

Mary Schwartz

*Re: H883 Legislation*

April 8, 2014

Dear Committee,

In the history of education reform there are moments when change is not only called for, it is required in order to move forward. Ladies and gentlemen, while the current system is celebrated by some for its achievement for some children, the time has come to consider what we must do to improve the performance of the system for all children.

Transforming our current system of schools to a comprehensive education system better equipped to meet the needs of all children requires courage and leadership. The General Assembly is best situated to demonstrate both.

For starters, enacting H883 will help to better focus our educational mission and provide the opportunity for better deployment of nearly \$1.5 billion in personnel and monetary resources. The system that is contemplated in H883, with its clearly delineated pre-k to grade 12 organizational structure and well-defined roles and responsibility, is a great improvement of our system of supervisory unions. Most importantly, the bill envisions boards as true policy-making entities, superintendents as chief executive officers and principals as the critical instructional leaders that they need to be.

Having a focus on accountability for the outcomes for all children, which honors both evidence-based practice and innovation, and provides training and time for staff collaboration, is the future that business leaders seek for education in Vermont. It is time for our state to move to a management system that focuses on achievement, and provides opportunity for all children no matter where they live.

As a business person, and a member of the Vermont Business Roundtable, I urge you to pass H.883 this year. This will allow the state to move to the next step of ensuring success for every child.

Sincerely,



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