

# **Selected Materials on School District Regionalization and Collaboration**



Dr. F. E. Engleman, Commissioner of Education

February 3, 1953

Regional High School Planning Committee

The towns of Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge have taken steps to establish a regional school district for the purpose of maintaining a six-year high school. The following is a brief statement of the procedures of the towns in taking this action:

1. A Temporary Regional School Planning Committee was appointed under the provisions of Section 298b of the 1951 Supplement to the General Statutes by action of the three towns: Bethany in October, 1951; Woodbridge in May, 1952; and Orange in June, 1952.
2. The Temporary Regional School District Committee submitted the following report dated October 30, 1952 to each of the towns:

Report on Recommendations of the Temporary Regional School Planning Committee For the Towns of Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge

A Temporary Regional School Planning Committee formed in accordance with Section 298b of the 1951 Supplement to the General Statutes, consisting of Mrs. Henry Bunting, Mr. Nathan Fedoloff, Mr. Henry P. Treffers and Mr. Theodore Wolfe from the town of Bethany; Mr. John Martin, Mr. Thomas J. O'Sullivan, Mr. Daniel Schmidt, Jr. and Mrs. Stanley Wright from the town of Orange and Mr. Charles Gostelle, Mr. Robert Dickgiesser, Mr. Charles C. Hitchcock and Mr. Francis Martino from the town of Woodbridge, having met since August 1951, has concluded as follows:

1. That it is advisable to set up a Regional School District for the towns of Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge to build and administer a high school for grades 7 through 12.
2. That the school should be built in the town of Woodbridge.
3. That upon the basis of projected enrollments the regional junior-senior high school should accommodate approximately 1000 students to take care of the needs of the three towns until 1961 and that the cost of providing the land, developing the site and constructing and equipping the buildings has been estimated to be \$1,685,000.
4. That the committee recognizes inequalities and limitations in the present Act Concerning Regional Schools which should receive further study.

The members then voted to present the following resolution to their respective towns:

Resolved: That the towns of Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge join in the establishment of a regional school district with the school located in the town of Woodbridge for the purpose of providing the necessary facilities and administering grades 7 through 12 of the public schools.

The Temporary School Planning Committee voted that this report, together with the minutes be filed with the report on recommendations to the towns.

- 3/ This recommendation provides for the creation of a regional school district composed of the towns of Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge, three small towns suburban to New Haven to maintain a six-year high school. These towns are facing the necessity of providing their own secondary school opportunities instead of paying tuition to neighboring cities. In addition, the establishment of a six-year school will help meet the elementary school housing problem by providing for grades six and seven in the new school. Enrollments show a few over 500 pupils in grades seven to twelve as of September, 1952. Projected enrollments indicate 600 pupils by September, 1954, when the school may be expected to be ready. By 1961-62, on the basis of recent experience, the enrollment will reach 1,100 or more than double the present enrollment.
- 4. In accordance with the provisions of Section 303b of the 1951 Supplement to the General Statutes; each of the towns held a special election to act upon the recommendation of the Temporary Regional School District Committee that it join with the other two towns "in the establishment of a regional school district with the school located in the town of Woodbridge for the purpose of providing the necessary facilities and administering grades seven to twelve of the public schools." As shown by the certificates of the respective town clerks the vote of the towns was as follows:

Town	Date of Election	Number voting		Total
		Yes	No	
Bethany	Jan. 17, 1953	291	52	343
Orange	Dec. 20, 1952	470	37	507
Woodbridge	Nov. 4, 1952	983	71	1,054

- 5. In view of the fact that the towns involved have made a careful study of their problem through the work of the Temporary Regional School Planning Committee, that this committee has had the assistance and advice of the assigned Rural Superintendents and that the staff of the Department has acted in a consultative capacity, the Regional Planning Committee after reviewing the report of the Temporary Regional School Planning Committee recommends the following action:

VOTED: That the State Board of Education, acting in accordance with the provisions of Section 303b of the 1951 Supplement to the General Statutes, approves the establishment of a regional school district composed of the towns of Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge, for the purpose of maintaining a high school for grades seven through twelve and that such district be known as Regional High School District Number 5, in accordance with Section 312b of the 1951 Supplement to the General Statutes.

