

Ms. Zunder, my name is Lance Mills and I live in Fairlee, Vt. I am writing about the school governance proposal currently under consideration by the House Education Committee. I am unable to drive over there tonight to testify, but I would like my voice heard. Please forward my remarks to the members of the House Education Committee. They can be read aloud during tonight's testimony if that is possible. I will keep my remarks brief.

This proposal is a solution in search of a problem. In any survey I have ever seen, Vermont ranks at or near the top ten in quality of education in the United States. Local control is one of the linchpins of the quality of education in Vermont. Local school boards are filled with community members who care enough about the quality of education in their communities that they are willing to spend many hours of their own time seeing to it that the children in their communities receive the best education possible. I see nothing in this proposal that can take the place of local school boards.

Driving to work today I heard Representative Donovan being interviewed on VPR. Here is what she said, according to the transcript on VPR, "I don't think small school districts can continue to offer some of the things that we want all Vermont children to have: art, music, other learning opportunities," said Donovan. "I think larger districts can be more flexible with their staff and can just basically offer more opportunities for kids."

Is Representative Donovan suggesting that this proposal is the only thing that can save Art and Music in our smaller public schools? I don't believe that we need to replace our local school boards with "expanded district" boards in order to continue offering Art and Music to our students and, quite frankly, I think parents would have a thing or two to say about this topic... to their local school boards.

I find it very difficult to believe that the people of Vermont will embrace any piece of legislation that would come out of this proposal because it will shift control away from the local school boards that have done a great job educating our children for a very long time now. Vermonters will see this proposal is nothing but a solution in search of a problem.

Lance Mills
Pre Tech English Instructor
River Bend Career & Technical Center
Bradford, Vt. 05033
802-222-5212