



**Arlington School District Study Committee Report  
December 2017**

**Preface:**

It was an invaluable learning experience to serve on the Arlington School District's 2017 Self-Study Committee. Not only are we more knowledgeable about our school, its governance, our state, and our laws; but the experience reinforced what we already knew – that we are extremely fortunate to live in a community filled with intelligent, skilled, and talented neighbors who truly care about the future of our children and our schools.

We would like to extend a special thanks to the following leaders who advised us, encouraged us, were candid with us, and collaborated with us during the process of investigation:

William Bazyk, Superintendent of the Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU)

Heather Bouchey, Deputy Secretary of Education

Jim Culkeen, Superintendent of the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union (SVSU)

John Fischer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Dan French, Vermont Education Consultant

Celeste Keel, Sandgate School Board

Francis Kinney, Shaftsbury School Board

Michael Lawler, Superintendent of the Southwest VT Career Development Center (CDC)

Ray Mullineaux, Chair of the Prudential School Board in North Bennington

Matthew Patterson, Prudential School Board in North Bennington

Jay Ramsey, State Director of Career Technical Education (CTE)

Donna Russo-Savage, Principal Assistant to State Education Secretary

Allan Tschorn, Sandgate School Board

Nicol Whalen, Chair of the Arlington School District (ASD) /

Chair of the Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU)

Jackie Wilson, Superintendent of the Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union (BRSU)

Our study committee’s mission was to evaluate all options for the Arlington School District (and by extension, the BVSU), synthesize that information, and then make our best recommendations for our future governance. We worked hard as a group to obtain accurate information, so that we could provide thoughtful recommendations.

Although this report is intended for the ASD Board and the State Board of Education, our committee feels strongly that all members of the Arlington community should have equal opportunity to understand Acts 46 and 77, as well as the current state-wide challenges facing our education system.

While the attached report presents our formal recommendations in detail, there are three complex points that we feel the Community at large should understand:

### #1

Many concerned Community members have asked about available “Tax incentives,” “Tax relief,” and “Tax Breaks.” This was a regular point of discussion earlier this summer when there was a proposed 3x1 merger between Sandgate, Winhall, and Stratton (3) with Arlington (1). The Arlington School District Self-Study Committee thoroughly investigated opportunities for “tax benefits” in all geographic directions and found that there were no benefits to joining the 3x1 (which eventually did not pass), the BRSU (where we would remain a stand-alone because of our pre-K through 12 structure) or the SVSU.

In addition, we were specifically educated by the State that there are no “tax incentives” or “tax relief” available. The “incentives” that are often discussed are actually “tax-assistance” offered to districts for the transition from multiple districts into one unified district. Once unified, the district has one budget and all member towns have one tax rate. If the pre-merger tax rates of the merging districts are quite different, then some towns would see a large tax increase in the first year of a merged tax rate. As a result, the Legislature awarded four years of tax rate reductions (and other transitional assistance) to ease that transition to a common rate.

Even under ACT 49 (which once again attempted to incentivize school-district-merging with tax-assistance in 2017), the ASD was not eligible to receive tax incentives by merging.

However, as our report shows, if the ASD was to join the SVSU or BRSU, its costs would increase. Furthermore, our proposal results in a reduction in costs to the Community.

One of the most important recommendations we received during this investigation was from Donna Russo-Savage, Principal Assistant to the State Education Secretary. She stated: “The most important thing to remember in all of this is to determine the most important things to the community. Decisions about how to proceed should be based on long-term vision of the best way to achieve whatever educational goals the community decides are most important.”

We used that as a guide, always keeping our children’s education and future as the primary decision-maker.

## #2

The overall goal of Act 77 is to engage students in planning their own education pathways. This is achieved by asking them about their dreams and goals, while also identifying their needs and strengths. Based on this information, a map for each student's personal academic pathway can be developed. The overall goal of the law is to help steer our children toward stable and successful futures, whether that be readiness for college or work in the trades.

The committee feels that Act 77, with its focus on personalized learning plans and pathways, is not just "another law," but the key to re-inventing our community.