Regional High School Planning Committee

Paul D. Collier, Chairman  
Joseph A. Baer  
G. Wesley Ketchum  
Roger M. Thompson

W. H. T.  
G. H. T.  
M. H. T.  
L. H. T.  
J. H. T.  
I. H. T.  
H. H. T.  
G. H. T.  
F. H. T.  
E. H. T.  
D. H. T.  
C. H. T.  
B. H. T.  
A. H. T.

**§ 10-39. Temporary regional school study committee**

(a) Two or more towns may establish a regional school district in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(b) Two or more local or regional school districts may, by vote of their legislative bodies, join in the establishment of a temporary regional school study committee, hereafter referred to as the committee, to study the advisability of establishing a regional school district, and report to the respective towns in accordance with section 10-43. In performing its duties, such committee may employ an architect to assist in estimating the cost of providing school facilities, an appraiser to establish the value of assets of each participating school district and such other professional consultants or personnel as may be needed, provided the committee shall not incur obligations which exceed the moneys received pursuant to section 10-42. The committee shall continue until dissolved pursuant to section 10-43 but no longer than two years from the date of its organization unless the legislative bodies of the participating towns vote to extend the life of the committee for a period not to exceed two years.

(c) Two or more boards of education may conduct a preliminary study of the advisability of establishing a regional school district, and if their findings are affirmative, such boards of education, except as provided below, shall submit a written report to the chief executive officer in each town served by such boards. Within thirty days of the receipt of the report, such officer shall call a meeting of the legislative body of the town which shall consider the report and vote on the question of establishing a temporary regional school study committee pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. In the case of a regional board of education, such board shall call a meeting of the regional school district for such purposes.

(d) A regional school district may participate as a region in any study undertaken pursuant to subsection (b) or (c) of this section. In the case of a preliminary study, the regional board of education shall submit the written report to a regional school district meeting called to consider the report and vote on the question of joining in the establishment of a temporary regional school study committee pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. A regional school district may vote to appoint five members to a temporary regional school study committee at a regional school district meeting. Two of such members shall be members of the regional board of education. The towns which are members of such regional school district shall be "participating" towns for the purposes of notice, reports and referenda under sections 10-41 to 10-43, inclusive, and section 10-45. If a new regional school district is established by the referenda, the board of education of the regional school district which participated in the study shall be deemed a town board of education for purposes of section 10-46a.

**§ 10-40. Appointment of committee members**

The legislative body of each town joining in the establishment of such a committee shall appoint to such committee five members at least two of whom shall be members of the board of education of such town. The town clerk of each town shall immediately give notice of the appointments made to the Commissioner of Education. Within thirty days of receipt of the last of such notices, the commissioner shall appoint a consultant to such committee. The consultant shall call the first meeting of the study committee within ten days after such appointment.

**§ 10-43. Reports to towns. Dissolution of committee**

(a) The committee shall, at least semiannually, make progress reports to the participating towns and the State Board of Education in such manner as the committee deems suitable. Upon completion of its study, the committee shall present a written report of its findings and recommendations to the State Board of Education and the town clerk of each participating town. If the committee finds that establishment of the proposed regional school district is inadvisable, its report shall include such findings and an explanation of the reasons for its conclusions. If the findings of the committee support the feasibility and desirability of establishing a regional school district, its report shall contain (1) the findings of the committee with respect to the advisability of establishing a regional school district, (2) the towns to be included, (3) the grade levels for which educational programs are to be provided, (4) detailed educational and budget plans for at least a five-year period including projections of enrollments, staff needs and deployment and a description of all programs and supportive services planned for the proposed regional school district, (5) the facilities recommended, (6) estimates of the cost of land and facilities, (7) a recommendation concerning the capital contribution of each participating town based on appraisals or a negotiated valuation of existing land and facilities owned and used by each town for public elementary and secondary education which the committee recommends be acquired for use by the proposed regional school district, together with a plan for the transfer of such land and facilities, (8) a recommendation concerning the size of the board of education to serve the proposed regional school district and the representation of each town thereon, and (9) such other matters as the committee deems pertinent. The capital contribution of each participating town shall be in the same proportion to the total purchase price or negotiated value of the property transferred as the number of pupils in average daily membership of such town as defined in section 10-261 for the school year preceding that in which the plan is approved by the State Board of Education bears to the total number of such pupils in the participating towns.

