

**Regional Agreement Amendment Advisory Committee (RAAAC)
Meeting Minutes for January 19, 2022 7:00 PM via Zoom**

Call to Order: Chair Dr. Mary McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Member Attendance: Dr. Mary McCarthy (Bolton), Brian Boyle (Bolton), Ellen Sturgis (Stow), Kathy Konno (Stow), Sharon Poch (Lancaster), Lorraine Romasco (Bolton), Leah Vivirito (Stow)

Guest Attendance: Kirk Downing, Superintendent NRSD

Absent: Jen Fletcher (Lancaster)

Approval of Minutes:

Discussion around the Regional Agreement's final approval which resides with the three member towns. Suggested amendment, "The School Committee will have approval of the regional agreement and will be presented to the three member towns for resident voting on final adoption."

Motion to approve minutes of January 5, 2021 as amended by Ms. Sturgis; seconded by Ms. Konno.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Boyle	Yes
Ms. Konno	Yes
Dr. McCarthy	Yes
Ms. Poch	Yes
Ms. Romasco	Abstain (not present)
Ms. Sturgis	Yes
Ms. Vivirito	Yes

Motion Passed 7-0-1

Volunteer to Take Minutes: Ms. Romasco

Meeting Highlights

Dr. McCarthy shared with the group that Mr. Rubinstein has stepped down from the RAAAC.

Dr. McCarthy provided an update on her communication with DESE regarding timing of their review of the updated NRSD Regional Agreement as detailed in an email shared with the RAAAC members, as well as an update on her request to the member town administrators requesting pre-read and printing of the full draft Agreement in the Annual Town Warrants. Members discussed timing considerations. Dr. McCarthy suggested the Committee add another working session to complete its review and recommended further discussion for consideration later in the meeting. Copies of the correspondence with members are attached to these minutes.

Questions for Kirk

Superintendent Downing provided an explanation and illustration of how DESE uses the annual October 1st Foundation Enrollment process and calculation to quantify the number of students who reside in the three member towns and who attend NRSD schools. The Foundation calculation directly impacts each town's annual assessment to help fund the District's operating budget. Historically, NRSD has not used DESE's calculation to apply its annual towns' assessment. Superintendent Downing shared his desire to align the District's process with that of DESE's to ensure alignment, transparency in calculation, and improve understanding among constituents.

Superintendent Downing also shared historical data comparing the number of incoming Kindergarten and graduating seniors and overall enrollment impact across a number of years versus the member town's annual census results. He will be sharing deeper analysis at the NRSC Budget Workshop scheduled for Saturday, January 20, 2022. Zoom link for public viewing can be found on the NRSC website.

Finally, Superintendent Downing also shared the data reflecting School Attending Reports by Town. The data is provided annually by each member town. The charts illustrate trends in the number of all full-time students, school aged 5 – 22, who attend District schools as of January 1st of each year.

Review of Regional Agreement Section VI District Budget

The members discussed a recommendation to include copy that would ensure each Town's Administrator and Finance/Advisory Chair could have access to budget related information they have previously requested with prior administrators and not received. Suggested copy insert: "At least two weeks prior to that public hearing, the Town Administrator and Chair of the Finance/Advisory Committee for each of the member towns may request detailed budgetary information, including all budget documents, spreadsheets, and backup materials used to support the District's budget request. Such information will be shared with all three member towns, regardless of the source of the request."

Ms. Sturgis explained that the recommendation would encourage greater transparency and partnership among town officials and District administration. Dr. McCarthy and Ms. Vivirito expressed concern in the overreach of the request. Superintendent Downing shared that the request seemed operational in nature and questioned its inclusion in a regional agreement. Ms. Vivirito suggested that the recommendation be considered for inclusion to the District's policies. Additional discussion followed. Ms. Poch suggested that the adjusted copy represents a process approach that could be memorialized in a standard meeting between the District Fincom/Towns' Finance or Advisory Board and the School Committee. Dr. McCarthy suggested that the Committee members consider a desired approach and come prepared to discuss and resolve at the next RAAAC meeting.

Additional RAAAC Meeting

The members discussed the need for an additional meeting to review the Audit Advisory section of the Agreement and discuss final review of the District Budget section.

Motion to add an RAAAC meeting on Wednesday, February 16th from 7:00 – 9:00 PM by Mr. Boyle. Seconded by Ms. Konno.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Boyle	Yes
Ms. Konno	Yes
Dr. McCarthy	Yes
Ms. Poch	Yes
Ms. Romasco	Yes
Ms. Sturgis	Abstain (not present)
Ms. Vivirito	Yes

Motion Passed 7-0-1

Adjourn: Ms. Poch motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 pm. Mr. Boyle seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Boyle	Yes
Ms. Konno	Abstain (not present)
Dr. McCarthy	Yes
Ms. Poch	Yes
Ms. Romasco	Yes
Ms. Sturgis	Abstain (not present)
Ms. Vivirito	Yes

Motion Passed 5-0-2

Next meeting February 16, 2022 7pm - 9pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lorraine Romasco