Governor Peter Shumlin's Education Agenda

January 29, 2015

VERMONT
AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Goals

- To ensure <u>all</u> children develop the skills they need to thrive in both their career and civic life.

- To provide this education in the most **effective, efficient and accountable way possible.**

- To reduce inequity of access and outcomes across the state by asking: *do our models of providing education represent equitable practices and opportunities that would be considered appropriate and desirable for all students?*

To achieve these goals:

- School boards need **better data on school quality and financial performance.**
- Policy needs **to incentivize** decisions that serve the goals of equity, education quality and fiscal efficiency.
- Solutions need to involve local voices in the design of systems. One size will not fit all.
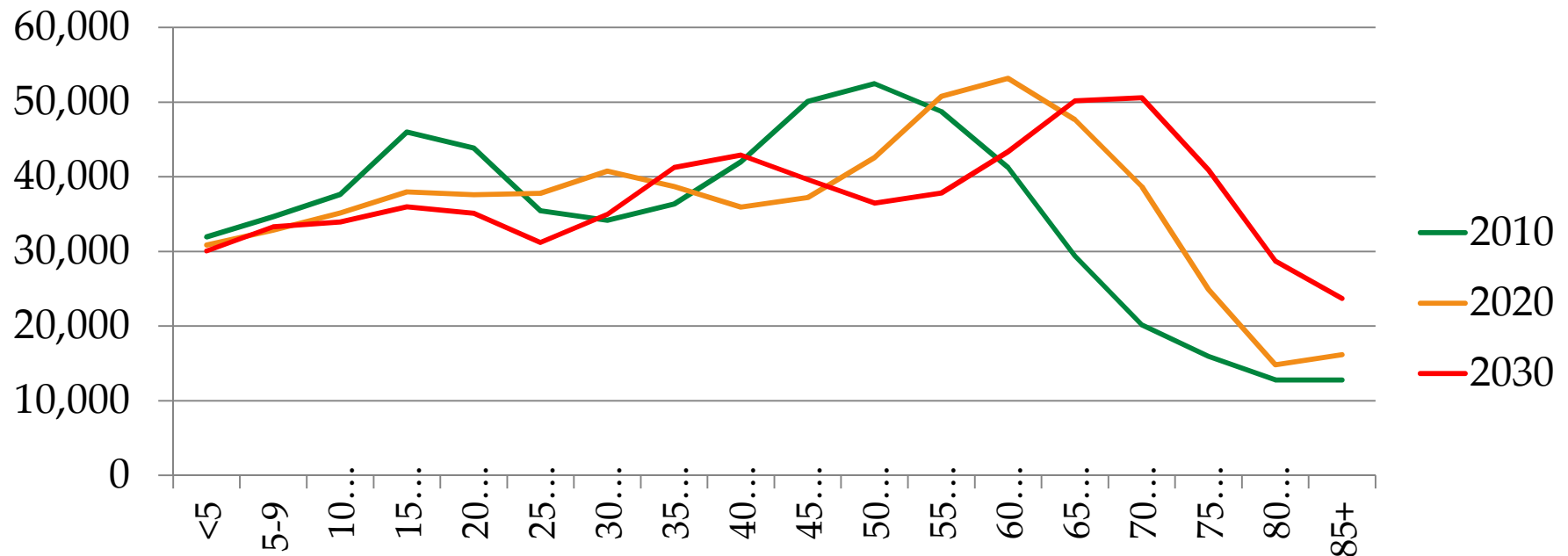
Context:

Core Problem: In the future, we are projected to have declining student numbers, fewer people in the work force and rising taxes. Access to educational opportunities is not equal.