(b) If the committee finds: (1) Establishment of the proposed regional school district is inadvisable, the State Board of Education shall, within thirty days of receipt of such report, send to the committee and the town clerk of each participating town a statement of its agreement or

disagreement with the committee report and the reasons therefor. The town clerk shall make available copies of the report and the statement and publish notice thereof in a newspaper having general circulation in the town. Within thirty days after receipt of the statement of the State Board of Education, the committee shall present the report and statement to the legislative body of each participating town at a public meeting called for the purpose of acting thereon. The committee is dissolved upon presentation of its report to all participating towns; (2) establishment of a regional school district is advisable, the State Board of Education shall, within thirty days of the receipt of such report, determine whether the report contains the information described in subsection (a) of this section and shall, accordingly, accept or reject the recommendations of the committee. (A) If the recommendations are rejected, the State Board of Education shall advise the committee in writing of the reason for rejection. The committee may revise its recommendations and resubmit its report within thirty days of receipt of notice of the rejection and shall, in such case, file a copy of the amended report with the town clerk of each participating town. If the committee does not submit an amended plan or if the committee submits an amended plan which is rejected by the State Board of Education, the proposed regional school district shall not be established and the procedure in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall apply. (B) If the committee report is accepted, the State Board of Education shall certify to the town clerk in each of the participating towns that the committee recommendations have been approved and send a copy of such certification to the committee. The town clerk shall make available copies of the certified report and publish notice of the certification and availability of copies in a newspaper having general circulation in the town. Within thirty days after receipt of its copy of the certification, the committee shall hold a public meeting in each participating town to present the certified report. All participating towns shall hold a referendum on the same day in accordance with section 10-45. Upon completion of such referenda as may be held thereunder, the committee is dissolved.

**§ 10-45. Referendum on establishment of regional districts or addition or withdrawal of grades**

(a) Upon receipt of a copy of the certificate of approval, the committee shall set the day on which referenda shall be held simultaneously in each of the participating towns to determine whether a regional school district shall be established as recommended. Such referenda shall be held between forty-five and ninety days from the date of such approval. In the case of a recommendation from a study committee or a regional board of education to add or withdraw grades from the regional school district pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of section 10-47b, such referenda shall be held between forty-five and ninety days from the date of such recommendation. The committee or regional board of education shall immediately notify the

town clerk in each participating town of its decision. Upon receipt of such notice, the town clerk shall file the notice required by section 9-369a. The warning of such referenda shall be published, the vote taken and the results thereof canvassed and declared in the same manner as is provided for the election of officers of a town. The town clerk of each participating town shall certify the results of the referendum to the State Board of Education.

(b) The vote on the question shall be taken by a "yes" and "no" vote on the voting tabulator and the designation of the question on the voting tabulator ballot shall be "Shall a regional school district be established in accordance with the plan approved by the State Board of Education on .... (date)?" and the ballot used shall conform with the provisions of section 9-250. If the majority of the votes in each of the participating towns is affirmative, a regional school district composed of such towns is established and shall be numbered in accordance with the order of the incorporation of the districts.

(c) If the majority vote of one or more of such towns is negative, the committee or, in the case of a study committee's or a regional board of education's recommendation to add or withdraw grades from the regional school district pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of section 10-47b, the regional board of education shall determine the advisability of immediately submitting the question to referendum a second time. If the committee or regional board of education so recommends, the committee or board shall notify the town clerk in each participating town of its decision. Within thirty days after receipt of such notice, the legislative body of the town shall meet to act upon the committee or board recommendation. If the legislative body in each of the participating towns accepts the recommendation, a second referendum shall be held in each participating town in accordance with the provisions of this section. If the majority of votes cast in each town is affirmative, the regional school district is established and numbered accordingly or grades are added to or withdrawn from the regional school district, as applicable.

