

## Position on Governance

My name is Melanie Clerihew. I was a teacher at Lothrop Elementary School for 33 years and now I am the School Board Chair. I am very much against creating larger districts. If a larger district is created, larger than a present Supervisory Union, one superintendent could not be expected to manage everything that is necessary. Thus, assistant superintendents would need to be hired, increasing administration. Bigger bureaucracy has never lead to cost savings. We need to focus on directly influencing instruction for students, not creating more administrative positions.

Our RNESU functions very well the size that it is. We do save money on transportation, special education, central office staff and even hot lunch because we collaborate and centralize everything. Our RNESU is not broken. It works well, so please don't try to fix it.

I am very much in favor of local control by individual school boards. Having representation on a local board is what democracy is all about. It may be more time consuming and more messy, but it's worth it. We recently dealt with a decision at our local school board in Pittsford concerning the location of our preschool. The superintendent and central office staff recommended that our preschool be located within our elementary school because it would be more efficient and perhaps would save money. The townspeople, especially the preschool parents, were very upset by this recommendation. Pittsford has a very unique and historic child centered building surrounded by nature and nature trails. It is the perfect setting for 3 and 4 year olds. It appears more as a home away from home than an institutional building. Parents feel comfortable and safe leaving their children there. After much time, discussion and a committee review of both locations, the local school board decided to leave the preschool in its present location. This decision was not based on what was efficient or cost cutting, but on what was right for the children and what our community wanted. If the decision had been left up to the superintendent and a smaller, more distant board, the outcome probably would have been different and the taxpayers in our town would not have been represented.