Question: How do we provide **high quality opportunities to learn** in the most **equitable** and **affordable** way possible?
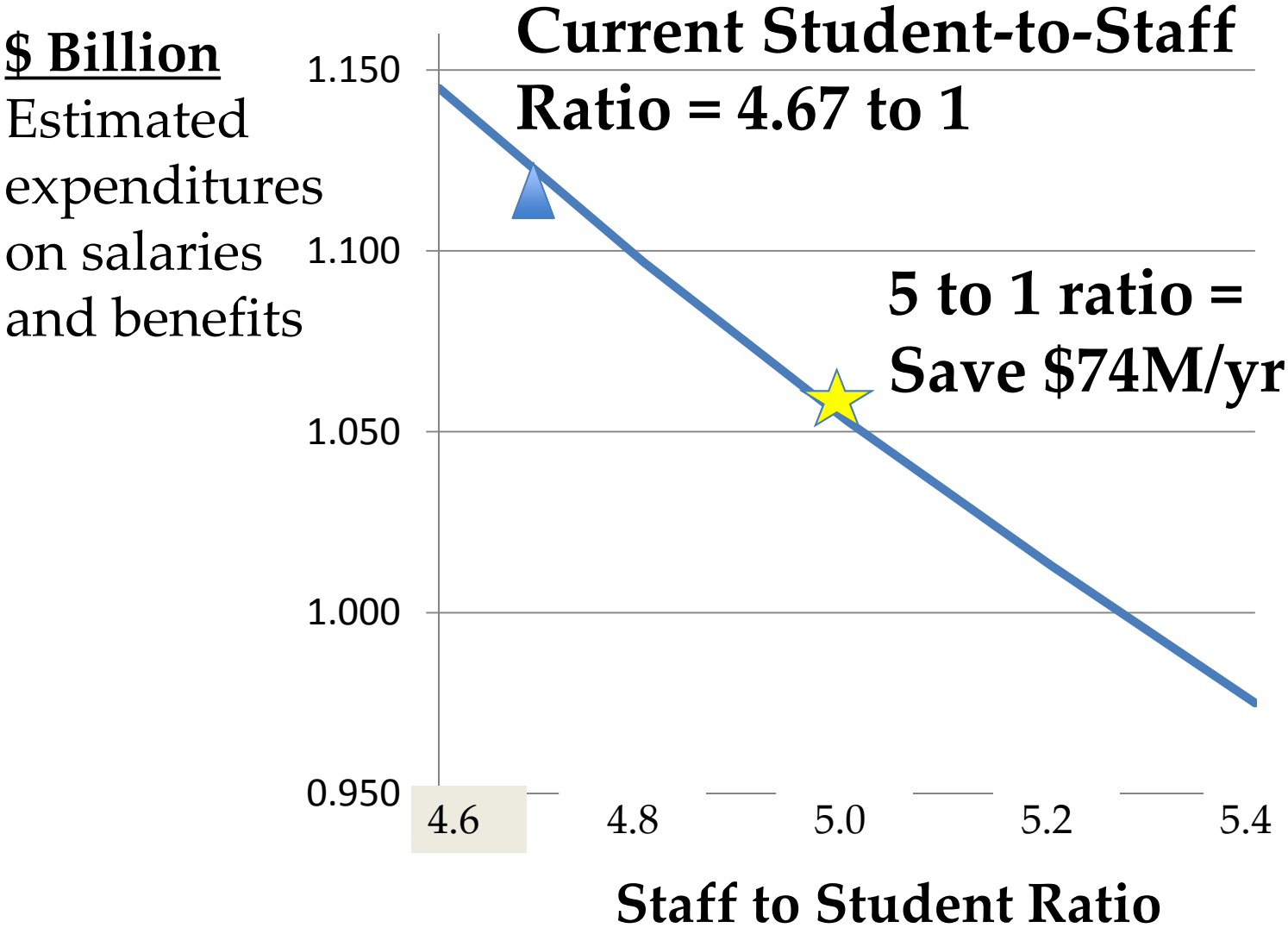
Vermont Population Projections. 2010 Census, 2020, 2030