#### **§ 10-47b. Addition or withdrawal of grades**

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, any regional school district which does not include all elementary and secondary grades may add or withdraw grades in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (1) or, if applicable, subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(1) Any regional board of education in a school district which does not include all elementary and secondary school grades may recommend a study of the advisability of the addition to or withdrawal of grades from the regional school district or, upon the request of two or more of the town boards of education of the member towns, shall recommend such a study to the chairmen of the town boards of education and chairmen of the boards of finance or other such fiscal authorities in each town affected. Within thirty days of receipt of such recommendation, such chairmen shall each appoint one of the members of their boards and



the chairman of the regional board of education shall appoint one member of the regional board from each member town to a study committee. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a consultant to the study committee. The study committee shall proceed in the same manner as the temporary regional school study committee except that the expenses of the committee shall be borne by the regional school district and shall not exceed three dollars times the number of pupils in average daily membership of such town and regional school districts as defined in section 10-261 and the committee shall submit its report to the participating towns no later than one year from the date of its organizational meeting. If the committee recommends a plan for addition to or withdrawal of grades from the regional school district and the referenda held in the manner provided in section 10-45 result in an affirmative vote in the regional school district as a whole, the participating towns shall implement the plan.

(2) Any regional board of education in a school district which does not include all elementary and secondary school grades and has a total of three member towns, each with a population between three thousand and seven thousand five hundred persons pursuant to subdivision (27) of section 10-262f and a combined population for such towns of at least ten thousand persons, but fewer than twenty thousand persons may recommend and develop a plan for the addition to or withdrawal of grades from the regional school district or, upon the request of two or more of the town boards of education of the member towns, may make such recommendation and develop such a plan. If the regional board of education recommends a plan for addition to or withdrawal of grades from the regional school district, referenda shall be held in the manner provided in section 10-45. If such referenda results in an affirmative vote in the regional school district as a whole, the participating towns shall implement the plan.

(b) The procedures in subsection (a) of this section shall not be used to dissolve a regional school district, but may be used to empower the regional school district to administer all programs which are provided in the member towns and are under the general supervision and control of the State Board of Education. In such case, if the vote in each member town affirms the expansion, the town boards of education in such member towns shall be dissolved in accordance with section 10-46a. If the vote is not affirmative in all the member towns, but is affirmative in a majority of such towns, the towns voting in favor of such expansion may initiate a study of the feasibility of establishing a regional school district to administer all programs which are provided in such towns and are under the general supervision and control of the State Board of Education. Such study shall be initiated and conducted pursuant to sections 10-39 through 10-45. In such case, the study may be made forthwith without using the procedures for withdrawal of a town or dissolution of a regional school district provided in sections 10-63a through 10-63c. If a second regional school district is so established by referenda, the first regional school district shall be dissolved. The State Board of Education shall

make the relevant determinations required by section 10-63c for such dissolution of an existing regional school district. The assets apportioned to the member towns of the new regional school district may be transferred directly to said district. If secondary schools are among the assets so transferred to the new regional district, said district shall accept applications from the remaining school districts for admission of secondary students for a tuition based on per pupil cost for a period of at least three years after the dissolution. The State Board of Education may withhold from the next grant paid pursuant to section 10-262i to the town or regional school districts so established an amount equal to the proportionate share to be borne by each such district of the cost of the services rendered by said state board during the dissolution of the regional school district.

**§ 10-47c. Amendment of plan**

With the exception of the terms which pertain to the capital contribution of member towns, the transfer of property to the regional school district, the grades included, the size of the board of education and the representation of each town on the board and the towns to be served by the regional school district, the terms of the plan approved through referenda pursuant to section 10-45 may be amended as follows: If a regional board of education finds it advisable to amend the plan or if the legislative body of a town served by the regional board of education requests amendment of such plan, the regional board of education shall prepare a report on the proposed amendment, including the question to be presented, file a copy with the Commissioner of Education and the clerk of each member town and make copies of such report available to the public at a district meeting called to present the plan. After such public hearing, the board shall set the date for referenda which shall be held simultaneously in each member town between the hours of six a.m. and eight p.m. At least thirty days before the date of the referenda, the regional board of education shall notify the town clerk in each member town to call the referendum on the specified date to vote on the specified question. The warning of such referenda shall be published, the vote taken and the results thereof canvassed and declared in the same manner as is provided for the election of officers of a town. The town clerk of each town shall certify the vote of the town to the regional board of education and the Commissioner of Education. If the majority vote in each town of the district is in favor of the proposed amendment to the plan, such amendment shall take effect immediately.

