



## SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

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slatevalleyunified.org

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Kristin H. Benway, Director of Special Services

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Christopher G. Cole, Director of Operations

April 24, 2020

To: House Education Committee Members

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the Slate Valley Unified Union School District, we wish to thank you for considering ways to assist districts like ours that find ourselves in the most difficult position of not having a budget for fiscal year 2021, and no way to hold a vote for the foreseeable future.

In March we proposed a budget that would have been a 0.51% increase in education spending and a 3.66% percent increase in education spending per equalized pupil. Unfortunately, that budget was defeated by 95 votes out of a total of 3,075 votes cast. At the time we were also proposing a large bond, and we believe the budget suffered as a result of the bond which was soundly defeated.

In March the Slate Valley School Board quickly reorganized and proposed another budget for voters to consider on April 21<sup>st</sup>. That budget would have been a 0.24% **decrease** in education spending and a 2.99% increase in education spending per equalized pupil. Unfortunately, the Board had to rescind that vote due to the Governor declaring a state of emergency.

We are writing to you today in full support of the bill that you are considering related to establishing fiscal year 2021 budgets for school districts that do not have voter approved budgets. The bill as proposed would allow us to move forward with a budget in place for fiscal year 2021, rather than operating in the limbo we find ourselves without a budget. Despite all that is happening, now would be the time that we would be making plans for building maintenance that is sorely needed in our district to take place over the summer. Without a budget, we are also concerned about losing staff to other school districts who are more financially stable than us at this time. Finally, we would like to be able to plan for the support that our students will surely need upon their return to school - whenever that may be.

Once again that you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Brooke Olsen-Farrell*

Brooke Olsen- Farrell  
Superintendent of Schools

*Cheryl Scarzello*

Cheryl Scarzello  
Director of Finance

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Benson Village Orwell Village Amy Roy, Principal Patrick Walters, Principal 32 School St. 494 Main St. Benson, VT 05743 Orwell, VT 05760 802.537.2491 802.948.2871	Castleton Elementary Kim Prehoda, Principal 263 Elementary School Rd. Bomoseen, VT 05732 802.468.5624	Castleton Village Kim Prehoda, Principal 47 Mechanic St. Castleton, VT 05735 802.468.2203	Fair Haven Grade Deborah Infurna Principal 115 North Main St. Fair Haven, VT 05743 802.265.3883	Fair Haven Union High Jason Rasco, Principal 33 Mechanic St. Fair Haven, VT 05743 802.265.4966
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