

NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Ashby – Pepperell – Townsend, Massachusetts

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FILLING THE BUDGET GAP BY SHARING RESOURCES

North Middlesex Regional School District is examining a potential relationship with the Quabbin Regional School District. The main goal of this relationship is the sharing of administrative resources. It will not expand our district to include those towns; each district will retain its current, separate composition. It will be of a finite length of time, and needs to be approved by the Dept of Education. Nothing has been decided at this time.

The reasons for exploring this are twofold. First, by sharing our resources, we can enhance the educational experience of the children of this district without spending any additional taxpayer funds. When the state of the economy becomes this challenging, it becomes extremely difficult to maintain the forward motion this district has achieved. Under an arrangement such as this one, portions of the salaries of various administrators can be charged to the Quabbin District; in exchange, there are resources in place there that North Middlesex could benefit from but could not otherwise afford if a position or program had to be hired or created.

The second reason has its origins at the state level. As we speak, legislation is being drafted to impose the regionalization of school districts across the Commonwealth. It will be presented this fall, and seeks to reconfigure the present structure of school government. Single town districts will be merged with their neighbors, and already- regionalized districts like ours may be consolidated. These enlarged districts are seen as more efficient than the small, parochial structure in place now. The state of Maryland has approximately the same number of students as Massachusetts: we have 329 school districts; they have 24. We here in Massachusetts can expect our student to district ratio to more closely represent Maryland's in the next few years. The administration would like to be in a position to determine its own path, rather than wait for the state to dictate its future.

What is in this for the parties involved? North Middlesex gets to apportion a share of its administrative costs, further reducing that portion of its budget; Quabbin gets someone to fulfill the duties of a superintendent, an office currently vacant; the children of the district get access to educational opportunities that at present are at the mercy of the current economic climate; and all of us get to exercise some say in the direction of our future as a district.

The North Middlesex Regional School Committee will be discussing this further on Monday, June 29th at 7:00 PM at the North Middlesex Regional High School. The public is encouraged to attend.

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