reverse that

By Greg Sukernik, The Berkshire Eagle Sep 8, 2025 3 min to read



Confusion as Kids Head Back to School and RFK Jr. Calls the Shots on Vaccines

'Unfortunately, this is not a time where we can trust those in the highest positions of power at HHS,' said Johns Hopkins researcher and physician.



Loose estimation of where the three elementary zones will fall in Pittsfield after consolidation.

Plan for Merging Pittsfield's Elementary Zones Tabled

By Brittany Polito

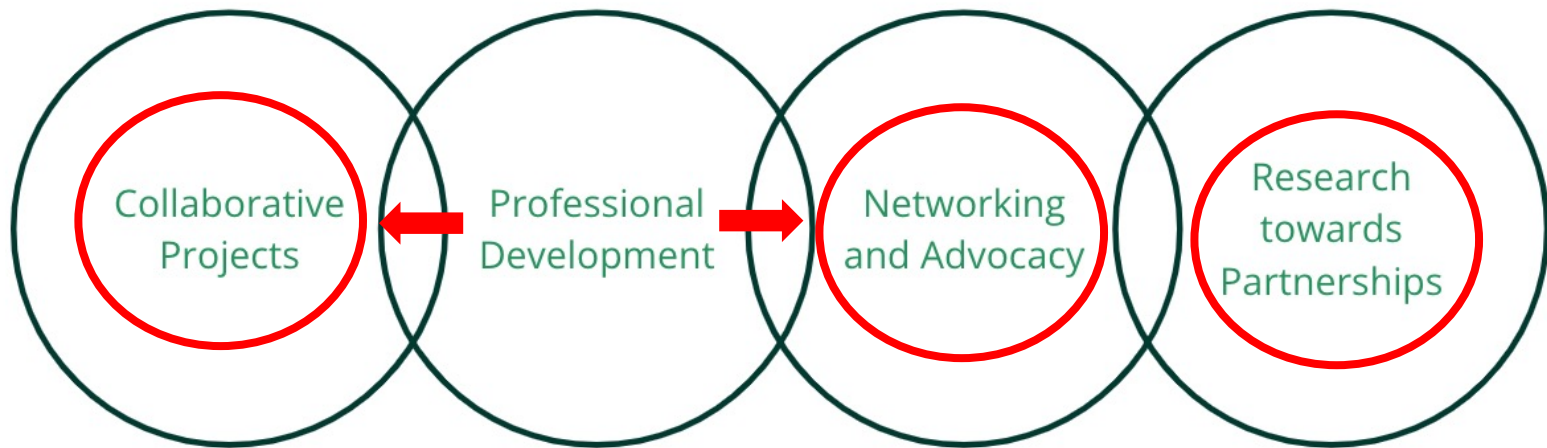
Berkshires Staff

05:25AM / Friday, September 05, 2025

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

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

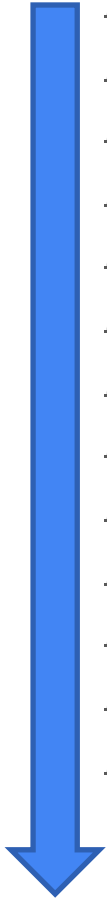
Rural advocacy
Other news



FUNDING AND BUDGET



FY 2025 WORK (completed):

- 
- ~~Mohawk Trail — Hawlemont Sustainability, Phase II~~
 - ~~Barr Portrait of a Graduate — Year 1 of 3~~
 - ~~November PD Day~~
 - ~~Professional Learning Networks~~
 - ~~Study Action Teams~~
 - ~~New Teacher Induction/Mentor Training~~
 - ~~Teacher gatherings~~
 - ~~Website/Dashboard~~
 - ~~Networks (BSTA)~~
 - ~~BRAINworks (BTCF & NEA)~~
 - ~~Berkshire Educational Convening (#2)~~
 - ~~CPPI, Preparation for Early Implementation Grant~~
 - ~~Ongoing advocacy efforts (for example, rural network)~~
~~Initial support for Northern Berkshire Sustainability; Rowe inclusion in MTRSD; West Springfield; 6 Town Partnership~~

BUDGET UPDATES:

- **FY25 is closed out**

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

- **FY26 spending (high confidence)**

- BERK12 MISC/Revolving – District agreements
- Mohawk-Trail/Hawlemont – Phase III: NOT ALL FUNDS
- Barr Portrait Year 2 (of 3)
- Mentoring/New Teacher Induction (Years 1 & 2) – PPS/Berkshire Districts
- BRAINworks (Berkshire Taconic, Mill Town)
- Feigenbaum (support November PD)

- **Prospects, FY26**

- FY26 Earmark – support BERK12 core and regionalization
- Northern Berkshire Sustainability
- 6 Town Partnership (support for community engagement/campaign)

- **In the works, Prospects, FY26**

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



H. Jake Eberwein, Ed.D.
Project Manager
jakeeberwein@gmail.com
413.329.4336

August 13, 2025

To: Michelle Griffin
From: BERK12

Re: Final Report. Fund Code Earmark, FY25

Submitted by: H. Jake Eberwein, Project Manager

INTRODUCTION:

We are pleased to submit a summary report for Fund Code Earmark FY25, provided to Berkshire Educational Resources K12 (BERK12) through Berkshire Community College, our fiscal sponsor. This grant supported general BERK12 efforts that, when combined with additional funding from sources such as the Barr Foundation, Commonwealth Compact grants, district partnership agreements, contracts for regionalization studies, and local donations has funded (over the calendar and fiscal year) a wide range of impactful activities within our organization and across (and beyond) Berkshire County. These activities allow us to devise and support near-term collaborative solutions that encourage districts/staff to work across district lines, while we dig into the larger, more challenging long-term studies of formal collaboration through mergers and consolidation. We appreciate support from our local delegation as well as from the Barr Foundation and DESE as critical partners in the BERK12 work, and are hopeful that these relationships continue to serve as a source of technical expertise, organizational coaching, funding, and partnership opportunities.

FY25 EARMARK:

The FY25 Earmark was used for specific purposes, broadly described below. These funds were (for the most part) consistent with a budget outline submitted in late 2024. Some funds (such as cost estimates for a convening) were less than anticipated, thus were applied towards other projects and priorities. These earmark (DESE) funds interact with other funding streams from the Feigenbaum and Barr Foundations, funds from district regionalization projects, district contributions, and miscellaneous (revolving) funds. While the grid below has approximate (rounded) amounts and a brief description, many of the programs/activities will be described in the details that follow. A more precise breakdown of spending is available through BCC, as needed.

