

**Massachusetts Association of School Committees  
Regional Schools Subcommittee  
Courtyard by Marriot - Marlborough, MA  
September 17, 2009**

**In Attendance:**

Ellen Holmes, Chair	Ashburnham-Westminster Regional
Lynn Ryan	Assabet Valley V-T
Roberta Newman	Athol-Royalston Regional
Christopher Ghilarducci	Berkley School Committee
Joseph Gillis, Jr.	Bridgewater-Raynham Regional
Kosma Evangelidis	Essex Agricultural Technical School
John Skrip	Farmington River Regional
Kristin Boyle	Gill-Montague Regional
Joyce Phillips	Gill-Montague Regional
Pat Francomano	King Phillip Regional
Joan Petersen	Life Member
John Columbus	Narragansett Regional
Cliff Fountain	Quaboag Regional
William Flannery	Southeastern Regional V-T
Mindy Kempner	Southeastern Regional V-T
Dina Sullivan	Triton Regional
Tom Evans	Whitman-Hanson Regional

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:10 pm by E. Holmes.

**II. Introduction of New Members**

The Chair welcomed our new and returning members. The Committee list was circulated for review/corrections.

**III. Updates**

**July Conference Call**

Jay Sullivan and Christine Lynch joined us for this successful conference call. Those who took part found it helpful. We plan to use this in place of a regular meeting as well as for important DESE updates between meeting dates this year.

**Franklin County Group**

Joyce Phillips provided members with an update of the advocacy activities of this group, and its support of regional school issues.

**IV. Legislative Update**

**a.) Senate Bill 269**

Senator Rosenberg has submitted this bill with several legislative co-signers supportive of regional school issues. The bill would roll regional school transportation funding into chapter 70 as a specific factor for regions. The major concern should be regional incentive aid was last seen entering chapter 70 years ago. It has not been seen by regions since. The same fate may await regional school transportation. (It may also be a way to silence the voices of regional school committee members who point out the depth of the shortfall in under funding this line item (separate and distinct). The proponents believe that this is a way to lessen the high percentage swings of the past few years. Also, as it currently exists, regional school transportation is vulnerable to 9C cuts by the Governor. If it were rolled into chapter 70, the legislature would have to give their consent to such a cut. The additional problem is bringing the very low percentage of funding for regional school transportation from FY10 into chapter 70. That would be the benchmark. As a separate line item, we can point out that community members in regions are being under funded by the Commonwealth "X" % in this line and have comparisons that show what 100% would be vs. what is proposed/delivered by their representatives. (The MASC Regional Chair will contact legislators on the bill for clarification as to their thoughts on the bill.)

(D. Sullivan and J. Petersen leave at 8:05pm)

**b.) MSBA Funding**

MSBA intends to no longer allow three percentage points for community use of proposed school building. The three points would be rolled into the category of creating new regional school districts. No points will be given to existing regional districts that have building projects just because they are already a region. Model school points are not available for elementary or middle schools.

In addition, we discussed the status of the Berkley/Somerset discussions (building project – regional governance); the collapse of the Lunenberg/Ayer/Shirley discussions (and the restart with just Ayer/Shirley); and the progress of the Essex Agricultural building and expanded region initiative.

**c.) Performance Contracting and Net School Spending**

School Committees who enter into 4+ year leases for utilities under these performance contracts are now being told that only the first three years count as operational expenses. After three years, the costs are considered by DESE as capital expenses. These are then expenses that are factored into Net School Spending. While they may present no issue for communities above N.S.S., they do present a challenge if you find your district at or below N.S.S. If you are 10% below, you will face the withholding of funds as a consequence. The additional challenge may also be one from the local communities who have the right to approve at the voting booth capital expenditures. Though it was not one when you entered into it, it becomes a capital expense at the start of year four. (MASC Regionals will want to seek further comment and guidance on this matter.) (K. Evangelidis leaves at 8:40pm)

**V. Review and Approval of Minutes**

The Chair had members review all of the minutes from AY'09 for their posting to the MASC's new, updated website. Motion to approve AY'09 minutes for posting to MASC website by R. Newman; seconded by M. Kempner.

**VI. Schedule of Future Meetings**

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009; November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 (DESE teleconference)/ November 18<sup>th</sup> informal mtg approx 9pm after cracker barrel; January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010; March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010; April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010; May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

**VII. Adjournment**

**MOTION** to adjourn by R. Newman; seconded by M. Kempner. Unanimous 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted  
E. Holmes, Chair.