One-Man/One-Vote
History

- 1987 – State asks regionals to comply
- 1999 – District runs study circles on issue
- 2000 – Option of district-wide elections with 2 members per town, residency requirements fails to win 7 town approval
- 2002 – Weighted option with 2 members per town sent to towns
- 2003 –
  - Weighted vote gets 5 yes votes
  - Joe Boudreau and Dan Jacques form ad hoc committee
- 2004 – Ad hoc committee reports to school committee
- 2005 –
  - Montgomery becomes 7th town to vote yes but Worthington rescinds their yes vote two days prior to Montgomery meeting
  - School Committee seeks legislative solution, not moved forward
- 2009 – School Committee revisits issue
- 2010 – Legal counsel seeks input from State DESE
- 2011-2012 – School Committee to meet with towns and select one of five options to move forward for consideration at 2011 annual town meetings. School Committee votes to draft new amendment
- 2012-2013 – School Committee moves forward district-wide vote with residency requirements – was not ratified by 7 towns
Options under Chapter 71, Section 14E

1. Electing committee members by voters in member communities with each community’s members representation apportioned according to population
2. Electing members in district-wide elections
3. Electing members in district-wide elections with residency requirements
4. Weighing the votes of committee members according to the population they represent
5. Appointing members by locally elected officials such as school board members
ATTORNEY’S OPINION

• Most reasonable options, and those being used regularly throughout the state are:
  o District wide elections with residency requirements (Option #3)
  o Weighted votes with local town elections (Option #4)

• Both of these options have been accepted by DESE, including keeping the same town representation as currently under either choice
OPTION 3 (DISTRICT-WIDE/RESIDENCY)

- Electing members with residency requirements in district-wide elections held during biennial state election.
  o Used by numerous regional districts in Mass
  o Regional agreement determines total numbers of committee members
  o Larger town could determine which candidate from a smaller town is elected to committee
  o No weighted vote required
OPTION 4 (WEIGHTED VOTE)

- Weighing the votes of committee members according to the population they represent
  - Used by many regional districts in Mass
  - Weighted vote may be by membership numbers or equal number of members with a weighted vote dependent on population by town
  - Members elected by the towns they serve
COMPARING OPTIONS

If a ‘quorum’ is designated to be 50+% of vote, and 50+% of membership, and we move to have two members represent each of the remaining 6 towns, then:

● Under the District-Wide/Residency option
  ○ The two biggest towns would not constitute a quorum
  ○ The four smaller towns would constitute a quorum

● Under the Weighted Vote Option
  ○ The two biggest towns, or the four smallest towns, would not constitute a quorum
DIFFERENCE IN VOTING REPRESENTATION/WEIGHTS WITH 6 TOWNS AND 12 MEMBERS (OPTION 3 - DISTRICT-WIDE/RESIDENCY = EQUAL VOTING WEIGHTS DUE TO DISTRICT WIDE ELECTIONS WITH RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT) VS 15 MEMBERS
DIFFERENCE IN VOTING REPRESENTATION/WEIGHTS WITH 6 TOWNS AND 12 MEMBERS (OPTION #4-WEIGHTED VOTES) VS 15 MEMBERS

Current vs. Weighted Votes

Blandford
Chester
Huntington
Middlefield
Montgomery
Russell

Percent of Vote by Town

Current Vote
Weighted Vote
Options Gateway has put forward

District-Wide/Residency (Option #3)

- Voters elect representatives from each town through district-wide vote
- No weighted votes
- Equal weight/number of representatives from each town
- Failed twice

Weighted Vote (Option #4)

- Voters elect representatives from their town at their town elections
- Votes (and attendance for Quorum) are then weighted based on town population (census)
- Failed once (due to reconsideration)

These are the two most frequently used by other regional school districts in Massachusetts.
Next Steps — Questions - Recommendations

• The DESE is recommending that the School Committee comply with MGL C71,S14E
• School Committee should move forward a potential solution for member town approval as a regional agreement amendment
• Both weighted (once) and district wide elections with town residency (twice) have failed
• Weighted vote came closest to passage with all towns voting for it at one point