BUDGET UPDATES:

- **J. Eberwein – project director**
 - 16 hrs/week through October – through MISC/Revolving
 - Will transition to Mohawk Trail 16 hrs, NO BERK12 HOURS
 - ? – additional hours from MISC/Revolving for core BERK12
- **B. Sheran**
 - 12 hrs/week - Barr Portrait – 52 weeks
 - 8 hrs/week – Barr Exit through October
 - Will add Mohawk Trail hours in October/November
- **B. Ballen**
 - 8hrs/week – Feigenbum funds – through November
- **J. Rush**
 - 8 hrs/week through October – through MISC/Revolving
 - Specific contract for mentoring and induction training
- **H. Marshall**
 - Specific contract for mentoring and induction training
- **L. Donovan & L. Appleget**
 - Project based on Berkshire Taconic and Mill Town contracts

Other subcontractors

BANKED

- Grant making
- Website
- Finance

NEEDED

- Public relations
- Actuarial work
- Field/lit. study
- Finance Analysis
- Transportation?
- Legal
- Grants

OTHER

- Stipends for various projects
- CPPI additional

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)

MAYBE

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

FUNDING DEPENDENT (RED IS IF EARMARK HAPPENS)

- Professional Learning Networks
- Study-Action Teams
- Berkshire Educational Convening (#3)
- Additional CPPI or “like” work (In Pittsfield or other communities)
- Other restructuring/consolidation district needs
- Other Professional Development

Amendment 706

Budget Amendment ID: FY2026-S3-706-R1

Redraft EDU 706

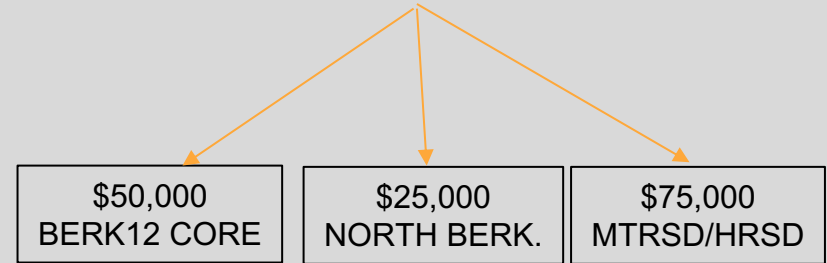
BerK-12 Public School Regionalization

~~Mr. Mark moved that the proposed new text be amended in section 2, in item 7010~~

1192, by adding the following words:- "; 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"; and by striking out the figure "\$100,000" and inserting in place thereof the following figure:- "\$250,000".

*To further control spending and protect taxpayer dollars, Governor Healey is vetoing \$130 million, resulting in a final budget that is more than \$1 billion less than the H1 proposal and \$130 million less than the final conference budget. The administration is also continuing an Executive Branch hiring freeze, halting a planned non-union manager pay raise scheduled for January, saving \$17 million, and **delaying payment on earmarked funds for local projects in the budget totaling approximately \$125 million until later in the year when more is understood about their affordability.***

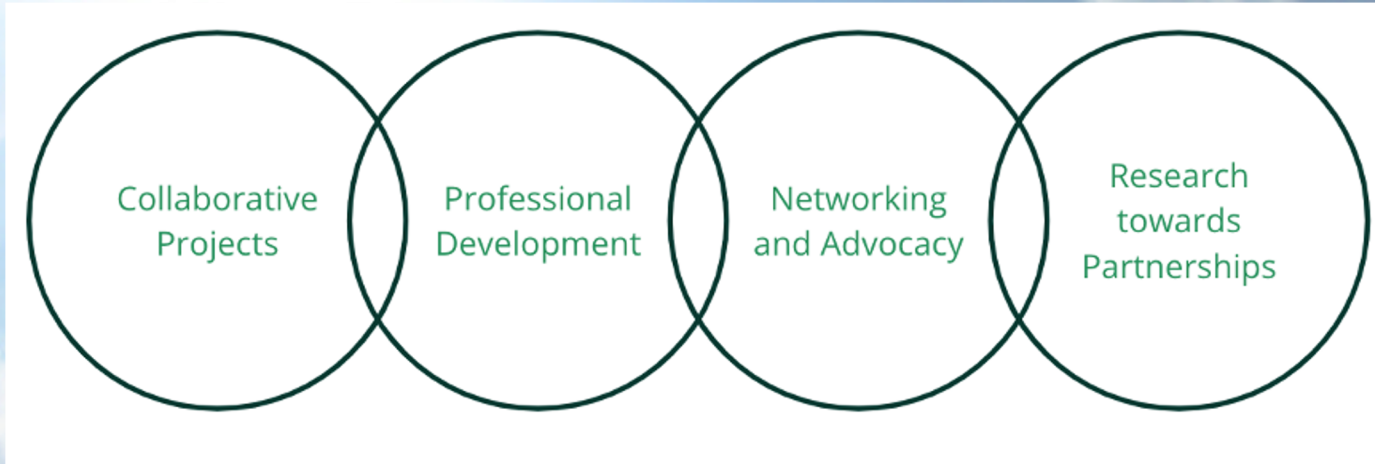
FY26 EARMARK \$150,000



Budget question:

Beyond October?

Our work domains..



Updates.

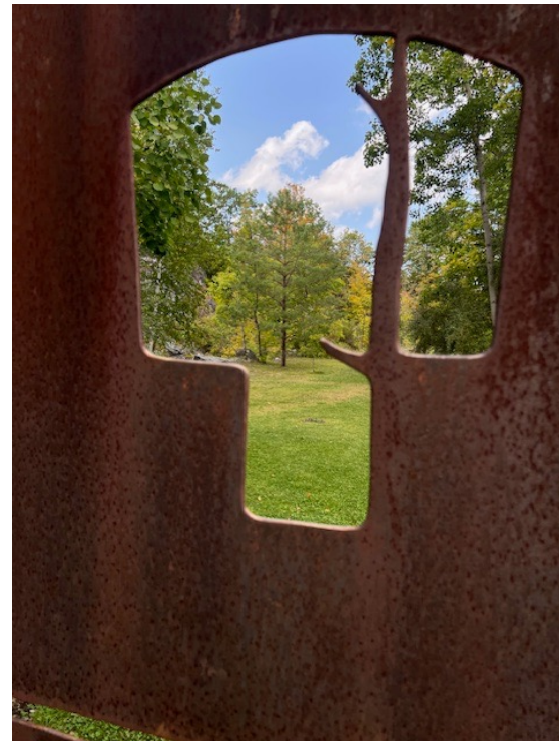
Professional Development

Judy:

- Mentoring and Induction
- PAL study
- After-hours gathering
- Convening & PD planning

Bill:

- Nov 2025 – County-wide/Thanksgiving week
- Study Action (OST, BRLL, Leadership)
- PLNs



If we know what matters, people will show up. It's not about building—it's about building wisely.