The vision and action plan (as outlined in the attached proposal) takes full advantage of the area's diverse businesses, construction trades, and creative assets, as well as its spirit of community engagement. Our campus, in effect, will broaden far beyond our school buildings. Our new approach links students with men and women who work in fields of interest, giving each student a tailored, practical learning program geared to his or her interests, abilities, and aspirations. These community alliances will create direct pathways to career opportunities for Arlington students during and after high school, leading to increased youth retention within our community and Vermont state. Most important, students will understand how their academic studies relate to various careers or pathways. As students understand this connection and set goals, they will become more invested in their education and future test scores will increase.

## #3

In these pages, there are multiple references to "Act 46". Although you may have heard "Act 46" talked about on the news or over a cup of coffee at the gas station, it is important to understand the five core goals of Act 46. They are the following:

- 1) To create equality in Vermont State education
- 2) To make changes that will increase student performance
- 3) To promote transparency and accountability within the educational system
- 4) To deliver a great education at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value
- 5) To make the system as efficient as possible

These are excellent goals that are hard to disagree with. Equality is something we all value. Asking that we work to improve our students' education is a good thing. Having our leaders share information openly and honestly - and to take responsibility for their actions - is certainly important. Making education affordable with reasonable taxes is always welcome.

"Making the System Efficient" is where people seem to disagree - and the key word here is "system."

While we all probably try to make our own homes or our own lives as efficient as possible, there's a good chance that we take very different approaches and place different amounts of value on various components. The Committee received a lot of very useful information from the above-mentioned leaders regarding the goals of the state and "system efficiencies," but we also received a lot of important feedback from our Community members on what they value.

At this point, it is important to distinguish between the Arlington School District (ASD) and The Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU). The ASD currently runs a public school for Pre-K through 12 students. The BVSU currently includes The Arlington School District and the Sandgate School District. The Sandgate School District is non-operating, which means that Sandgate does not have a school in their own town.

While the BVSU is made of the Arlington and Sandgate communities, our neighboring Supervisory Unions are much larger.

To the North is The Bennington Rutland Supervisory Union (BRSU) which currently consists of the towns of Danby, Dorset, Landgrove, Londonderry, Manchester, Mt. Tabor, Pawlet, Peru, Rupert, Sunderland, Weston and Winhall (Note: The BRSU is only a K-8 SU. Grades 9-12 are school choice with 90% of the students attending Burr & Burton Academy).

To the South is The Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union (SVSU) which currently consists of six districts: Bennington, North Bennington, Shaftsbury, Pownal, Woodford, and Mt. Anthony Union School District No. 14.

Because Act 46 aims for "System efficiency," the State has advocated for fewer Supervisory Unions. The challenge is that in order to create efficiencies at the State level, several key budget items have been moved from the local school district's operating costs to the overseeing Supervisory Union's budgets. Some of these costs include Business Management, Special Education, and Transportation.

It is critical to understand that the town of Arlington has been (until now) in a unique position: We have had local control of our School District AND our Supervisory Union.

If the Arlington School District were to join a different Supervisory Union, Arlington would be a minority voice at a time when strong leadership and vision is needed to administer the newly envisioned and fully-integrated pathways project. In addition, rather than change our governance, we should embrace the fact that we are a Pre-K through 12 institution, because it will allow us to create opportunities and pathways for our students long before 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

Therefore, on behalf of the appointed Self-Study Committee for the Arlington School District, we recommend a five year pilot program that will be developed and implemented by the Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU). The BVSU will serve Arlington and Sandgate's 419 students at the Pre-K through Grade 12 level. Both towns have worked together with singular success in the current BVSU. Both are committed to keeping and operating the Fisher Elementary School and the AMHS. In addition, we propose (in conjunction with the Prudential Committee of North Bennington), that North Bennington join the BVSU as a Pre-K-12 choice school district, adding an additional 270 students to the BVSU for a total of 689 students.

It has been a great honor to serve our Community. We hope you are as excited as we are by the possibilities ahead!

