

Dear Chair Webb and Members of the House Education Committee:

I write in support of strengthening S.13, from the board of a school district that stands to lose equalized pupils — and therefore to face a much heavier tax burden — if the pupil weights are updated.

Why would a school district board adopt such a position against its own apparent self-interest?

In a word: principle.

The board of the Washington Central school district voted on March 3 to join the Coalition for Vermont Student Equity in order to uphold the proposition that all Vermonters have a right to live equally in a just society. If this means giving up unearned privileges we might be enjoying in an unjust one, then so be it. We are willing to pay that price.

Equity is what we try to teach our children. It is what we strive to establish as a foundation for our schools and for our communities. It is what we ask of our legislature for the state as a whole.

Narrow self-interest would dictate that we oppose implementing the corrected pupil weights. But enlightened self-interest — the understanding that we can only truly advance if all our fellow Vermonters, children alike, are treated fairly — calls us to support it.

I am supportive of amending S.13 as requested by Coalition for Vermont Student Equity. Specifically, I believe the taskforce should be singularly focused on creating an implementation plan to correct the pupil weights. As recommended by the Pupil Weighting Factors Report of 2019.

With gratitude for your work and appreciation for the seriousness with which you are approaching S.13, we urge you to approve the bill with favorable recommendation to the full House for its vote this session.

Kind regards,

Scott Thompson
Washington Central