Gill-Montague
Regional School District

35 Crocker Avenue
Turners Falls, MA 01376
tel 413-863-9324
fax 413-863-4560

To: School Committee
From: Michael Sullivan, Superintendent of Schools
Date: October 30, 2016
Re: Report for Committee meeting of November 1, 2016

1. Our early release days continue to provide valuable time for educator professional development. On October 26, most middle school teachers participated in a session on how to implement restorative community building and conflict resolution practices in their small group "Circles". Most high school teachers attended training on increasing the amount of higher order thinking tasks in their classes. Most elementary teachers and para professionals attended a presentation by Sally Grimes, on literary instructional strategies to improve student oral language skills and vocabulary acquisition.

2. On November 2, I will be attending a meeting of the Greater Springfield League of Women Voters, where I was invited to speak about the impact of charter schools on public school districts.

3. On October 26, there was a meeting of the Rural Schools Coalition which I was unable to attend. It was a productive meeting, attended by State Senate President, Stan Rosenberg. Senator Rosenberg was supported of the Coalition's efforts and, among other things, recommended that the Coalition draft language about its proposals that could be inserted into the RISE Act, an education funding bill that the Senate has passed and the House has not acted upon. The Coalition has requested that area school committees vote in support of the the Coalition's rural schools aid proposal and vote to support its rural schools resolution, both of which are attached. (This information was not available in time to make this a meeting agenda item but I did want to make it available to you as soon as possible for future consideration.)

4. On October 24, I attended a meeting at the Montague Police Station where members of the police department, personnel from the Franklin County Technical High School, and I met with the owner of a business called COPSYNC911. COPSYN911 is a service that allows teachers and administrators of a school to contact the police directly and immediately with a couple of computer keystrokes in the event of a serious emergency event. It has the potential to reduce police response time to a school incident by valuable minutes. It provides the police with the exact location of the caller within a school or from a cell phone. It also allows all school personnel hooked up to the system to be in direct two way written (electronic) contact with the police dispatcher during an emergency.

   I am interested in learning more about this this system. The cost structure includes annual fees for the police department as well a start-up cost of $3,600 per school building and $1,800 per school annually thereafter. According to the presenter incentive grants are possible and likely available to us should we wish to pursue this in the current fiscal year.