Dr. Brian Allen, Florence Belnap, Elizabeth Berger, Kate Bryan, Marshall Cross, Terri O'Dea, Kevin Smith, and Dr. Joshua Sherman (Chair)

## **Arlington HISTORY:**

Arlington (population of approximately 2,400) is one of Vermont's most historic towns. Chartered in 1761, it served as the Vermont Republic's capital and counts key Green Mountain Boys among its early settlers and citizens. A hive of agriculture and small industry in the nineteenth century, it evolved into an artist colony led by Norman Rockwell, one of America's most famous artists, and the writer and taste-maker Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Arlington was a hub of a larger, important creative culture also featuring Grandma Moses and Robert Frost, Bennington College, and the Manchester Arts Community. Today, Arlington is a vibrant, attractive residential town with a diverse population and business base. Its schools are among the state's best and its voters consistently supportive of educational excellence and good town services. At the geographic center of Bennington County, with a well-connected road system, it is linked economically and socially to Bennington, Manchester, the towns in neighboring New York State, and the northern edge of Berkshire County.

## **Arlington NOW:**

Early in 2017, concerned Arlington residents joined together to inventory our many assets and challenges. These challenges are not unlike those that many of Vermont's small towns are facing, but rather than accept circumstance, Arlington is committed to re-organizing, re-building, and re-inventing the community.

A structured, coordinated group of six volunteer committees (comprised of all economic sectors, town officials, and not-for-profit leaders) is actively working to revitalize the town and to develop a plan for a prosperous future. One committee was asked to focus on our schools. This report describes this committee's vision for a reimagined public education system for the community.

## **Arlington STEAM:**

This report describes the appointed ASD Study Committee's vision for a re-imagined system. We propose a laboratory for learning success that does more than comply with Acts 46, 49, and 77. It taps and deploys every asset of our community, especially the Arts and Sciences (STEAM), to help each student - from every background and with every ability and dream - achieve his or her best.

## **Executive Summary:**

We believe Arlington Memorial High School (AMHS) has the opportunity to take advantage of its small size, the area's diverse business and creative assets, and its spirit of community engagement. Our innovative approach enlists our diverse assets to develop pathways to learning and to post-secondary school and employment success tailored to each student. The zenith of equity, the school will take all-comers and use every available asset to educate each student. Each student will assume an active role in his or her development, working as a partner with his or her teachers and community liaisons.

Anchoring this creative approach are our existing teachers and staff, the town government, MACK Molding (Vermont's second largest manufacturing company), THE MILL (a new arts campus focusing on theater, art, film, music, and dance), The Battenkill Valley Health Center, and local leaders in the hospitality, health, technology sectors, as well as the trades.

Our plan will have two new components.

First, led by the Board of Education, this starting coalition of businesses and not-for-profits will expand to draw on the considerable talent and treasure of Arlington, Sandgate, and the towns in our neighborhood. Our campus, in effect, will broaden far beyond our school buildings. Our new approach links students with men and women who work in fields of interest, giving each student a tailored, practical learning program geared to his or her interests, abilities, and aspirations. Whether the child plans to pursue an academic or vocational career, he or she will graduate with practical work-experience and a perspective that is grounded in a modern, changing economy.

A second component is what we call STEAM teaching and learning. (STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math). Cutting edge studies have shown that immersion in the arts provides students with a surprisingly effective and satisfying complement to the study of science, technology, engineering, and math. This added facet to an academic program provides more than diversification. The arts stimulate creativity in these other fields in new ways, defying the left brain/right brain boundaries that have been taken for granted in education circles for decades. This component will build on the school system's current arts strengths to draw new strengths from Bennington County's surprisingly vibrant arts sector. We expect a new twist on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) learning and teaching will spring from our work. These community alliances will create direct pathways to career opportunities for Arlington students during and after high school, leading to increased youth retention within our community and Vermont state. Most importantly, students will understand how rigorous academic studies are crucial to various careers or pathways. As students understand this connection and set goals, they become more invested in their education and future test scores will increase.

To ensure the integrity and flexibility of these new approaches, this committee recommends a five year, pilot program developed and implemented by the Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU) serving Arlington and Sandgate's 419 students at the Pre-K through Grade 12 level. Both towns have worked together with singular success in the current BVSU. Both are committed to keeping and operating the Fisher Elementary School and the AMHS. In addition, we propose in conjunction with the Prudential Committee, that North Bennington join the BVSU as a Pre-K-12 choice school district, adding an additional 270 students to the BVSU for a total of 689 students.

