

# TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER

## OFFICE OF SELECTMEN

Stanley A. Kravitz, Chairman  
Herbert J. Lemon, Jr., Vice Chairman  
Joseph M. Silva, Clerk  
Christopher T. Flynn, Member  
Michael S. Demos, Member



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J. Jeffrey Ritter  
Municipal Administrator

Memorial Building - 25 South Street  
Bridgewater, MA 02324

July 29, 2009

Donald L. McKinnon  
Chairman, Board of Selectmen  
Veteran Memorial Town Hall  
558 South Main Street  
Raynham, MA 02767

SUBJECT: Superintendancy

Dear Mr. McKinnon & Members of the Board:

The Board of Selectmen met on Tuesday, July 21, 2009 and the question of superintendancy was on the Agenda. There was a thoughtful discussion regarding your request to place the superintendancy question before Town Meeting. The Board voted 4-0 not to place an article on the next Town Meeting Warrant and does not support deregionalizing after being informed by Town Counsel this is not an appropriate question to place before the Town.

There was agreement that the establishment of a joint superintendancy would not address or remedy the essential question, which is how funding to the District from the Commonwealth is calculated. Town Counsel will also provide an explanation as to why she believes this approach would be procedurally incorrect. Other Board observations include the following:

- Chapter 70 funding for a separate K-8 would be based on a new formula not the existing formula and could be reduced based on each town's ability to pay;
- There is a general concern that a duplication of services will increase overall costs in the areas of curriculum and instruction, teacher training and special education. Also, three different school committees tend to be less efficient and could lead to poor communication that in turn may result in having more than one superintendent.

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- The Board believes that the superintendency approach would be more costly for both towns and that more levels of administration would not improve the overall education for our children.
- Financially, three independent studies over the past ten years all concluded Bridgewater taxpayers would pay anywhere between \$1.5 and \$2 million more annually if the District was deregionalized and Raynham an additional 1 million.
- It appears your analysis was based on historic low levels of Chapter 70 and Chapter 71 funding without considering the shared costs when overall state revenues recover.
- There is concern if state transportation funding were to end for K-8 that the loss would be over a million dollars.
- The Regional School District Committee and the Advisory Board do not support the superintendency union for all the reasons stated above.
- Finally, the Commonwealth continues to encourage school districts to regionalize with financial incentives and we are concerned about the possible financial impact of deregionalization.

Finally, the Board believes this discussion has reopened communication between the two towns and that we now have an opportunity to address our mutual funding challenges. We request that you consider supporting us in inviting our legislative delegation to join us in the discussion about how the current funding formula works and what we can do together to enhance funding from the Commonwealth to the District.

The Board does not believe the Regional School District is broken. The funding formula from the Commonwealth is broken. The Bridgewater Board of Selectmen unanimously supported a motion to establish quarterly meetings with the Raynham Board of Selectmen, Regional School Committee and our legislative delegation to better understand our mutual challenges and develop a framework for shared solutions.

Please advise if your Board might be available for this discussion on Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at the Bridgewater Senior Center.

Stanley A. Kravitz, Chairman

Joseph M. Silva, Clerk

Michael S. Demos

Herbert J. Lemon, Vice Chairman

Christopher T. Flynn

cc: Dr. Forbes, Superintendent, Bridgewater Raynham Regional School District  
School Committee, Advisory Board

# STACY M. BLUNDELL, ESQ.

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July 24, 2009

Donald L. McKinnon, Chairman  
Raynham Board of Selectmen  
558 South Main Street  
Veterans Memorial Town Hall  
Raynham, MA 02767

RE: **Superintendency Union**

Dear Mr. McKinnon:

I am writing in response to your letter to the Bridgewater Board of Selectmen (hereinafter the "Board"). In that letter, you requested that the Board discuss the possibility of voting on a Superintendency Union or to place a vote for a Superintendency Union before the Bridgewater citizens at the fall town meeting.

As you know, the creation of a Superintendency Union requires the vote of 2 or more separate school committees. It is not the decision of the Board of Selectmen, nor is it the decision of Town Meeting. For those reasons, I have advised the Board that any vote by them or by Town Meeting relative to a Superintendency Union would be inappropriate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Stacy M. Blundell  
Associate Town Counsel

SMB/ms

cc: Bridgewater Board of Selectmen