**§ 10-63a. Vote for withdrawal of town or dissolution of district**

(a) Any town which is a member of a regional school district may, pursuant to a vote of its legislative body, apply to the regional board of education to institute procedure for withdrawal

from the district or, in the case of a district composed of two towns, dissolution of the district as hereinafter provided.

(b) Any two or more towns which are members of a regional school district composed of three or more towns may, pursuant to a vote of the legislative bodies of the respective towns, apply to the regional board of education to institute procedure for the dissolution of the district as hereinafter provided.

**§ 10-63b. Committee to study issues relating to withdrawal or dissolution**

Within thirty days of receipt of an application pursuant to section 10-63a the regional board of education shall call for the appointment of a committee to study issues relating to withdrawal or dissolution. The committee shall consist of the following: One member of the board of education of each town within the district, to be selected by each such board, if any, or if none, an elector to be elected by the legislative body in such town; one member of the board of finance or comparable fiscal body of each town within the district to be selected by each such board or body; two members of the regional board of education, to be selected by such board, no more than one of whom may be a resident of a town making the application for the appointment of the committee; one member to be appointed by the Commissioner of Education, who shall not be a resident of any town within the district; the State Treasurer or the Treasurer's designee, and one member to be appointed by the regional board of education, who shall be an expert in municipal bonding and financing and who shall not be a resident of any town within the district. The members shall receive no compensation for their services, but their expenses and those incurred by the regional board in connection with withdrawal or dissolution procedures shall be paid by the towns applying for withdrawal or dissolution. The appointee of the Commissioner of Education shall call the first meeting of the committee, and the committee shall organize and function in accordance with section 10-41.

**§ 10-63c. Report of committee**

Within one year after its appointment, the committee shall prepare a written report that includes: (1) Its recommendation concerning the advisability of a withdrawal or dissolution; (2) a determination of the value of the net assets of the regional district; (3) an apportionment of the net assets to each member town on the basis of the ratio which the total average daily membership of such town since its membership in the regional district bears to the total average daily membership reported to the State Board of Education by the regional board of education up to and including the last such report; (4) a plan for settlement of any obligations and the transfer of property from the regional school district to the member town school districts; (5) a timetable

for the orderly withdrawal or dissolution of the regional district and establishment of local boards of education if none exist; (6) the question to be determined by the referenda; and (7) such other matters as the committee deems necessary. The provisions of sections 10-43 and 10-45, except as provided below, shall apply to the procedures for submission of the plan to the State Board of Education, action by such board, presentation of such plan to the member towns, action by such towns and the dissolution of the committee. The establishment of any new local board of education shall be in accordance with chapter 146.<sup>1</sup> Upon an affirmative vote in each member town, or, in the case of a regional school district that does not have a high school, any of the member towns, the regional board of education and member towns shall cooperatively implement the plan for dissolution or withdrawal of a member town.