Annual Mentor Training & New Educator Induction

Mentor Training for New Teacher Mentors

- **Participants:** 6 districts
- **Highlight:** Bringing together mentors across multiple districts to share strategies and support

New Educator Induction Year One

- **Format:** 20-hour hybrid course, September - April
- **Teachers Registered:** 62
- **Districts:** 3 (predominantly Pittsfield Public Schools)

New Educator Induction Year Two (NEW!)

- **Format:** Rigorous, 50-hour hybrid course, October - December
- **Teachers Registered:** 39
- **Districts:** 2 (predominantly Pittsfield Public Schools)



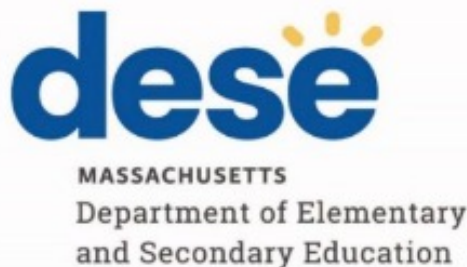
Supporting Our Mentors: New DESE Guidelines Webinars

[Link to the Invitation](#)

Webinars for trained teacher and administrator mentors...

- **Purpose:** Help mentors navigate the updated DESE guidelines
- **Content:** Overview of key changes
- **Interactive:** Time for questions and discussion

Judy Rush & Howie Marshall



Launching a Cross-District PAL Study Team

[Link to the Invitation](#)

Purpose: Support provisionally licensed principals and assistant principals in completing the Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL)

Offerings:

- Structured guidance
- Peer collaboration
- Ongoing support aligned with the 2025–2026 *PAL Candidate Assessment Handbook*



After-Hours Educator Gatherings

Purpose: Connect, support, and recharge educators across districts

Highlights:

- Wine, Cheese, & Classroom Cheers
- Technology Tips & Discoveries
- Book & Podcast Roundtable
- Strategies to restore energy and create healthy boundaries

Goal: Foster collaboration, well-being, and professional growth in a relaxed, engaging setting

Fadia Rostum-Makdisi



BERK12 Day: Engage. Empower. Transform.

Date: January 23, 2026

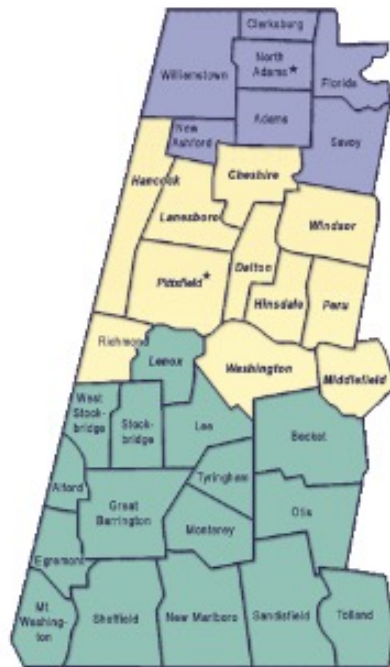
Purpose: Connect, renew, and build skills across education and community services

Key Highlights:

- National speakers
- Interactive workshops on inclusion, resilience, and collaboration
- Participants: Educators, human service professionals, mental health providers, caregivers, and community leaders

Goal: Strengthen individuals, teams, and systems for lasting impact

***Funding contingent – subject to available resources



BERK12 Day: Agenda Overview – *Funding Dependent*

Experience the Day: Engage → Empower → Transform	
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Registration, coffee, and conversations
9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	Engage Together – BERK12's connections and welcome
9:45 a.m. - 10:05 a.m.	Be Inspired – <i>Lead Out Loud: Finding Power in Purpose, Belonging, and Breakthroughs</i> (Dr. Sean Larry Stevens)
10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	Empower Your Practice – Morning workshop rotations
11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Nourish & Network – Lunch + community partner tables
12:20 p.m. - 1:20 p.m.	Transform in Action – Afternoon workshop rotations
1:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Recharge & Reflect – Hot cocoa bar
1:40 p.m.- 2:40 p.m.	Closing Inspiration – <i>The Positive Shift: Mastering Mindset to Improve Happiness, Health, and Longevity</i> (Catherine A. Sanderson)

Building Wisely, Together

- Our initiatives are designed to **engage, support, and retain educators** across districts.
- Structured mentoring, cross-district study teams, after-hours gatherings, and BERK12 Day all aim to **foster connection, growth, and well-being**.
- Every effort is **purpose-driven and aligned with evidence-based best practices**, maximizing impact on educators and students alike.



Collaborative Projects

- Portrait of a Graduate, Barr
- BRAINworks
- CPPI

B. Sheran/Lisa Donovan/Team



Berkshire Portrait of a Graduate

Berkshire Portrait of a Graduate - Project Updates

- August Kick Off - 40 educators from Berkshire PoG network schools (including principals, APs, assistant superintendents)
- Focus: experiencing and using visible thinking strategies and protocols
- Theme for the Year - ***Building Bright Spots*** - supporting effective instructional practices through PD, coaching, classroom observation, and peer exchanges
- Like role groups working cross district to update/enhance resources

