

Addressing Equity, Quality & Cost

Vermont School Boards Association & Vermont Superintendents Association

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2015 Education Policy Goals

- ▶ Solutions must address concerns about equity, efficiency and quality
- ▶ Solutions must allow districts to more flexibly deploy resources
- ▶ Solutions should not assume one size fits all
- ▶ Local communities should design and implement their own structural changes
- ▶ Structural change should be encouraged through a mix of incentives and disincentives
- ▶ Solutions should be crafted to retain strong community connections

PreK-12 Integrated Education Systems: A Policy Framework

- ▶ Establish a policy requirement to provide educational opportunities that meet the Education Quality Standards through integrated PreK-12 Education Systems by **date certain**—these systems are defined as units that are responsible for the equitable delivery of high quality education to all students in the region at a reasonable price for taxpayers.
- ▶ PreK-12 Education Systems will be designed to achieve the following outcomes in an efficient manner:
 - ▶ equitable access to high quality learning opportunities that meet EQS;
 - ▶ stability in tax rates and sustainability for taxpayers;
 - ▶ conditions for stable leadership;
 - ▶ a connected professional workforce;
 - ▶ strong community influence and voice;
 - ▶ transparency and accountability; and
 - ▶ flexibility in the deployment of resources.

- ▶ PreK-12 Education Systems can be governed by a single board or, where it can be demonstrated to the SBE that a different configuration will achieve the outcomes, multiple boards within an SU structure.
- ▶ AOE will publish and make readily available data on education and fiscal performance in order to inform local PreK-12 Education Systems design efforts. AOE will be resourced to work with districts to analyze data and support plan development.
- ▶ AOE will work with school board members, administrators and teachers to develop an Education Quality Review process that will use multiple sources of data and site visits in order to evaluate compliance with EQS and fiscal efficiency measures.
- ▶ AOE will publish guidelines for SBE review of PreK-12 Education Systems plans and be well-resourced to do so.
- ▶ SBE will be empowered to waive certain requirements of Title 16 in order to approve a PreK-12 Education Systems plan, including but not limited to plans that reassign district duties to an SU or require the electorate to vote on SU budgets.
- ▶ SBE will review PreK-12 Education Systems plans prior to submission to the electorate; it will approve the plan if:
 - ▶ It is reasonably designed to achieve the outcomes, and
 - ▶ Does not leave a district stranded
- ▶ Increased tax incentives, transition funds, and construction aid will be available to those communities that approve their PreK-12 Education Systems plan by **date certain**.
- ▶ Small schools grants would be retained where a district has approved a PreK-12 Education Systems plan.
- ▶ ADM Hold Harmless protections will be time-limited.
- ▶ The Agency of Education will implement its Education Quality Review process. Within guidelines established by the AOE, if districts are not able to meet certain fiscal and educational benchmarks, the AOE/SBE will be empowered to intervene.