**§ 10-158a. Cooperative arrangements among towns. School building projects. Student transportation**

(a) Any two or more boards of education may, in writing, agree to establish cooperative arrangements to provide school accommodations services, programs or activities, special education services, health care services, alternative education, as defined in section 10-74j, or administrative and central office duties to enable such boards to carry out the duties specified in the general statutes. Such arrangements may include the establishment of a committee to supervise such programs, the membership of the committee to be determined by the agreement of the cooperating boards. Such committee shall have the power, in accordance with the terms of the agreement, to (1) apply for, receive directly and expend on behalf of the school districts which have designated the committee an agent for such purpose any state or federal grants which may be allocated to school districts for specified programs, the supervision of which has been delegated to such committee, provided such grants are payable before implementation of any such program or are to reimburse the committee pursuant to subsection (d) of this section for transportation provided to a school operated by a cooperative arrangement; (2) receive and disburse funds appropriated to the use of such committee by the cooperating school districts, the state or the United States, or given to the committee by individuals or private corporations; (3) hold title to real or personal property in trust, or as otherwise agreed to by the parties, for the appointing boards; (4) employ personnel; (5) enter into contracts; and (6) otherwise provide the specified programs, services and activities. Teachers employed by any such committee shall be subject to the provisions of the general statutes applicable to teachers employed by the board of education of any town or regional school district. For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a committee below the rank of superintendent who holds a regular certificate issued by the State Board of Education and who is in a position requiring such certification.

(b) Subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, any board of education may withdraw from any agreement entered into under subsection (a) of this section if, at least one year prior to the date of the proposed withdrawal, it gives written notice of its intent to do so to each of the other boards. Upon withdrawal by one or more boards of education, two or more boards of education may continue their commitment to the agreement. If two or more boards of education continue the arrangement, then such committee established within the arrangement may continue to hold title to any real or personal property given to or purchased by the committee in trust for all the boards of education which entered the agreement, unless otherwise provided in the agreement or by law or by the grantor or donor of such property. Upon dissolution of the committee, any property held in trust shall be distributed in accordance with the agreement, if such distribution is not contrary to law.

(c) If a cooperative arrangement receives a grant for a school building project pursuant to chapter 173,<sup>1</sup> the cooperative arrangement shall use the building for which the grant was provided for a period of not less than twenty years after completion of such project. If the cooperative arrangement ceases to use the building for the purpose for which the grant was provided, the Commissioner of Education shall determine whether (1) title to the building and any legal interest in appurtenant land reverts to the state or (2) the cooperative arrangement reimburses the state an amount equal to ten per cent of the eligible school building project costs of the project.

(d) Any cooperative arrangement established pursuant to this section, or any local or regional board of education which is a member of such a cooperative arrangement which transports students to a school operated by such cooperative arrangement shall be reimbursed in accordance with the provisions of section 10-266m. At the end of each school year, any such cooperative arrangement or local or regional board of education which provides such transportation shall file an application for reimbursement on a form provided by the Department of Education.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about The Supervision District - What is it? Why is it Important?**

**By Terry G. Stewart**  
(with updates by administration as needed)

Unique to the education system used in Essex, Chester, and Deep River is an organization called the Supervision District. At first glance, the Supervision District appears to be a faceless and school-less layer of education spending that adds complexity to the overall budget process. Each year there are concerns this growing budget is an example of "taxation without representation". Others see the Supervision District as a key element of improving instruction, learning, and achievement across the Region.

Here is a look at some "Frequently Asked Questions" to help understand the Supervision District.

### ***What is the Supervision District and why should I care?***

The Supervision District is chartered through an agreement established in 1964 among the Boards of Education of Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4, and modified in 2000, to fund those programs and services that are best shared across the five schools in our communities. The Supervision District provides our communities the economies of scale of a larger multi-school district yet allows each town the autonomy to manage its own elementary school.

### ***How is the Supervision District different from the Region 4 and Local Boards of Education?***

The Supervision District is governed by a permanent committee of three members each from the Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards of Education. The town Boards of Education govern each town's elementary school. The Region 4 Board governs John Winthrop Middle School and Valley Regional High School. The Supervision District Committee meets every other month in addition to sponsoring committees involved with policy, negotiations, transportation and, when needed, searches for hiring region wide administrators. The Committee chair rotates annually among the chairs of the Boards of Education.

### ***What does the Supervision District do?***

The Supervision District Committee manages the budget for the Superintendent's Office which consists of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Pupil Services (Special Education), Supervisor of Pupil Services (Special Education), the Director of Technology, and the Business Manager. Through the Superintendent's Office, the Supervision District provides fiscal management, personnel, and legal support required by the towns and Region 4 Boards of Education.