## **Governance Comparisons and Conclusions:**

Arlington School District (ASD) currently operates a public school for Pre-K through 12 students. ASD is currently a member of the Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU). The non-operating Sandgate School District is also a current member of the BVSU. The BVSU was created by concerned citizens in 1986. Specifically, due to lack of attention and escalating costs in the SVSU, Arlington citizens overwhelmingly voted to leave the SVSU and create a new SU for the Arlington and Sandgate school districts. The State Board of Education approved the creation of the BVSU shortly thereafter. As a result, administrative costs for Arlington in the BVSU dropped significantly - and the ASD and Sandgate school district students received increased attention.

More recently, on July 28 and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a large group of citizens from the Arlington/Sandgate communities worked together to create a vision and strategic plan for the ASD.

This group of concerned neighbors represented different demographics. Each volunteer provided a different perspective and offered a unique skill set. Nationally-recognized business leaders, local healthcare providers, professionals, artists, farmers, parents, teachers, alumni, and administrators focused on one goal: to complete a SWOT analysis of the ASD. By identifying the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to our school, we were able to create a unified mission statement from the community for the education of our children:

**We prepare our children for life. We nurture individuality and teach good citizenship by example. We demand accountability and the hard work that leads to achievement. We focus on resilience. We collaborate with parents, local businesses, and our community to create personalized pathways for student learning. With its rich history and natural setting, we make all of Arlington our campus. By graduation, each student can proudly say, 'I became the best version of myself.'**

A strategic planning sub-group was immediately formed and officially appointed by the School Board on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 to serve as the designated ASD Study Committee.

With the above community mission statement in mind, the group of volunteers began to research all available options (including the proposed 3x1 merger with Sandgate, Winhall, and Stratton).

In order to proceed with informed understanding, the study committee investigated Vermont state governance (in regards to the structure of the educational system) and reviewed nomenclature. Because of the immediacy of the 3x1 proposal, the study committee reviewed its benefits and drawbacks first. On August 29<sup>th</sup>, the Chair of the Committee (Dr. Joshua Sherman) sent a letter to Nicol Whalen (Chair of the Arlington School Board) strongly recommending that the Arlington School Board (as elected representatives of the community) directly decline the 3x1 merger at that time. Independent of this recommendation, on September 19, Sandgate and Stratton voted against the 3x1 due to significant increases in property taxes and no significant efficiency gains.

After that, the Committee evaluated all reasonable options for new governance, including evaluating the current BVSU, BRSU, SVSU, and CDC.



Regarding the BVSU, BRSU, and SVSU:

- 1) It is actually more efficient to maintain the BVSU from a cost savings analysis when compared to the SVSU and BRSU (See Figure 1). In fact, with the addition of North Bennington to the BVSU, there will be cost savings through economies of scale.
- 2) By having the North Bennington community join the BVSU, it eliminates complexity in our neighboring SVSU. (The SVSU will thereby gain additional efficiencies through their proposed merger.)
- 3) There are no transportation efficiencies gained by joining the BRSU or SVSU.
- 4) The BRSU has no public 9-12 high school and has no experience administering one. Obviously, there would a steep learning curve here.
- 5) Most important, if Arlington maintains local governance with the BVSU, it will retain better control of key decisions while embarking on the new Pathways vision outlined here.

**Figure 1 Supervisory Union Cost Analysis**

The following compares administrative costs in the BVSU versus joining another SU. This assumes that existing transportation and special education expenses will be allocated according to services used.

	BVSU Overhead*	SVSU**	BRSU***
Superintendent	80,157		
Central Office Manager	48,665		
Supplies, Services and Contracted Costs	30,000		
Business Manager/Human Resource Director	87,896		
.6 Accounts Payable/Human Resources	34,963		
.2 Payroll	15,567		
Special Education Administrator	43,102		
Stipend Team Leader	9,125		
	\$349,475	\$600,000	\$375,208
Cost Per Arlington/Sandgate Student****	\$834	\$1,432	\$895
Potential Cost per BVSU Student with addition of North Bennington Students	\$507		

\*Costs eliminated if BVSU dissolved; 2018 Projected.