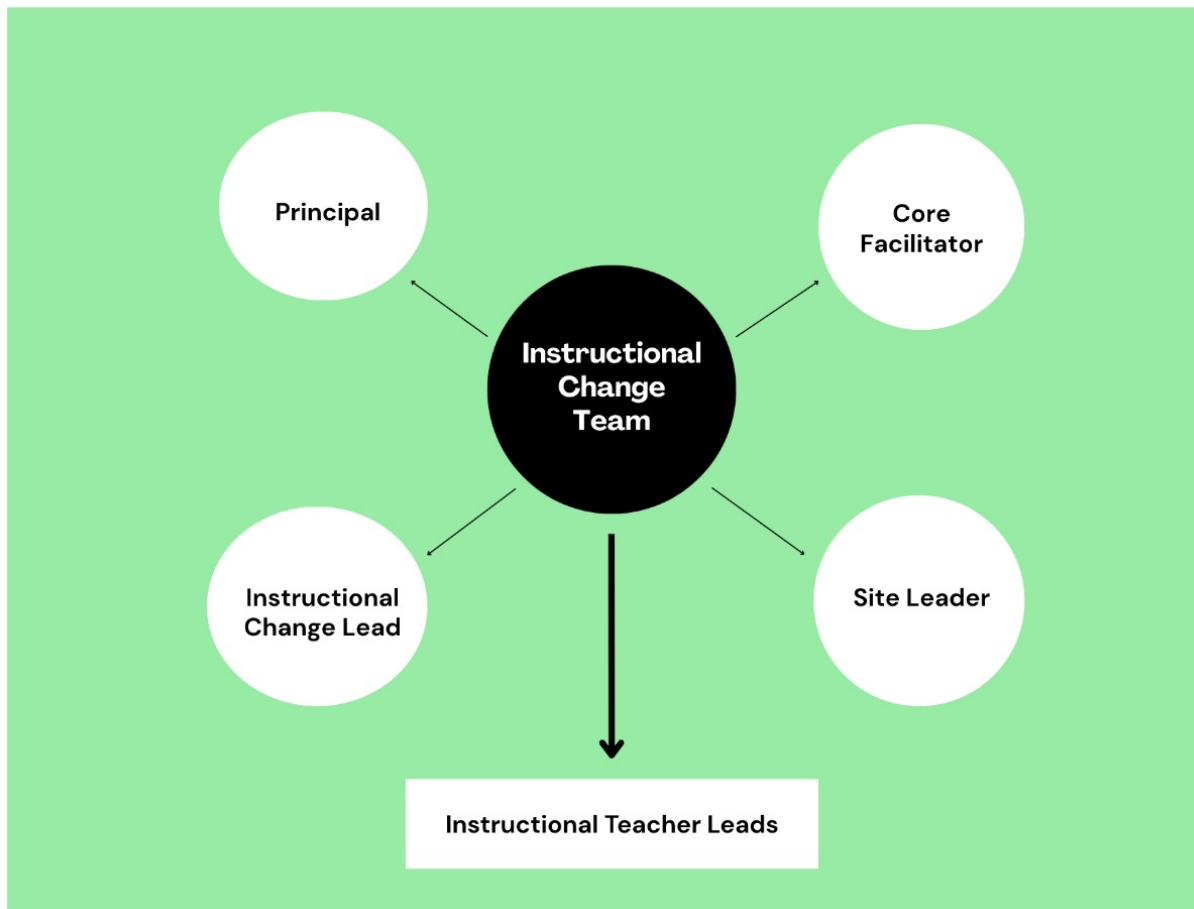
What's Next...

- [BARR Convening Oct 20-22nd \(Newton/Salem\)](#)
- Updating/refining/developing resources and further site plan work
- November PD Day workshop options

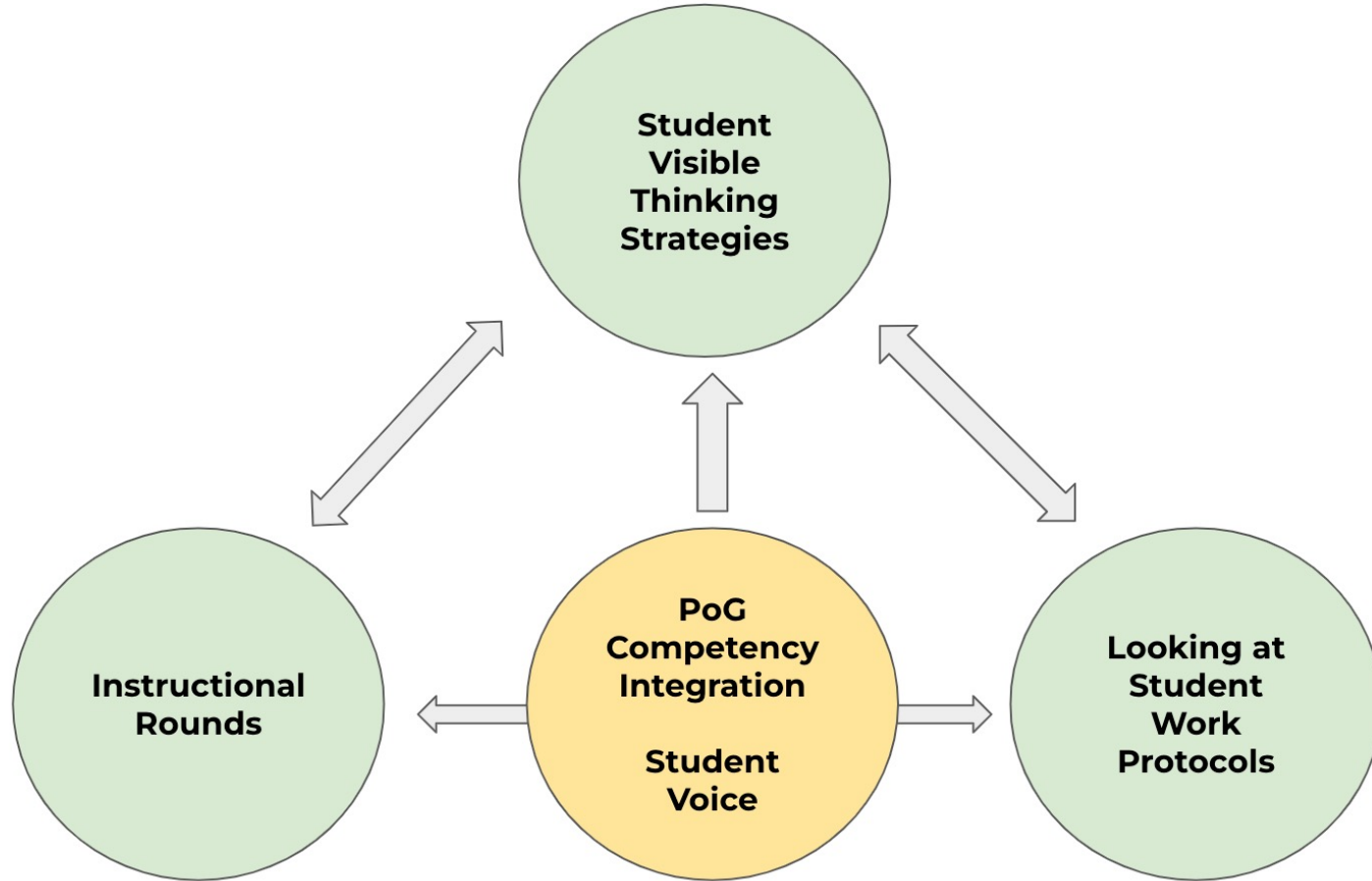


Berkshire PoG Phase IV Year 2 Kick off at BCC

Site Level Teams



Supporting Our Theory of Change



Barr PoG Peer Visit Videos

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

2025-2026

PEER VISIT INTRODUCTIONS



- BART is the Berkshires Collaboration school of focus for network peer visits
- Additional county peer exchanges will be developed for our other Berkshire PoG schools
- Click the image to view the previews for all the schools involved in our grantee network

Video Introductions for all Barr PoG grantees!