The Supervision District also provides teachers and staff who work, or must be available to work, in any of the five schools such as special education, gifted and talented student support, summer school, world language at the elementary school level, music, and art teachers. Additionally, the Supervision District operates a state required pre-kindergarten program that provides early intervention support for students from the three towns. Finally, the District is responsible for student transportation for all five schools.

***How does the Supervision District improve education quality in the Region?***

Key to improving learning and achievement in our communities is increasing the cohesiveness and consistency of our PK-12 system. This means maintaining communication and coordination among the schools in curriculum design and development, professional development, and sharing best practices. The Supervision District also provides World Language instruction at the elementary level and programs that support accelerated students in the region such as the Mock Trial, Debate, Math Counts, and the High School Bowl teams. The Supervision District also sponsors the region's preschool program and summer school program that provides reinforcement instruction for identified students.

***How is the Supervision District budget created and approved?***

The Supervision District is the first budget approved in the overall education budget process. A draft Supervision District Budget is prepared by the Superintendent. This budget is debated by the Supervision District Committee and approved for a public hearing normally held in February. Following the hearing, a joint meeting of the entire membership of the local and Region 4 Boards of Education (33 members) is called to vote on the Supervision District budget. To be approved, each board must support the budget. If a board objects to a particular aspect of the Supervision Budget, the budget must be renegotiated until that support is obtained. In this way, a board is not forced to absorb spending it opposes. The resulting budget is then allocated to the Region 4 and local Boards' budget based on that board's percentage of students in the total enrollment in the Region. If one school wants a Supervision District program or position not needed or used by the other schools, those costs are passed directly to that board's budget alone and are not shared by the other boards.

***Why isn't the Supervision District budget directly accountable to the Town Board of Finance and the voters at the Annual Town Financial Meeting?***

Unlike the Local and Region 4 Boards of Education, the Supervision District is not an organization chartered by the state. The Supervision District is an administrative body created by agreement of the boards of education themselves to more efficiently pool the costs of shared programs and staff. Once created, the Supervision District budget is allocated to each board of education's budget. The elementary school budget is then directly reviewed by the Town Board of Finance and approved by the voters at the town financial meeting in May. Region 4 manages its own finances independently from the towns. Voters from the three towns directly approve the Region 4 budget at either a

Region 4 town meeting also held in May or a referendum. Over the past several years, the Region 4 budget has gone to referendum.

***Could a Board of Education "hide" increased spending in the Supervision District budget since it is not directly reviewed by the Board of Finance?***

This would be very difficult since there are 33 elected board of education members involved in the process, rarely sharing the same agenda. All hearings and meetings are held in public often with selectmen, board of finance members, citizens, and local press in attendance. It is also not in any board of education's interest to "hide" spending since this would jeopardize legitimacy with the public and support for programs over time. Finally, the local and Region 4 budgets, which include their portion of the Supervision District budget, are subject to direct questioning by members of the Board of Finance and the public at hearings and town financial meetings.

***Once the Supervision District Budget is approved, are costs allocated to the local Budget "locked in" and not subject to question or even removal prior to the Town budget being approved?***

No. Boards of finance can and do question the Supervision District Budget during the review process. While the board of finance cannot direct the board of education where to specifically cut funding, it can reduce the budget it recommends to the public to reflect its opposition to any line item in the budget, including the Supervision District allocation. It would then be up to the Board of Education to decide whether to cut funding from the local budget or seek an adjustment in the Supervision District Budget.

***How can I voice my opinion on these and other issues?***

- Attend Preliminary Budget Presentations by the Superintendent in December and January and the Supervision District Public Hearing in February.
- Comment and ask questions during the Town and/or Region 4 Budget hearings in April and May.
- Visit [www.reg4.k12.ct.us](http://www.reg4.k12.ct.us) where budget information will be posted.
- Communicate with your local or regional board of education members who all vote on the Supervision Budget.

About the author of the original content: Terry Stewart served as Chairman of the Region 4 Board of Education. He previously served as chair of the Essex Board of Education and has also chaired the Supervision District Committee. Revisions to original content have been made by Administration as necessary for updated accuracy