Impact of Governor's Proposed Budget to Reduce Education Spending Through Staff Attrition on Teacher and ESP Workforce[1&2]

The projected budget of the Governor Scott will have a deleterious effect on jobs in Vermont. Primarily the budget proposes to reduce overall teacher and staff jobs through attrition. The goal is to raise the staff to student ratio from its current rate from 1 to 4.22 up to 1 to 5.0. The proposal is supposed to save over $100 million dollars in K-12 spending for Vermont. However, there is no discussion as to how many teachers and staff jobs would be lost in K-12 education nor on the impact of that on teacher to student ratios.

How is the ratio of 1 to 5 achieved?

POINT: It will take 4 Years to reach the 1 to 5 staff to student ratio through staff attrition.

The governor's plan for reducing K-12 education funding is to reduce staffing levels through attrition. That is, a freeze on hiring. An analysis done by NEA, shows that the if the rate of attrition for teachers and staff (i.e., teachers and ESPs) were 6.3%[3], it would take approximately 4 years to reach to staff to student ratio of 1 to 5 (by 2020, the actual ratio would be 1 to 5.2) (Table 1). This analysis kept the average salaries static, with no adjustments taken for raises, movements across steps, or cost of benefits. The only changes adjusted for were any reduction in student enrollment and the corresponding reduction in teachers and ESPs.

Table 1: Staff to Student Ratio Projection

Fiscal Year		Enrollment	TotStaffFTE	Staff/Stud
2011-2012	2011	81,056	18,327	4.42
2012-2013	2012	80,217	18,351	4.37
2013-2014	2013	78,983	18,241	4.33
2014-2015	2014	77,780	18,062	4.31
2015-2016	2015	77,078	18,066	4.27
2016-2017	2016	76,230	18,061	4.22
2017-2018	2017	75,082	16,919	4.44
2018-2019	2018	74,098	15,850	4.67
2019-2020	2019	73,205	14,848	4.93
2020-2021	2020	72,283	13,909	5.20

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[1] This analysis assumes that the attrition would take place in the largest areas of staffing, which are teachers and ESP. Most organizations when attempting to make staffing cuts cut the lowest earners of the workforce first before making cuts to management.

[2] All data provided in this report is generated from VT's edu-teacher-staff-report: http://education.vermont.gov/documents/data-teacher-staff-fte-report.

[3] The 6.3% number is the percent of average teachers retiring per year based on a number provided by the Secretary of Administration.

Impact on Jobs

POINT: Over 4,000 people will lose their jobs under the governor's attrition plan.

The impact on K-12 jobs if the governor's budget plan were enacted would result in a projected job loss of 4,151 in the K-12 system (1,710 teacher jobs and 2,442 ESP jobs). These numbers assume that the attrition would come from both teachers and ESPs. (See Table 2)

Table 2: Impact of Attrition Plan on Jobs

	Annual Teacher Jobs Lost	Annual ESP Lost	Annual Total Jobs Lost	Cumulative Jobs Lost
2018	470	671	1,141	1,141
2019	440	629	1,069	2,211
2020	413	589	1,002	3,213
2021	387	552	939	4,151

Impact on Funding

POINT: Total spending cuts under the governor's attrition plan will exceed over $253 million per year, 150% over the stated projection of $100 million per year.

What is most egregious about the governor's plan is the number projected for cuts. The governor projected in his state-of-the-state address that the attrition needed to reach the 1 to 5 ratio would only cut approximately $100 million per year. The number, however, is actually 150% higher. NEA predicts that the cuts to the K-12 budget would actually reach over $253 million per year. (See Table 3)

Table 3: Impact of Attrition on Teacher and ESP Compensation

	Teacher Compensation	ESP Compensation	Combined Coompensation	Annual Cuts to Compensation	Cummulative Cuts
2017	577,527,429	527,021,418	1,104,548,848		
2018	541,124,916	493,819,069	1,034,943,985	69,604,863	69,604,863
2019	507,016,913	462,708,468	969,725,381	65,218,604	134,823,467
2020	475,058,794	433,557,834	908,616,628	61,108,752	195,932,219
2021	445,115,049	406,243,691	851,358,740	57,257,889	253,190,108

Impact on Staff to Student Ratios

POINT: The Average Increase in Teacher to Student Ratios will be over 20% Statewide.

The plan to increase the staff to student ratio from 1 to 4.2 to 1 to 5 will inevitably result in higher student to teacher ratios. All districts will see an increase with the statewide average being over 20%. The top 10 districts will suffer an average staff to student increase of 36%, with Bennington Rutland SU seeing an increase of over 59%. (See Table 4—next page)

Table 4: Projected Increase in Staff to Student Ratio from 2017 to 2021 Due to Governor's Attrition Plan

SUName	Percent Inscrease	SUName	Percent Inscrease
Bennington Rutland SU	59.1%	Washington West SU	19.4%
Orange Windsor SU	47.6%	Windsor Central SU	19.4%
Windham Southwest SU	45.2%	Lamoille North SU	19.3%
Montpelier SD	36.9%	Rutland Northeast SU	19.1%
Battenkill Valley SU	35.9%	Windham Southeast SU	18.6%
St Johnsbury SD	30.9%	Addison Rutland SU	18.4%
Lamoille South SU	29.4%	Milton SD	18.3%
Grand Isle SU	28.0%	Barre SU	17.5%
Essex Town SD	27.0%	Springfield SD	17.4%
Winooski SD	26.9%	Caledonia North SU	17.1%
Colchester SD	26.6%	Franklin Northwest SU	17.0%
Caledonia Central SU	26.4%	Southwest Vermont SU	16.5%
Franklin West SU	26.0%	North Country SU	16.0%
Windsor Southeast SU	25.8%	Franklin Central SU	16.0%
Burlington SD	25.8%	Rutland South SU	15.9%
South Burlington SD	25.6%	Orange Southwest SU	15.8%
Rivendell Interstate SD	25.3%	Rutland City SD	15.4%
Orange East SU	25.0%	Washington South SU	14.4%
Addison Central SU	24.9%	Blue Mountain SD	14.2%
Sau 70	24.4%	Two Rivers SU	14.1%
Franklin Northeast SU	24.1%	Addison Northeast SU	12.6%
Orleans Southwest SU	24.1%	Rutland Central SU	12.5%
Orange North SU	22.5%	Windham Central SU	11.6%
Orleans Central SU	22.2%	Chittenden East SU	11.5%
Essex North SU	22.1%	Hartford SD	11.5%
Chittenden South SU	22.0%	Rutland Southwest SU	6.4%
Washington Central SU	21.6%	Washington Northeast SU	6.3%
Windham Northeast SU	21.6%	Addison Northwest SU	2.2%
Chittenden Central SU	20.0%	Essex Caledonia SU	0.1%