



Peacham Elementary School

P.O. Box 271

340 Bayley-Hazen Rd.

Peacham, VT 05862

802-592-3513 info@peachamschool.org

Judy Ross, Principal jross@peachamschool.org

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To the Members of the Vermont House and Senate Education Committees:

Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Peacham Elementary School learning community.

As the Principal of PES I have the privilege and responsibility to oversee providing the very best education possible to prepare our young students for a lifetime of learning. In our PK-6 school we are tasked with building a solid foundation of conceptual understanding and skills in reading, math, writing, science, and social and historical studies for every child. Even more importantly, we are teaching our children to be contributing members of their school, town, state, national and global communities. Our mission states:

The Peacham Elementary School is a community of learners and teachers dedicated to developing the ability of each individual to think and communicate clearly, to explore the world, to make responsible decisions, and to have concern for the common good.

In our case, and in the case of many of Vermont's small schools, the quality and variety of educational opportunities we provide is only possible with exceptional support from our community, our families, and our dedicated staff. At PES we are proud to offer:

- ✓ Highly-qualified PK-6 staff with instructional specialization in STEM and Humanities for 3-6
- ✓ Data-based decisions guiding daily Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for all K-6 students in math or reading, including adaptive online progress monitoring
- ✓ MTSS-Behavior programming first-year implementation scoring near the proficient range for our school culture, both students and staff
- ✓ VT Rural Partnership support to increase student voice, meaningful community connections, and proactive healthy lifestyles.
- ✓ VT Dept. of Agriculture Farm to School grant support to plan for a continuing commitment to school sustainability
- ✓ A certified teacher/Tech Integrationist providing meaningful curriculum-related learning experiences for all students to develop crucial 21st century skills, including writing computer code, video production, and electrical engineering.
- ✓ A highly engaging program of the Arts, including Studio Art, and Music. Our Music program has grown to include a whole-school band and a voice program with individual and group instruction shared with the community at regular events. Our plan is to implement music theory, composition, and digital recording next year.
- ✓ A popular foreign language program, French, for all PK-6 students
- ✓ A very well-attended after school Extended Learning Opportunity providing quality programming supporting our district curriculum
- ✓ An exceptionally committed Parent-Teacher-Friends Group that provides funds for a ski and swim program for K-6, playground redesign, and numerous other enrichment events.

This is a very incomplete list, but it does provide a snapshot of what is happening now with community, district, and staff support in a level-funded budget through realistic and committed leadership focused on our mission.

Peacham Elementary is a small school in size only. We think big and expect big results for all our students. And we are not alone. There are “small schools” providing fiscally responsible educations throughout Vermont. Please consider more than just the bottom line in your deliberations. Our students’ futures depend on it.

This is an open invitation to come visit Peacham Elementary School. See how much can be accomplished for Vermont’s children when educational professionals partner with families and community members with shared commitment to the common good of all of our children.

Respectfully,

Judith A. Ross, Principal