BERKSHIRE
COUNTY
MAKES
ART WORK





BCAN Meet-Up

10 organizations gathered at the Linde Center in August.

Themes for next convenings:

- Spaces and places
- Working together on to create a shared narrative for advocacy
- Alignment/collaboration with strategic planning for arts education.

r!



Culture elevates.

In all its forms, culture is essential to the health and vitality of the Commonwealth.

We are writing to invite you to serve on a small but mighty planning committee for an exciting summit we're organizing, aimed at transforming how Massachusetts' higher education institutions prepare students for sustainable, civically engaged careers in the arts.

As you know, the arts face serious structural and financial challenges—but we also see this as a moment of tremendous opportunity. We believe higher ed can play a critical role in preparing the next generation of artists not just to survive, but to thrive as entrepreneurial, politically aware, and economically empowered contributors to society.

This one-day retreat-style summit will bring together 40 – 50 leaders from across Massachusetts: deans, department chairs, business and policy educators, artists, and employers. Together, we'll explore curricular reforms and institutional collaborations that can embed entrepreneurship and civic engagement directly into arts education.

GOAL: Co-convening a half-day workshop with fine and performing arts department chairs and administrators, employers, arts leaders, funders, education experts

OUTCOME: urgently addressing career development, workforce preparedness, curriculum revision (with an eye toward career skills), and an emphasis on arts sector political advocacy and stronger business acumen and expanded reach beyond curriculum.



I'm writing to invite you and your organizations to join the planning effort for Creative Sector Advocacy Week 2026:

For the third year, MASSCreative and our partners will hold Creative Sector Advocacy Week to celebrate the contributions of artists, creatives, and cultural organizations while advancing our policy priorities.

Last year, over 400 advocates traveled to the State House for Creative Sector Day featuring remarks from Governor Healey, Lt. Governor Driscoll, Senator Mark, and Representative Garballey. The day also featured performances and artistic displays by artists from across the Commonwealth. In addition to State House Day, local leaders hosted advocacy events across the Commonwealth.

This year, we are eager to build upon last year's success by increasing participation in local events and attendance at State House Day.

One way we are particularly interested in expanding Creative Sector Advocacy Week is by finding ways for young people to lead and participate in the week's events. As leaders in the creative youth development and arts education community, we are especially interested in working with you all to design this expansion.

Berkshire Portrait of a Graduate



Your Voice Through Film is a semester-long course that will provide the means for young people in our region to share and amplify their voices and perspectives on social issues that are important to them through the medium of film. Students will have the opportunity to explore the forces and events that are creating divisions within our communities and society - as well as ways individuals and communities are coming together to address a shared problem or issue. Through research, collaboration and the creation of a film, students will be empowered to see that their voices matter and can make a difference.







Sensing Nature at the Clark: Clark educators lead a slow engagement with nature and art, focused on enhancing wellbeing. This new seasonal program encourages visitors to connect deeply with the landscapes on the Clark's campus and in the galleries.



ARTcentric Berkshires introduces students to local visual artists to explore how they use inspiration from the world around them - for example biology, geology, and culture - in their art.



Ballot Ballad: Youth Voice, Civic Power, and the American Songbook: An interdisciplinary civics curriculum integrates art and advocacy to empower students with knowledge of their voting rights through collaborative and creative expression. Using theater, movement, and songwriting—rooted in American singer-songwriter traditions—students co-create an original performance that educates both performers and audience members about the right to vote and the broader importance of civic engagement.

	<p>Curriculum in Motion™: Artist Educators are in residence in schools and work in the classroom, guiding teachers and students in creating original movement that applies choreographic approaches, creative processes, and kinesthetic learning strategies to investigate and solve problems, articulate ideas, contextualize content, affirm intuitive knowledge, work cooperatively, and improve self-esteem.</p>
	<p>Moving Life Stories (MLS) is a creative-based workshop where students are offered an opportunity to share their ancestry, family stories, personal journeys, and life experiences through movement and words in a safe space. When memories, ideas and experiences are investigated through movement and turned into art, transformation occurs, creating an increased understanding of self, community and respect for others and their differences.</p>
	<p>Behind the Scenes at MASS MoCA: The new two-visit model would include a behind-the-scenes look at either an exhibition currently in development, or a visual or performing artist residency where new work is being developed at the museum, as well as an exploration of careers in the creative sector.</p>
	<p>Playwright Mentoring Program is an intensive out-of-school activity that uses theater as a catalyst to help young people learn valuable life skills. PMP is offered at no cost to the students, and no audition is required. Meeting weekly, PMP offers teenagers a brave space to talk about difficult issues in their daily lives. Participants learn the fundamentals of devising, playwriting, and improvisation from experienced mentors. Theater is used as a means of self-exploration and self-expression. Over the course of the program, teens collaborate to create an original performance piece based on their own stories.</p>

CPPI NETWORK MEETING

August 21, 2025



Purpose: Introductions; Status of the Community Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) application; Summer efforts/recap/outstanding; Transition planning.

Thanks from BERK12



Pittsfield Public Schools

A significant portion of early childhood education seats in Pittsfield go unused. A state grant is funding efforts to reverse that

By Greg Sakornik, The Berkshire Eagle Sep 8, 2025 3 min to read



Students play in a preschool class through the end of the day at Pittsfield Head Start in 2023. Head Start is among programs taking part in a collaborative effort to improve access for early childhood education in the city. THE BERKSHIRE EAGLE

f w i n

PITTSFIELD — In education, a strong start doesn't just matter. It's crucial.

With that in mind, Pittsfield Public Schools, in cooperation with Berkshire United Way and early childhood educators, is using a \$250,000 grant to clear obstacles to early childhood classes for city children.

"With this grant, we are not just expanding preschool access — we are creating a stronger, more equitable early learning system," interim Pittsfield Superintendent Latifah Phillips said of the initiative. "Every child in Pittsfield deserves to enter kindergarten ready to succeed, and this investment allows us to work alongside our community partners to make that a reality."

LINK [HERE](#) FOR ARTICLE

CPPI Priorities:

- **Expansion of access to affordable quality preschool.** Through subsidies and scholarships, via a mixture of public and private classrooms - supported by community resources (mental health and social services) while closing transportation gaps.
- **Building locally aligned quality.** Strengthen and align curriculum, policy, assessments, and professional development - reflective of evidence-based best practice.
- **Equitable access to special education and inclusion.** Ensure full inclusion of children with disabilities across all settings.

