

## **School Board Membership Proportionality**

*“One person, one vote.” The Equal Protection Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment guarantees proportional representation in voting. This right extends to the election of local school officials who exercise general governmental powers.*

### **3 Types of Proportional Representation**

#### **Proportional-by-Town Model**

- Proportionality is achieved at the town level by ensuring the number of seats apportioned to each town is closely proportional to the town’s population
- Apportionment: Articles of Agreement set out a specific number of board seats for each town within the union school district, based on the most recent decennial census.
  - Votes can be weighted to achieve proportionality
- Residence: Board Member must reside in town to which seat is apportioned
- Nominating Petition: Only voters of town to which seat is apportioned can sign
- Election: Only voters of town can vote on candidates for their town’s apportioned seats

#### **Modified At-Large Model**

- Proportionality is achieved by voting at the district-level
- Apportionment: Articles of Agreement apportion a specified number of board seats to each town within the union school district, based on any agreed upon method
- Residence: Board Member must reside in town to which seat is apportioned
- Nominating Petition: Petition can be signed by either 1) voters of town to which the seat is apportioned OR 2) Articles of Agreement can provide otherwise
- Election: ALL voters in the district vote on all seats

#### **At-Large Model**

- Proportionality is achieved by voting at the district-level
- Apportionment: No seats are apportioned to specific towns within the district
- Residence: Board Members can reside anywhere within the district
- Nominating Petition: Petition can be signed by any voter in the district
- Election: ALL voters in the district vote on all seats