

# MTRSD Regional Agreement Amendment Articles



## What's the district trying to accomplish?

The MTRSD School Committee has proposed three amendments to the MTRSD Regional Agreement

The purpose of the amendments, in aggregate, is to alter the way each member town's enrollment is counted for the purpose of calculating operating and capital assessments.

Currently, assessments are based, in general, on the number of town students who are attending District schools.

The proposed amendments would instead use each town's Foundation Enrollment, which includes all students for whom the town is financially responsible under Massachusetts law.



### Consistency with DESE

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education uses Foundation Enrollment for the purpose of determining all types of enrollment-based education funding, including c.70 state aid to education. Foundation enrollment is also used by many other regional districts as the basis for town assessments.



### History of Charter and School Choice

In Massachusetts, all towns are deemed "financially responsible" for educating all resident children who attend public school. The Mohawk Trail Regional Agreement was adopted at a time when all of these children went to their local public school; there were no charter schools and no option to "choice" to another public school. When these options became available, the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) continued to count "choice" and charter students in each town's Foundation Enrollment, because towns continued to be financially responsible for these students' education.



### Update the District Formula

The Mohawk Trail Regional Agreement has failed to keep up with these changes. The District's formula for determining each town's proportionate share of operating and capital assessments continues to be based on the five-year rolling average number of resident students who attend District schools, excluding "choice," charter and other students (such as certain special education students) who attend public schools in other (non-vocational) districts. The Mohawk Trail District spends approximately \$2.6 million to fund choice, charter and out-of-district special education tuitions; however, none of these students are included in any town's enrollment calculation.

The proposed amendments would not mean that a town would itself pay the charter or choice tuitions for its resident students. Rather, these students would simply be included, along with all other students, in the town's total enrollment number. Towns would continue to pay only their proportionate share of total operating and capital assessments. This change would be phased in over a period of five years so that the impact on any town – positive or negative – would be incremental.