..ON AUGUST 13TH...

Dear CPPI Grantee,

We're pleased to announce that the Fiscal Year 2026 Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative grant packages have been approved. You can expect to receive your contract documents shortly.

We kindly ask that you execute and return your contract as quickly as possible upon receipt.

I will be reaching out to you directly to address any corrections needed for your **Direct Service Summary** and **Budget**. Please note that grant funds cannot be drawn down until all corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of and approved by your Grant Manager.

Thank you for your partnership and your continued commitment to serving the children and families of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,
The CPPI Team

Kathie Lange

Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative Grant Manager
Department of Early Education and Care
1441 Main Street, Suite 230
Springfield, MA 01108
Katherine.M.Lange@Mass.Gov

NARRATIVE RESPONSES

Section 1: Needs Assessment

Section 2: Cost Modeling

Section 3: Strategic Plan

Narrative #1 - Introduction/Process. The Pittsfield Public Schools (PPS), in partnership with community-based organizations (CBOs), has leveraged data from an extensive community-wide Needs Assessment—conducted by SchoolWorks in 2024 and supplemented by BERK12 in 2025—to inform its current and future CPPI implementation strategic plan, and prioritize specific activities for the early implementation (2025) application. A number of activities supported information collection (data, including both quantitative and qualitative) as follows:

- Needs Assessment ([HERE](#)) base (conducted by SchoolWorks in September 19-20, 2024)
- Needs Assessment ([HERE](#)) supplemental (conducted by BERK12 and PPS, May 2025)
- Information shared in network meetings (monthly, in person or virtually)
- Peer exchanges regionally (in Berkshire County), through virtual state-wide networking activities, and during a site visit to Northampton Public Schools' CPPI program
- Data review
- Site interviews (conducted by BERK12, Winter-Spring 2025)
- Historical and ongoing early childhood network and program efforts and activities, such as the recent *Child Care: A Strategy for Economic Vitality in Berkshire County* (2025).

As listed, a comprehensive Needs Assessment—including focus groups and a records review—was conducted by SchoolWorks in September 2024 in support of the Pittsfield CPPI planning grant. Upon review of the findings, several key gaps were identified by the network, the BERK12 team, and ABT. To address these and offer a more complete understanding of community needs, BERK12 undertook a supplemental round of data collection and analysis (survey, [HERE](#)). This effort focused on: expanding the survey dataset to gain a clearer understanding of barriers families face when accessing early childhood education, such as limited hours, year-round care availability, and transportation; exploring the impact of half-day programs; assessing the awareness among families without children currently in care—do they know what early childhood options are available to them, and; documenting additional data related to special education needs, including the number of students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Leadership Team Structure and Grant Management

A strong partnership and governance structure becomes a key driver for collective action to meet CPPI Grant Goals.

- The leadership team should continue to reflect diverse perspectives from across the community.
- Engage in a process that re-evaluates current members and identify key stakeholders in the early education community.
- Convene a group that will be effective at making strategic decisions.

Grant Goals	Activities Under Development ³
Identify who is on the Strategic Leadership Team and how they will address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reflects diverse perspectives including key community leaders (district and local) ✓ Responsible for the needs assessment and strategic planning ✓ Provides ongoing oversight and strategic direction during implementation ✓ Identifies and monitors community-level KPIs ✓ Provides directions to annual grant planning for yearly application process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS Early Childhood Coordinator will facilitate the Strategic Leadership Team in reviewing the Strategic Plan goals to confirm diverse perspectives are represented on the committee by September 30, 2025 • Team will also review and adjust the proposed timeline in the plan by September 30, 2025 • As indicated in the Plan, subcommittees will be formed and facilitated by the CPPI Program Coordinator and CPPI Instructional Coach by September 30, 2025 • PPS Early Childhood Coordinator will collaborate with the external vendor (in budget) on needs in grant planning (such as evaluation) for the yearly application process - an ongoing process
Identify who is on the Operational Grant Management Team and how they will meet the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Includes representation from all participating LEA and CBOs ✓ Manages day to day coordination of grant activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS Early Childhood Coordinator will collaborate with the external vendor to make certain the LEA and CBOs are all represented on the team by September 30, 2025 • PPS Early Childhood Coordinator and CPPI Program Coordinator will set and maintain agendas and notes - an ongoing process

DIRECT SERVICE SUMMARY

Transition tasks

Hiring Team meeting

Posting for roles (BUW is reviewing)

Interviews/Hiring

Planning meetings (BUW/PPS/Project Manager)

- Review of documents/timeline/tasks
- Clarify budget/payment processes/organizational structures
 - Strategic Leadership Team/Grant Operational Team

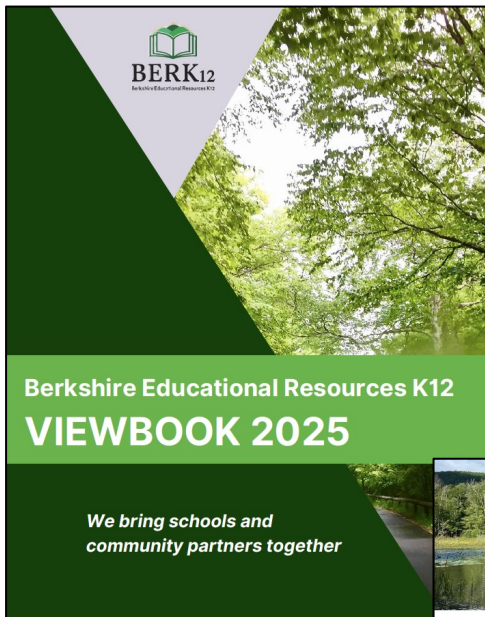
Review and confirm with teams

Calendars and Tasks

Networking & Advocacy

- BSTA (W. Ballen)
- Dashboard/Website Transition
- Viewbook





ADDITION



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- About BERK12
- Major areas of focus
- Collaborative projects
- Professional development
- Networking and advocacy
- Sustainability
- Partners
- List of services offered

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

For nearly a decade, BERK12 has worked to bring together school districts, educators, and the communities they serve to strengthen education across Berkshire County. As we reflect on this journey, we are reminded of both the challenges and the promise of our collective work.