\*\*Allocation based on projections provided by the SVSU.

\*\*\*Existing cost allocation based on similar town to BVSU student population and increased by 2.3% for inflation.

\*\*\*\*Projected 2018 students.

Regarding the Southwestern Vermont Career Development Center:

The Southwestern Vermont CDC in Bennington is an excellent resource for the community at large and we should continue dialogue with them in the future to create additional satellite programs in Arlington. That said, the CDC functions essentially as a stand-alone technical school. The CDC structure does not appear to allow for an integrated curriculum, which would compromise the proposed larger vision of creating integrated pathways for the students of the BVSU/ASD.

## **Conclusions**

In order to accomplish our goals of an integrated curriculum, we will need consistent administrative commitment to the vision and routine support of the students and faculty as this new curriculum is developed. This will not only require time, effort, and thoughtfulness but also financial support. Recently, the state has mandated changes in which the operational costs have been shifted to the BVSU (rather than the ASD). For this reason it is essential that the BVSU remain operating.

At this time, we request (from the State Board of Education) a five year extension of the BVSU. During this time, the BVSU will demonstrate to the state that an integrated curriculum is not only the best way to implement the Pathways mandated by Vermont State but is also a better educational system that could serve as a model for other schools (and even other states).

The Study Committee investigated all geographically reasonable options, including joining the SVSU, BRSU, and CDC. Committee members also explored discussions with Shaftsbury and North Bennington. In conjunction with studying governance issues, the study group continued its work on Act 77. It concluded that the best option for students and the community is to recommend that the BVSU continue to exist for at least five years to implement its vision and curriculum for Pathways at the ASD. In addition, representatives from the Prudential Board study committee, representing North Bennington indicated interest in becoming a PreK-12 choice district and joining the BVSU, similar to the Sandgate School District.

## **Vision for the Future**

As the Committee took stock of the community's aspirations for its schools relative to the policy requirements of Act 77 and Act 46, a new vision for the future emerged that built on the community's unique social, cultural, and economic assets. The Committee's vision proposes an educational system that functions as a "laboratory for learning" that does more than comply with Act 77 and Act 46. It taps and deploys every asset of our community to help each student from every background and with every ability and dream, achieve his or her best.

The purpose of this report is to begin to describe this vision. More work will need to be done, but it is the Committee's hope that this report will function both as a foundation and an inspiration in achieving this vision. The report describes the requirements of Act 77 and specific community assets that might be leveraged to support these requirements. The report concludes by identifying possibilities and action steps that can serve as an inspiration for future action.

## **The Proposal**

Based on community input from the July 2017 SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis held in Arlington, as well as the directives of ACT 77, an exciting idea emerged, which has the potential to:

1. create individualized educational opportunities and tailor-made career clusters & pathways for the students of the ASD;
2. support and enhance the ASD and Vermont State curriculum;
3. create economic development in the community;
4. increase youth retention, because their local future opportunities are apparent;
5. decrease drug use among our youth through positive mentorship and opportunity;
6. unite the generations via history, the arts, music, and technology;
7. groom the next generation of creatives, engineers, and entrepreneurs; and
8. provide clear metrics to Vermont State on the success of the Flexible Pathways project.

The ASD/Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU) would remain self-governing. The school would integrate core curriculum with corresponding practicums/training at MACK Molding, THE MILL, the trades, and the BVHC.

With their proximity to the high school (less than one mile away), THE MILL, MACK Molding, and the BVHC would each have an integrated presence at the Arlington Memorial High School facility, but would also serve as satellite campuses for the purposes of practical on-site training. This is a prime opportunity for the above "Community Mission Statement" to be realized in a meaningful way.

By identifying each child's strengths, weaknesses, and personal interests, the students of the ASD can be mentored by professionals in a wide range of careers, including (but not limited to) product design and application, engineering, machinery, finance, organizational structure, human

resources, healthcare, hospitality, music technology, film technology, art, live performance (theater, music, dance, TV/Film), lighting design, electrical work, carpentry, sewing, and other trades.

