

To: Selectboards and Town Administrators/Managers
From: STRPB Chair and Vice Chair/Secretary/Treasurer: Alan Genovese, Greg Snedeker, respectively
Cc: Town Clerks, Planning Board Members
Re: Special Election Update & Suggestion for an All Town Meeting
Date: August 7, 2026

Ballot Question update:

Thank you for your continued support and engagement in our work as we move forward with a vote on regionalization on October 6th. Although it may be on the same date as the vote for the proposed vocational school building project, one benefit might be that more voters participate in these very important ballot questions, albeit the 6/5 town regionalization proposals will help to mitigate future expenses for towns in a larger district (more affordable/sustainable and more opportunities for our students), while the other reinvestment in its vocational school that has served 19 towns very well over the past 55 years.

We met with the Town Clerks recently to listen to their ideas on how this might be handled in the respective town and they raised excellent questions/concerns that required further research. Amanda Hall, Northfield's Town Clerk, offered to research these questions and get back to the group. Ray Purington, Gill's Town Administrator, was gratuitous enough to help to coordinate this meeting as we explored various pathways to proceed.

Two questions will be presented to voters on separate ballots if the special legislation passes in the House and Senate and is signed by the Governor. This legislation allows all towns to vote on regionalization. Once it is signed (or not acted upon in 10 days by the Governor) it will be considered passed and that opens the timeline for the Planning Board to meet its obligation in requesting the Selectboards to hold a Special Election, which would be the same day as the Technical School Ballot question. The Planning Board will need to coordinate a 35 day notice to all Selectboards for this election. More later as we follow the progress of this legislation.

All Town Meeting:

We have learned a lot in our research regarding the benefits for both the towns and our students. We were charged to research the sustainability and affordability of a new regional school district and our findings support this mission. With declining enrollment at the heart of the structural issues facing our towns, regionalizing these school districts will help the towns mitigate its future costs.

We have also identified how cost pressures at the different levels of PreK-12 education of these districts will continue to place a heavy burden on the towns if something doesn't change. In the PVRSD towns, the theme at school committee and Town Meetings was that drastic reductions would need to be made, mostly at the elementary levels, because fixed costs at the secondary level are rigid, therefore, reductions at the high school level are limited due to state mandated

requirements in programming, courses and graduation. This put residents in an awkward position. If they do not sufficiently fund the school district, students will suffer and towns will need to assume the financial burden in their budgets. **This is not sustainable** and will become a common theme in the coming years!

We would like to share an econometric model at an All Town Meeting that identifies why this is not sustainable, along with an update on the regional agreements. The earlier we get this information presented to you and voters, the better understanding our towns will have as to how regionalization benefits students and towns.

Ray Purington has graciously offered the Gill Town Hall for an All Town Meeting if the Selectboards are interested in the Planning Board hosting one. We realize this is a busy time of year and every member may not be able to attend. The meeting will be recorded and we will invite both the public access networks to attend and record it. If interested, please let Greg Snedeker know what dates work best for you.

Potential dates and times:

Thursday, August 27, 6 PM or later

Thursday, September 3, any time

Monday, September 14, any time

Thank you again for your continued engagement in this process!

