

MARS General Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: March 10, 2015		Location: Nashoba Valley
Attendees: See sign-in sheet		Legislative Breakfast
Topics/Items Discussed:	Actions Taken:	
Call to order	Steve Hemman called the meeting to order at 8:30 and invited everyone to enjoy their breakfast.	
Sen. Anne Gobi	Senator Gobi addressed the attendees and told them she and other are working to restore some of the regional transportation dollars lost to 9C cuts. Restoration is only possible through legislative action.	
Introductions	Steve invited everyone to introduce themselves.	
Legislative actions	Two bills proposed by MARS were passed last session. There are three bills proposed for this year.	
Regional Transportation	Governor Patrick cut regional transportation in his 9C cuts. MARS is working with the legislators to get the funds restored.	
Minimum Contribution	Steve asked that the minimum local contribution be set and left at that number.	
MAVA	David Ferrara thanked Steve for inviting him and thanked Nashoba Valley for a wonderful breakfast. David spoke about a bill proposed regarding developing a policy for six year career plans. MAVA supports the development of the policy.	
MASC	Ellen Holmes highlighted their priorities: restoring regional transportation funds, full funding for Circuit Breaker, Charter Schools reimbursement, revision of Chapter 70 funding, strengthening Children's Safety Net, support for early education programs, expanding technology access for all districts and students and relief from over regulation and new mandates.	
Rep. Steve Kulik	Praised MARS for how the organization went about raising concerns regarding the cut to regional transportation. He and other legislators are working with the Governor to try to back fill RT dollars for 2015 and increase funds for 2016.	
Maureen Marshall	Maureen asked Rep. Kulik to work with MARS to convince MSBA to ease up on restrictions for school buildings that are no longer needed for education and could be used for town purposes. Steve agreed to set up a meeting	
Rep. James Arceiro	Thanked Judy Klemkowicz for her openness and support. Large deficits exist in health care and other areas of the budget. Advocating improvements to Chapter 70.	
Megan Green	Attended the meeting on behalf of Sen. Jennifer Benson, who could not attend.	
Rep. Sheila Harrington	All of her districts are regional school districts, so she feels the pain of the 9C cuts. She is working with the new Governor, who says, "Be patient."	
Sen. James Eldridge	Trying to do the budget in the same time frame although the Governor's budget was delayed because he is new. They are looking at new revenue sources for FY2016.	
Charlie Lyons	Praised Steve Kulik's work for regional schools.	

Steve Hemman	Announced he will retire June 30, 2016. He wanted to give the Board plenty of notice to allow for a good search for his replacement. He thanked Maureen Marshall and Lynn Ryan for their support.
Maureen Marshall	Poor districts do not have access to PARCC pilot tests because of costs. She wants these opportunities available to all students and districts.
Alan Himmelberger	Health insurance continues to be one of his greatest financial challenges. MIAA increased the rates by 10.8%. We need some relief.
Ralph Hicks	The foundation budget needs to be changed to better support districts.
Ruth	Thanked Steve Hemman for all his work and his support for new superintendents.