In addition, regardless of the pathway chosen, each student will gain core life skills, such as: listening & communication skills, problem solving skills, skills of observation, leadership skills, time management, organizational skills, networking skills, awareness of group dynamics and the ability to collaborate.

### **An Integrated Curriculum**

Core curriculum and competencies established by the State of Vermont will continue at the local high school. Traditionally, the sciences (such as chemistry and physics) have associated labs. Imagine if those (and other classes) had “labs,” which were integrated on-site at MACK Molding or THE MILL. Here are some hypothetical examples of possible integrated curriculum for the envisioned collaboration between the ASD/BVSU, MACK Molding, BVHC, and THE MILL:

The Science of Sound - A Physics class is taught in collaboration with a Grammy Award Winning sound engineer. The class explores everything from “How the ear works” to “Sound waves and Frequencies” using music and music technology.

The Science of Optics - A Physics class is taught in collaboration with an NFL cinematographer and a local physician, using TV, film, and digital media as a way of enhancing student understanding through practical learning.

The Science of Electricity - A Physics class that explores the fundamentals of circuits and technology. Assignments may involve technology at Mack or technology at THE MILL. A hypothetical project would be for the class to assemble the lighting grid for the high school’s musical concert – and in so doing, they learn the practical application of a high-level science through active learning.

An English course in which the students had to write a research paper about art history or technology or any field in their chosen pathway.

Data Analysis – A statistics class that helps design a community quality assurance survey for the BVHC. Students do research on FQHC quality assurance parameters, design and implement the survey, arrange the survey data for analysis, and present their findings to the BVHC board.

Medical Coding – in partnership with the BVHC, students learn medical coding skills and obtain an industry credential in this area before graduation.

## **Opportunities for Advanced Studies**

An advanced integration class could focus on collaboration and entrepreneurship, as follows:

Four students with different pathways must collaborate on a group project. Each student has an assigned mentor in his/her designated field. The first student is interested in design and is tasked with designing a product. The second student is interested in engineering and is tasked with physically creating that product.

These two students must discuss materials to be used, clearly articulate their ideas, build trust, problem solve together, and meet project deadlines. These two create a prototype under the guidance of their mentors at the ASD, THE MILL, and MACK Molding.

The third student is interested in finance and is tasked with creating a budget for the product's development. This third student must work with the first two students to adjust the product's design (for lower cost, better materials, etc.) to justify "the bottom line" of creating the product. During this phase, communication, collaboration, and the reality of the market place are addressed with all four students.

The fourth student is interested in PR/Marketing/Social Media and is tasked with working with the first three students to create a product development campaign and identify strategic partners.

These four high school students (working as a team of peers and with their mentors) have now successfully and collaboratively designed a product, a physical prototype, a business model, and a brand that they could package and distribute as a new business, stamped with pride:

### **"Made in Arlington, Vermont"**

## **Implementation of the Alliance**

We propose that the 2017-2018 school year can be used by the ASD, BVHC, MACK Molding and THE MILL to identify leadership, coordinate integrated planning, and finalize governance.

During this same school year, the current 7th-11th grade classes would outline their interests and their pathways.

Our goal is to use the four subsequent school years to develop and provide educational programming to the ASD/BVSU. During this time, we would gather key metrics on the success of the integrated curriculum and "Flexible Pathways Project" for the State of Vermont.

Since MACK Molding and the high school already utilize quarterly metrics, Vermont State's educational system could potentially benefit from these services. The proposed collaboration between the ASD/MACK Molding/BVHC/THE MILL could be used as a coordinated/scientific trial of this already existing vision. If proven successful over time, this model could be implemented more broadly, both in Vermont and beyond.

## **Arlington STEAM**

### **Summary of the Vision**

Arlington's community assets that are already committed to this concept include the Mack Molding Company, THE MILL, several local historic inns, and the Battenkill Valley Health Center (BVHC). We anticipate and welcome additional Arlington companies and trades.

An alliance between the Arlington School District (ASD) and Mack Molding Company, THE MILL, and BVHC will enhance ASD's educational objectives and engage important community members in our children's education through the practical application of core curriculum.

