

To: School Committee
From: Michael Sullivan, Superintendent
Date: May 7, 2017
Re: Report for May 9, 2017 Meeting

1. As you know, I presented five new staff reductions to you at your last meeting, with all of these having come after your approval of the FY18 budget. In consulting with Attorney Dupere on the proper decision making authority for these decisions, Russell makes a distinction between the straight reductions, which he believes do not require School Committee action, and the compression of the Gill Elementary grades 5 and 6 classes into a single class, which he frames as a significant enough change in how education is being provided that a Committee vote is warranted. Therefore, I would like to request that we make this matter an agenda item to be voted on at the next Committee meeting.

Sticking with the Gill Elementary combined class topic, since sharing this proposal with you last Tuesday, three families have contacted Principal Driscoll to say they wish to change their minds and have their student stay at Gill for grade six. So, I would like to use the time between now and our next meeting to see how things settle out with these decisions and hopefully present you with solid class size projections for your next discussion.

2. As of this writing, we are still working with Attorney Dupere to find a specialized attorney to help the district better understand our Medicaid reimbursement problem.

3. I am pleased to announce that on Saturday, May 6, Montague Town meeting overwhelmingly voted to support the Committee's approved FY18 district budget. In the same spirit is also approved new capital improvement projects for Hillcrest electrical work, the replacement of Sheffield water heaters, and an increase in funds for the Hillcrest stage renovation project. I would like to thank the citizens of Montague and the members of town government for their ongoing support of the district.

2017-5-8 email

Dear School Committee,

For the strategic planning agenda item tomorrow evening my intention is discuss how to gather parent feedback for the purposes of developing the next district strategy. I would like to develop separate surveys for parents/families of currently enrolled students and another survey of parents/families who have chosen schools outside of the district. I have provided you with the two such surveys done 3 years ago. There are different ways to proceed. You could simply provide me with suggestions for changes to the earlier surveys tomorrow evening. Or, if there is interest, a sub-group of the SC could meet with me to spend more time on this and develop revised questions. I would like to take action on surveys soon so that we can get feedback before the school year comes to a close.

Additionally, I am interested in your feedback on methodology. Last time we mailed home the survey to non-attending families with a stamped return address envelope and got a strong response rate in this manner. For in district families the survey was electronic only. The electronic approach makes it easier to gather and sort results but sometimes the response rate is not as great. I will be interested to hear your ideas. Regard, Michael