Ken Jones, Ph.D., Economic Research Analyst

Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development

Example: Why this Matters
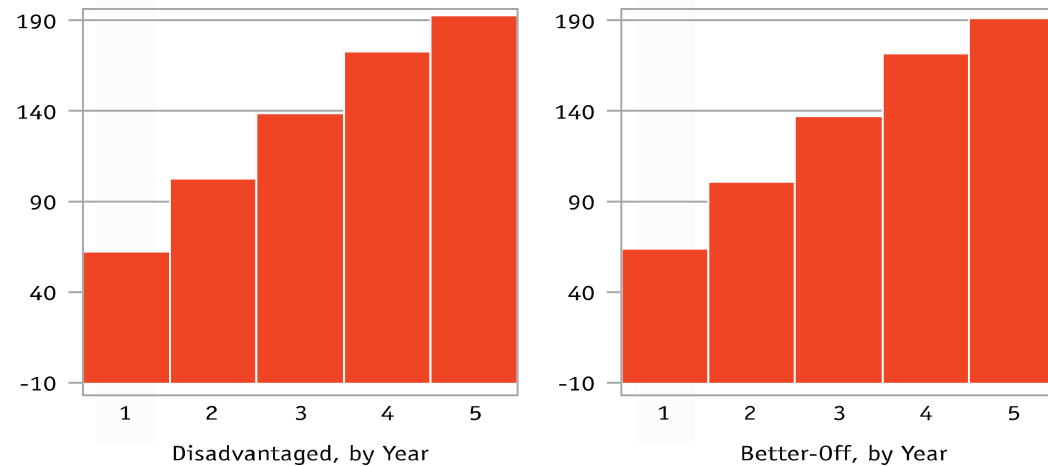
Example: Opportunity Cost to Equity
Are we spending our money where it matters?
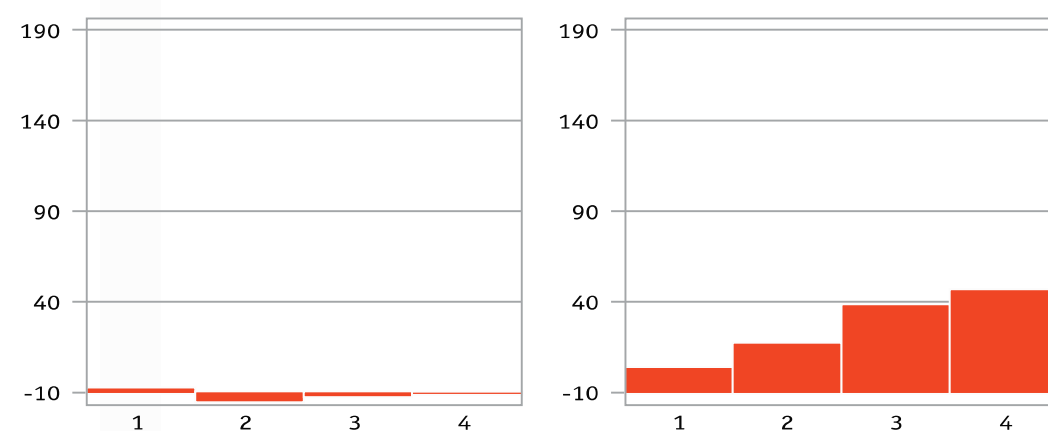## Classes of 2-9 students or summer learning?

Cumulative gains on California Achievement Test in reading:

- During the school year, children in poverty learn as much as their affluent peers.

- Over the summer, the skills of children in poverty do not improve, but the skills of more affluent students do.

Source: Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson (1997), Table 3.1
Note: From "Summer learning and its implications: Insights from the Beginning School Study," by K. L. Alexander, D. R. Entwisle, and L. S. Olson, 2007b, *New Directions for Youth Development, 114*, p. 18. Copyright 2007. Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

School Year Cumulative Gains

Disadvantaged, by Year

Better-Off, by Year

Summer Cumulative Gains

Legislative Requests

(Note: We have shared draft language with Donna Russo Savage)

In order to address rising property taxes caused by declining enrollments while maintaining quality in our schools:

1. Release a new district data online tool:
   http://education.vermont.gov/district-data-profile

2. Place a moratorium on any new legislation that adds costs to districts, other than support for incentives that move districts to a more sustainable model.

3. Phase out contradictory incentives including the small schools grant and the phantom student provision, but allow districts that vote to join a RED to retain them for 3 years to defray transition costs.

4. Provide $3 million for targeted construction aid for districts that are actively trying to right-size through a merger.

