

March 18, 2014

House Committee on Education  
Vermont State House, Room 32  
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Representatives Donovan, Peltz, Buxton, Campion, Christie, Cupoli, Juskiewicz, Mitchell, Rachelson, Stuart and Turner:

I live in the town of Bolton, VT, on the eastern edge of Chittenden County. We have a small, PreK-4 elementary school with an enrollment of about 70 students. My interest in your work relating to education governance is primarily due to the recent results of school budget votes in our town.

Last spring, for the first time in recent memory, the school board and town voters found themselves in a somewhat adversarial position. Our school budget was approved at our town meeting, then a petition was presented requesting reconsideration. Two subsequent votes were held before a budget was ultimately approved. And even then, the vote was close.

On Town Meeting Day this year, our budget was approved, but like last spring, the margin was very narrow.

The question of a merger between our town school district and neighboring districts in the towns of Richmond, Huntington, Jericho and Underhill has been discussed for the past several years, and the idea has gained fairly widespread support in our town. I think many people see a merger as a means to maintain the high quality education that we provide while keeping costs at a more manageable level.

Discussions about a merger are ongoing here, and I remain hopeful that a merger will be approved in the not-too-distant future. But in the meantime, I am in favor of any measures that can be taken at the state level to facilitate and streamline the school district merger process.

Thank you for your time.

Amy L. Turner