

Regional Agreement Amendment Advisory Committee (RAAAC) Meeting Minutes 1/5/2022 at 7:00 PM via Zoom

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

Attendance: Dr. Mary McCarthy (Bolton), Brian Boyle (Bolton), Ellen Sturgis (Stow), Kathy Konno (Stow), Jen Fletcher (Lancaster), Sharon Poch(Lancaster).

Absent: Lorraine Romasco (Bolton), Stephen Rubinstein (Stow).

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of December 8, 2021 by Boyle, seconded by Sturgis. Unanimous approval.

Volunteer to take minutes: Jen Fletcher

Overview of work done:

- Thank you to Brian for updating our documents.
- Discussed adding a footnote to the end of section 1 “Students with disabilities specified in their Individual Educational Program (IEP) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) may receive special education services through high school graduation or age 21 (whichever comes first.)” Unanimously agreed to add this in as a footnote.
- Discussion regarding section 2 B and whether or not to combine sections to highlight the school committee’s role, power and duties.
- Discussion on dating the 5 year review - 2020 / 2025 or 2021 /2026. Dr. McCarthy will contact town clerks to ask about census. FYI = All leases have to be reviewed in 2026.
- Discussion regarding if a treasurer can be a member of the committee. Dr. McCarthy will double check this answer (typically, the treasurer has not to be a member of the committee).
- Section 4 - Discussion regarding the metric and meaning of “geographic and population centers”. Talked about not wanting to have language limiting where the new High School building will / could be.
- District Budget section discussion

- Question to consider - Would it benefit the district to have a five year capital cost plan in order to give towns a better opportunity to plan their town budgets?
- Discussed adding a clause to state the committee should give consideration to Prop 2 1/2 when preparing and adopting a budget.
- Discussion surrounding how pupil numbers are determined for budget - using the DESE certified foundation enrollment numbers or actual pupil enrollment numbers in the buildings (This is a good question for Kirk Downing next meeting as he has been working on numbers).
- Discussion surrounding adding subsection C1 entitled “capital plans.”
- Discussion to add a footnote in regard to the capital budget and the future possibility of a district building being used by a cross section of differing town students.
- Discussion surrounding debt - subsection D (for the less amounts) or Subsection N (for the more amounts).
- Discussion surrounding Transportation section - Before the next meeting committee members will review the transportation section drafts and be prepared to ask questions regarding the way it’s currently drafted.
- Discussion surrounding section 11 - adding another town to the district would call for a review and addition of transitional language, procedures and then a new agreement.
- Discussion surrounding audits - forensic vs. annual audit. Discussed what is considered best practice and talked about having a different company complete the audit every five years.

Of note, remember we are an advisory committee. The school committee will have final approval of the regional agreement that gets presented to the towns for the needed majority vote at town meetings. Once the regional agreement goes to the school committee it will be a public document.

Adjourn: Ellen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm. Kathy seconded. Roll Call – unanimous.

Next meeting 1/19/2022 from 7pm - 9pm, with Kirk Downing.