Our fundamental focus has always been on the fact that our county's cities and towns face intense pressures from rising operating costs while also carrying the responsibility of providing effective, efficient, and high-quality schools. This tension is real, and it requires collaboration, creativity, and a willingness to explore new and promising solutions. BERK12 exists because no single district or community in our region can address these challenges alone. We are stronger, and the education we offer our students can be better, when we work together.

Throughout this viewbook you will see examples of what that collaboration looks like in practice. From the Berkshire multi-district *Portrait of a Graduate* initiative to cross-district professional development, from sustainability studies to expanded preschool access, BERK12 has become a means for ideas to take root and partnerships to thrive. These efforts are not only about improving districts' academic programs and educational excellence; they also can create conditions for pathways to long-term fiscal sustainability.

We are proud of the progress that has been made, but we are also aware that there is more work to be done. The future of public education in Berkshire County depends on our shared commitment to ensuring that every child whom our school districts are charged with educating has access to a full range of educational opportunities, and that every community has schools they can sustain and celebrate.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support in this important work. Together, we can meet today's challenges and build a stronger future for our students and our region.

With gratitude,
Andrea Wadsworth, BERK12 Chair, 2025
William Cameron, BERK12 Chair, 2026

LINK [HERE](#) FOR AN ELECTRONIC COPY

Research Towards Partnerships

Mohawk Trail-Hawlemont
Northern Berkshire Districts
Gill-Montague



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

AGENDA, AUGUST 21, 2025

- I. New Member Introduction
- II. Review of Minutes from July 31, 2025
- III. BERK12 Phase III Plan and Timeline
 - Key Questions to Address (follow up to July 31 meeting)
 - Role of the Steering Committee/Advisory Groups
 - Site Visits
- IV. Maintaining Community Engagement
 - 2D8T Table at Mary Lyon Foundation Resource Fair (MTRS 9-17-25)
- V. Budget Update
- VI. Public Comment

Meeting Goal: Prepare for Phase III with a review of draft work plan, budget, timeline, questions, and contingencies.

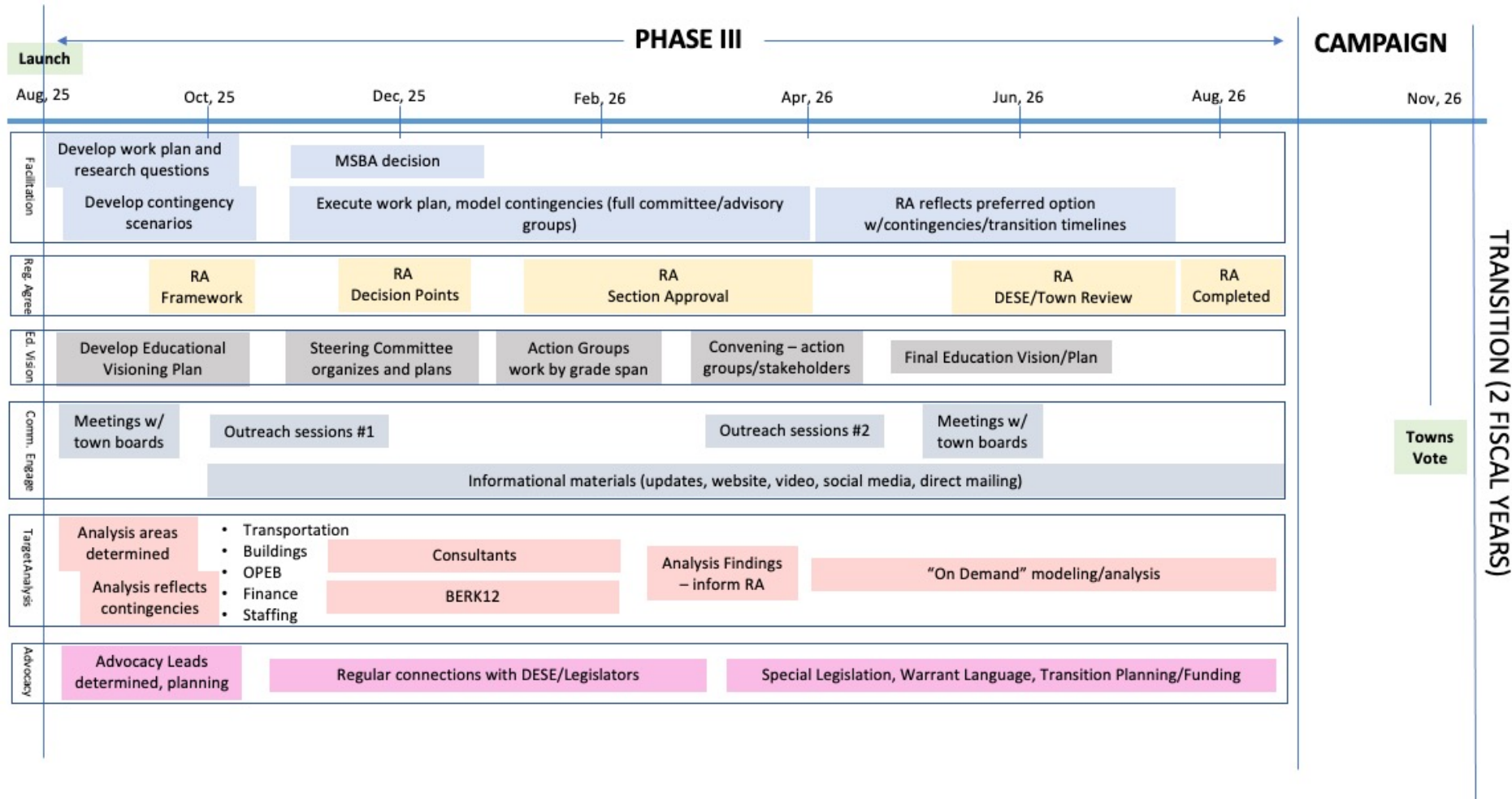


BERK12 PHASE III PROPOSAL

AT THE END OF PHASE III

- **DRAFT REGIONAL AGREEMENT**
- **PLAN FOR PUBLIC INFO/CAMPAIGN
LEADING INTO TOWN VOTES**

1. **Completed draft Regional Agreement.** The primary goal of Phase III is to complete a regional agreement that can be acted upon by the Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont School Committees and, ultimately, residents of the 8 member teams. The regional agreement will meet DESE requirements. This will include and/or be supported by:
 - a. Necessary special legislation and warrant language will support town votes anticipated for the fall of 2026
 - b. An educational vision for the merged district (long-range plan) will be developed and serve a vision/value proposition to the community
 - c. Articulation of potential contingencies and transitions
 - d. Responses to pressing (informed through public sessions) necessary to ensure residents can make an informed decision/vote (transportation, finance, buildings, etc.)
 - e. Any additional and/or required regionalization documentation by DESE and/or towns
2. **Public Informational Campaign Plan.** An initial set of supporting materials (presentations, summary briefs, etc.) and an outreach plan designed to inform and engage the public will be co-developed with the Steering Committee and community outreach advisory group. The implementation of this plan (campaign) will occur in September 2026 through the town votes (targeted for November 2026). *Note: Specific resources (materials and personnel/hours) for this campaign are not part of the Phase III Proposal and will be determined by the BERK12 team and Steering Committee.*



PHASE III WORK PLAN – (6) TASK AREAS

Project facilitation: work plan, meetings, oversight/facilitation, administration/logistics, etc.