5. Enhance authority of the State Board of Education to redistrict in cases where a school or district is orphaned and needs to be part of a bigger union.

6. **Superintendents as systems managers, principals as instructional leaders:** Ensure decisions such as principal hiring, health care contracting, and other significant spending take place at the supervisory union level where efficiencies can be achieved, while supporting principal leadership and involvement recruiting and hiring the teachers who work at their sites.

7. Create a **data-driven partnership with local districts**
   - Education Quality Review teams
   - Tailored performance measures including targets for student outcomes, school climate, staff to student ratios, and per pupil spending

8. If districts are unable to make improvements in their fiscal or educational results, the State Board may review their status and intervene:

-technical assistance

-oversight

-disallowing certain expenditures

-closing schools

Education Quality Reviews

- The Agency of Education will monitor SU/SDs' support and improvement of member schools **for the purpose of providing guidance and support**

- SU/SDs responsible for furthering improvement in schools:
    - Academic accomplishment
    - Social and emotional learning
    - Professional supports for learning
    - School culture and climate
    - Fiscal stability

Education Quality Reviews: Assumptions

100% of SU/SD's will receive desk audit feedback each year – Dashboard, published data

- Fiscal indicators calculated by AOE
- Achievement Indicators calculated by AOE (Grad Rate, Post-Secondary Attainment, Achievement gaps, etc.)
- Evaluation/PD audit and affirmation
- Culture and Climate Data

100% of SU/SD's will use the results of the desk audit to inform school improvement plans

33% will receive site visitations to complement desk audit findings (1 every 3 years)

- Every SU/SD will receive feedback every third year≈20 SUs
- EQS Observation protocols designed to detect practices in alignment with EQS and Act 77

Education Quality Reviews: Assumptions

Visiting teams will include representatives of the AOE (3-4) and site-based educators or experts (7-9) from other SU/SD's selected to represent expertise from different grade levels, teaching specializations and school districts. (10-12 people per SU/SD.)

SU/SD's participating in EQR will provide a hosting committee that includes student, family, teacher and leader representation to inform the visiting committee's findings.

Visiting teams will provide reports at the end of the visit that evaluate local progress towards goals and make concrete recommendations for improvement for every SU/SD.

Education Quality Reviews: Assumptions

Used to assess implementation fidelity for Education Quality Standards and Act 77

Academic Achievement	Personalized Learning	High Quality Work Force	Safe, strong school climate	Financial Efficiencies
Performance Based Assessment / SBAC-Math, English / Science assessments	Proficiency Based Education / PLP for secondary students	Licensing / Prin/Teach Evaluation	MTSS / Climate Surveys	Tax rate Trend / Teacher/Student ratio / Support for expanded learning

Academic Achievement Example

Desk Audit

- Average growth scores for SBAC in grades 3-8 and 11
- NGSS exams
- Graduation Requirements
- Post-secondary attainment data

SU/SD School Visitations

- Review of portfolio/performance based assessments and other items in the local comprehensive assessment system
- Observe classroom instruction
- Interview students, parents and staff regarding their understanding of graduation requirements
- Review curriculum materials and SU/SD improvement plans

Safe and Supportive Schools Example

Desk Audit

- % of student body experiencing 1 or more day of suspension/exclusion from school

- # of reports of bullying divided by student enrollment

SU/SD School Visitations

- Review of suspension documents and interviews with key personnel to identify discipline practices

- Interview students regarding familiarity with anti-bullying supports

- Review climate survey data

- Observe students in open settings (lunch, passing periods, etc.)

- Review implementation of systems of support for students

Financial Efficiencies

Desk Audit

- Per equalized pupil spending
- Student/teacher ratio
- Para/student ratio
- Trends in local tax rate increases/decreases

SU/SD School Visitations

- Ability to financially support expanded learning opportunities
- Ability to use multiple revenue streams to address local issues
- Ability to earn competitive grants
- Ability to leverage incentives offered by state

Potential examples of circumstances the State Board might review and for which it might suggest intervention:

- Extremely high per equalized pupil costs
- Schools have consistently terrible academic outcomes and school culture and climate