

# Gateway Regional School District

Blandford-Chester-Huntington-Middlefield Montgomery-Russell

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Town Selectboards

Re: FY-19 Budget Process

Dear Selectboard Members:

The school committee continues to institute recommendations from the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS) study of the Gateway District. One of these recommendations was to more closely involve the towns in the district's budget process so that school committee members would have a better understanding of town issues with regard to finances and that town officials would have input into the district's budget process from the beginning.

To begin this process, the school committee is requesting that the selectboard appoint at least one town resident to participate in budget deliberations on the following dates:

- September 13 - 7:00 PM at the Gateway Complex
- November 8 - 7:00 PM at the Gateway Complex
- January 24 - 7:00 PM at the Gateway Complex
- March 7 - 7:00 PM at the Gateway Complex (Public Hearing)
- May 23 - 7:00 PM at the Gateway Complex (if needed)

While the agenda for these meetings has not been determined yet the committee has indicated spending at least an hour and a half on each of these dates on budget planning, deliberation and development. I anticipate that each meeting will be focused on a specific aspect of the budget process and that town representatives would be asked to provide information from the towns regarding finances (i.e., revenue trends as they relate to tax rates, levy limits, and future growth) so that all parties have a better fundamental understanding of the myriad factors that constitute developing budgets.

We hope that the individual(s) selected would be committed to attending each of these meetings, have a working understanding of town finances and budgeting, and be willing to both participate in these meetings in a collaborative manner and to share information with town officials and residents. We would like to have the names and contact information for your appointees no later than the end of July so that there is sufficient time for them to prepare information for the first meeting in September.

If you have any questions regarding this process and request, please don't hesitate to

contact Central Office.

Sincerely,

Dr. David B. Hopson  
Superintendent

Michele Crane  
School Committee Chair