➡ **Regional agreement (drafting):** agreement vetted by DESE, approved by Steering Committee and School Committees

➡ **Educational visioning:** community engagement in refining educational plan, vision, reflect grade span/facility changes, programs/services/experiences

➡ **Community engagement:** ongoing outreach (information) and engagement/feedback sessions.

➡ **Targeted analysis:** additional analysis on transportation, finance, staffing, special education

Advocacy: visits, key state stakeholders, funding, MSBA

EDUCATIONAL VISIONING

BERK12 – INITIAL THOUGHTS

AIM: To engage school personnel, community stakeholders, and board members in the refinement of an educational vision for the MTRSD and HRSD as they become a single school district.

WHY? Develop shared vision and ownership; ensure equity/inclusion/whole-child; strengthen academic and co-curricular opportunities; build continuity within/across grade spans; maximize resources; strengthen relationships/trust/community.

FOCUS: Elementary (PK-5); 6th to middle/high; middle/high – POG

WHAT: Steering and advisory committees, build into community workshops/convenings

RESULTS IN EDUCATION PLAN, VISION, AND SET OF VALUE PROPOSITIONS

TARGETED ANALYSIS.PRESSING Qs

TRANSPORTATION

BUILDINGS

OPEB

FINANCE

STAFFING

ECONOMICS (IMPACT)



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

PORT TO BE SHARED WITH DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP:

Fall outreach to SBs

Fall/early winter community meetings (3x)

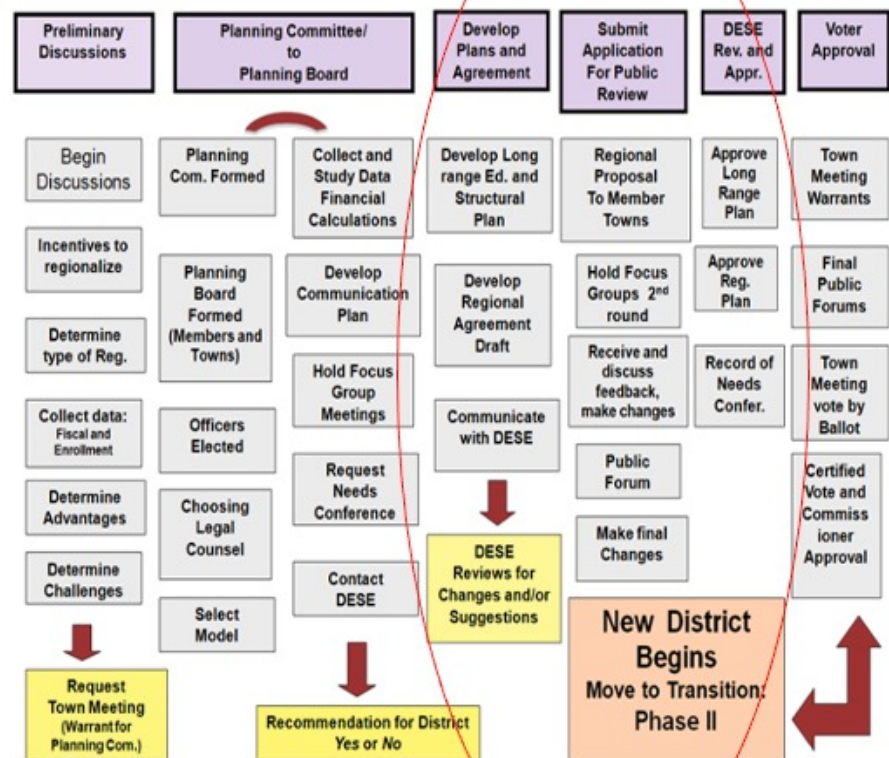
Late winter/spring community meetings (3x)

Monthly updates/press releases

- Website (additional products - video?)
- Summary documents/reports/informational briefs
- Direct mailing (at some point?)



Development of a post-Phase III informational campaign plan with associated tasks, timelines, personnel needs, and expenses - to include the time period between the Committee votes on a regional agreement, and the town votes (4-12 weeks later).



PHASE III FINANCES

1. Project Manager (@ 8hrs/week *through October* – paid by BERK12). Possible some hours from other members of research team (need to assess their other projects)
2. MTRSD/HRSD Earmark via Rep. Natalie Blais (\$25,000)
3. BERK12 Earmark via Senator Paul Mark (\$150,000), some can be dedicated to 2D8T Phase III effort
4. Other:
 - Community Compact
 - Other foundations (Barr)
 - Private donations
 - Town contributions
 - District borrowing

By Planning Board Vote:

Form a new regional school district, the **Great River Regional School District** unifying Pioneer Valley, Gill-Montague and Warwick school districts (into one PreK-12 district).



Bernardston Gill Leyden Montague Northfield Warwick

Pioneer Valley – becomes a grades 6-8 middle school
Turners Falls – becomes a grades 9-12 high school
Elementary schools (6), remain operational

A combined district of about 1,500 students



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THE VALUE PROPOSITION

FORMING A SINGLE, SIX TOWN DISTRICT,
WITH COMBINED MIDDLE & HIGH
SCHOOLS.

INCREASED EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES/SERVICES
FOR STUDENTS

LARGER COHORTS ENHANCE
STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND
PROFESSIONAL CLTURE

EFFICIENCIES FOR LONG-
TERM TOWN/TAXPAYER
SUSTAINABILITY



Our Opinion: Northern Berkshire school districts are wise to explore an ambitious team-up

Sep 10, 2025 2 min to read



Head football coach Marshall Maxwell leads a combined team of Mount Greylock, Drury and Hoosac Valley players.
JANE KAUFMAN — THE BERKSHIRE EAGLE

BERK12



Sponsors and Funding Supporters



BERK₁₂

Berkshire Educational Resources K12

SEPTEMBER 13, 2025

www.berk12.org
info@berk12.org



Next meeting....?