

WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

**REGIONAL AGREEMENT AMENDMENT COMMITTEE**  
**A Subcommittee of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School Committee**

**Minutes of February 26, 2018**

Held at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School  
600 Franklin Street, Whitman

Meeting convened: 6:01 p.m.  
Meeting adjourned: 7:44 p.m.

Voting members of the School Committee Members Present:

Robert Hayes (Chair), Fred Small (Vice Chair) arrived at 6:45 p.m., Christopher Howard

Other RAAC Voting Members Present:

Daniel Salvucci, Christopher George, James Egan, Rick Anderson, James Hickey

RAAC Voting Members absent:

Amy Wright

Administrators present:

Dr. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, Superintendent of Schools  
Christine Suckow, Executive Director of Business Services  
Kyle Riley, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services

MARS Representatives present:

Mac Reid, Steve Donovan, Stephen Hemman

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*1) Call to Order – Chair (Bob Hayes)*

Chair Hayes brought the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and announced the meeting was being recorded.

*2) Approval of January 29, 2018 minutes*

**VOTE: Mr. Anderson motioned; Mr. George seconded; voted to approve the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee (RAAC) meeting minutes of January 29, 2018, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

*3) PowerPoint presentation of Assessment formula*

Mr. Reid reported the draft of the amended agreement was sent to Christine Lynch, Governance and Facilities Program Manager at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for an initial review. As a result, there will be additional proposed language changes per Christine Lynch's suggestions.

Steve Hemman, Assistant Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS), presented a PowerPoint of the assessment formula and target share information. The presentation included how the state foundation budget is determined, what the minimum required local contribution is comprised of, the formula for Chapter 70 Aid funding, what net school spending is, and the statutory assessment calculation. Mr. Hemman explained that the School Committee determines the budget based on the needs of the students in the District, and must be at least at "net school spending." The summary of school assessments to the towns, using the statutory method is as follows:

Minimum Required Local Contribution (+) Amount over Net School Spending in District budget – e.g., by enrollment (+) Transportation (+) Capital/Debt (=) Assessment to Towns.

Mr. Hemman reviewed how Target Share is calculated. DESE develops the foundation budget for each community and the Department of Revenue (DOR) calculates the required minimum local contribution, based on local property values and income of residents. It was reported that Whitman’s target share should be 45.28% and is at 42.25%, a difference of 3.03%. The state will incrementally increase both town’s Target Share until these percentages match. Hanson’s Target Share should be at 54.19% and is actually at 50.00%, a difference of 4.19%. Of note, the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District receives \$4 million over the required Chapter 70 Aid. The goal of the state is to have no community pay more than 82.5% of its foundation budget.

The Committee discussed defining the October 1 Enrollment throughout the amended regional agreement to insure a clear and concise explanation, specifically for future interpretation of the regional agreement. This would require language whether school choice students or out-of-district-students are included or excluded.

#### *4) Review of Sections IV, V and VI*

Mr. Reid and Mr. Donovan reviewed the language and proposed edits by Christine Lynch. The Committee made language changes to the draft regional agreement document during the meeting. It was noted that throughout the amended agreement “regional school district” would be updated to “district”.

#### *Section IV – Budget*

The Committee reviewed the language updates and changes, as presented by the MARS representatives. For voting purposes, it was confirmed that two-thirds of the current ten member School Committee would require seven aye votes to pass the next year’s budget. Succinct language was added to clarify a passing vote as “The annual budget as adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Committee, must be approved by a simple majority vote at both town meetings.”

There was a brief discussion on what-if scenarios for mandated and non-mandated bussing costs related to operating costs and defined operating costs to “include all costs except capital, debt, and transportation costs as defined in Section V (C & D).” The Committee briefly discussed capital costs and keeping the current \$5,000 threshold as is “As relates to the elementary and middle schools in each town, capital costs shall include, but not be limited to, such expenses described above as exceed five-thousand dollars (\$5,000).”

#### *Section V – Apportionment and Payment of Costs Incurred by the District*

October 1 Enrollment was clarified as “resident pupil enrollment in all member towns in the District and Out-of-District placements on October 1 of the fiscal year immediately preceding the year in which the member towns vote to authorize the incurring of debt.”

Pupil transportation cost language was outlined and updated according to laws and regulations by the state.

#### *Section VI – Incurring of Debt*

The presented language was accepted.

The Committee discussed Section X – Withdrawal of Elementary Grades Pre-K to 8, of the Amended Regional Agreement. The Committee discussed eliminating this section due to the ramifications should one town withdraw from the region and the responsibility of liabilities and assets in the aftermath that would require a new regional agreement for the remaining grades.

**VOTE: Mr. Egan motioned; Mr. Small seconded; to remove Section X – Withdrawal of Elementary Grades Pre-K to 8 of the Amended Regional Agreement as discussed. The motion passed unanimously.**

*5) Vote on amendments to complete Regional Agreement*

The Committee will meet to review all amendments on March 19, 2018.

*6) Public participation*

Chair Hayes reminded the community all are welcome to attend the public meetings and encouraged community input and discussion.

*7) Future meeting dates – 6:00-7:30 PM*

*Future dates: 3/19/18 and 4/30/18 if needed)*

The next meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2018, at the Regional High School library at 6:00 p.m.

*7) Adjourn*

**VOTE: Mr. George motioned; Mr. Small seconded; voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Lindberg

Meeting Materials and Handouts:

- 2/26/2018 RAAC meeting agenda
- 1/29/18 RAAC meeting minutes
- Modified Regional Agreement – showing original language & all changes
- “Clean” modified Regional Agreement – as discussed by RAAC
- “Final” version of Regional Agreement – if all sections approved
- PowerPoint – assessments and target share