

BARRE SUPERVISORY UNION DISTRICT #61

Barre City Elementary
and Middle School

Spaulding High School and
Barre Technical Center

Barre Town Middle
and Elementary School

John Bacon, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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*Doing whatever it takes to ensure
success for every child.*

John Pandolfo
Director of Curriculum,
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Donald McMahon
Special Services Director

Diane Stacy
Technology Director

TO: Representative Johannah Donovan
VT House Education Committee
FROM: John A. Bacon, Ed.D.
Superintendent
DATE: March 19, 2014
RE: Proposed School District Change



Based on my thirty-four years of experience as an administrator in Vermont, I offer these comments:

~In the mid-eighties, when I was principal in Bethel, we talked about combining Rochester and Bethel High Schools in order to strengthen and expand our program. We also talked about merging the elementary students from Hancock, Granville, and Rochester together. I wonder where those towns would be today if we had done this thirty years ago.

~I was a principal in Hartford where several elementary schools fed into a common middle school and the same high school governed by a single board, the structure worked.

~In Barre, we have an equity problem that consolidation would solve. Right now, the Barre City school gets most of the Title I dollars because they have many more students (68% of their enrollment) than Barre Town who qualify for free and reduced hot lunch. However, in Barre Town, there are approximately 200 students (25% of the enrollment) who help generate the Supervisory Union's Title I allocation and who would benefit from remedial math or reading help. But they don't get any money and that's not fair.

In Vermont, there are lots of schools with fewer than 200 students who get Title I dollars.

~We have another equity problem in Barre. A high percentage of our free and reduced hot lunch students are concentrated in the Barre City School. If the school districts were merged, we could redistribute students into a K-4 school and a 5-8 school to achieve a more balanced demographic mix.

~I don't think we would save money, but we'd achieve greater equity and educational opportunity. It's the right thing to do for Barre.