

Public Comment on Education Finance

House Committee on Education

April 21, 2020

Dear Kate Webb,

I am a Director of the Windham Southeast School District. The WSESD conducts oversight of nine individual schools.

I am aware there are nineteen districts that do not presently have budgets for FY 21. Eight budgets did not pass and eight were not able to hold their annual meetings.

The WSESD is one of eight districts that does not at this time have a budget. We did convene our Annual meeting on March 17, 2020, and adjourned till a later time. The Pandemic prevented that from taking place.

I am aware that your committee is working on a solution.

I am writing to advocate for awareness by your committee the difficulties the WSESD is facing. Once the education committee understand the “perfect storm” numbers we are dealing with plus the disruption of the Covid 19 I believe a solution will be forthcoming.

FY	Equalized Pupils	Education spending	offsetting Revenues
2020	2234	\$40,623,303	\$9,648,986
2021	2253	\$42,654,076	\$8,517,224
Difference	+19	+ \$2,030,762	- (\$1,131,762)

As I understand the possibilities, the house is looking to pass legislation that would enable those districts that do not have a budget the ability to expend the previous year budget, plus a percentage to be determined. Please note the financial implication represented in the numbers above.

Our job is to making sure that student education goes forward for next year with as many programs intact as possible.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,
Shaun Murphy
Guilford

From: Teri Gaston

Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 6:50 PM

To: Avery Lamb <ALamb@leg.state.vt.us>

Subject: [External] Vermont Educational Funding during COVID

I am a Vermont teacher and although I do not live in Vermont, I have serious concerns about the budget and education in Vermont. Due to the shutdowns across the country due to COVID there is a natural consequence to schools. There is less tax collection and in some states a delayed tax deadline. There is less tax collected from food and drink as states deal with stay at home guidelines. We have been told there is an approximate \$90 million deficit in the EdFund. This affects the local budgets of school districts and as a result, many schools will have a reduction in force and programs cut to handle the budgetary restrictions that result in both FY20 and FY21. There have been hundreds of trillions in relief from the federal government. What help can be funneled to states to cure the deficits so that schools can remain a level of stability for our students, teachers, and communities that are so desperately needed in the wake of COVID, remote learning, and potential issues with resuming in person in the fall? Please pick up the torch to provide assurances for our states and local school districts. This is the one area that has been completely silent in our federal and state briefings. You hear about remote learning but not how to keep our districts operating moving forward.

Thank you for your time.

April 17, 2020

Dear Vermont Legislators,

On Wednesday, April 15, the Windham Southeast School District Board of Directors voted unanimously in favor of the following motion:

“Moved that the WSESD requests the Vermont Senate Committee on Education and the Vermont House Education Committee support the VSA & VSBA's proposals to fund districts without approved budgets at the FY20 education spending amount plus a 4% inflator.”

We do not have an approved budget because our regularly scheduled Annual Meeting had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Our administrators and Town Clerks are concerned about the safety of conducting a mail-in budget vote in the foreseeable future.

Considering health insurance increases, additional out-of-district placements for intensive needs students, and a reasonable salary increase for our staff, we would face a \$2,000,000 shortfall if forced to operate under FY20 education spending.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth Adams- Putney
Anne Beekman- Putney
Emily Murphy-Kaur- Brattleboro
Michelle Luetjen Green-Dummerston
Tim Maciel- Brattleboro
Shaun Murphy- Guilford
Thomas Nolan- Dummerston
Jack Reynolds- Brattleboro
David Schoales- Brattleboro
Kelly Young- Guilford