This alliance will create direct pathways to career opportunities for ASD students during and after high school, leading to increased youth retention within our community and Vermont State.

It will not only create immediate economic development in the community, but will also lay the groundwork for the next generation of local industry and entrepreneurship.

### **Next Steps**

- 1) Arlington STEAM presents a bold vision for the future of Arlington's education system and for the entire community. This Committee believes the unique cultural and economic assets of the community when considered together with the nimbleness of the school district's Pre-K through 12 governance structure, present an opportunity for creating a response to the current education policy context that best meets the needs of future generations of Arlington residents. If this recommendation is submitted by the ASD Board and then approved by the State Board of Education, the next step is to assemble a fresh group of community members to implement the vision outlined here.
- 2) Some of the best research in education (e.g. Chicago's Child-Parent Center Program study and the Abecedarian Project study) points to the importance of making investments in early education. Although Act 77 creates requirements for personalized learning starting in Grade 7, we believe the PLP process should start as early as possible to inspire students to take greater ownership of their learning from the start of their schooling experience. We believe there is a greater role for the BVHC under what is known as a "full service" school model. Full Service schools integrate academics, youth development, family support, health and social services, and community development. We suggest the School Board research how services from the BVHC could be better integrated into the school. This action would be particularly important for students of poverty.



## **MACK Molding**

Founded in 1920, Mack Molding is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the privately held Mack Group Corporation, which also includes Mack Technologies and Mack Prototype.

With its roots in custom injection molding, Mack Molding today is a leading supplier of contract manufacturing services and injection molded plastic parts to companies in a range of industries. Headquartered in Arlington, Vermont, Mack Molding operates six locations throughout the eastern United States.

A family-run business, Mack has earned a 5A1 D&B rating, the highest available. The corporation has no long-term debt, and finances its own acquisitions and growth. Mack is consistently ranked among the top 10 non-automotive injection molders in North America.

Mack Molding provides a wide range of services to both small- and mid-size companies, as well as blue chip Fortune 100 giants. Industries served include: computer, business, medical, industrial, transportation, energy/environment, and consumer products.

Today, Mack Molding operates six plant locations throughout the eastern United States and is ranked among the top 10 non-automotive molders in North America with sales of approximately \$350 million.



## **THE MILL**

THE MILL is an emerging artistic retreat, production facility, and education center. THE MILL - a 501(c)3 nonprofit - is the passion project of the Board's President, Joshua Sherman, M.D. Dr. Sherman is a practicing physician in Bennington, a former Broadway set and costume designer, and an active theatrical/music producer with a legacy in the Arts. Joshua is a Grammy voter and serves on the Board of The Al Hirschfeld Foundation. For a full bio, please go to: [www.joshuashermpresents.com](http://www.joshuashermpresents.com). THE MILL, however, is not a "one-man show". THE MILL is a group effort with a shared vision of collaboration. THE MILL is home to a large network of talent and advisors. As of October 2017, THE MILL's Advisory Board is composed of several world-renowned Art Historians, Filmmakers, Cinematographers, Authors, Screenwriters, multiple Tony Award Winners (in the fields of Directing, Composing, Choreography, Producing, and Performing), Multiple Emmy Award Winners (in the fields of Scriptwriting, Producing, and Performing), an Oscar Winner and Three Grammy Award Winners (in the fields of Music and Sound Mixing).





### **Battenkill Valley Health Center**

The Battenkill Valley Health Center (BVHC) is Bennington County's only Federally Qualified Health Center, and provides preventative and primary health care services. The BVHC cares for patients of all ages – infants to elderly, sick or well – throughout their lifetime.

Because the BVHC treats the whole person, their patients find a complete network of care under one roof. BVHC's support system delivers primary and preventative care, mental health, and nutrition counseling. BVHC understands the challenges of life and offers connections to benefits and services, case management, financial assistance, convenient hours, and an on-site laboratory so patients do not have to travel for routine lab work.

These significant community assets are all located in proximity to the campus of the of district's school buildings. As a single PK-12 school system with a streamlined governance system, the Arlington School District is well positioned to be the hub of student learning and broader community development.