

Representative Kate Webb
Senator Brian Campion
House & Senate Education Committees
Vermont General Assembly
State Street
Montpelier, VT 05601

September 21, 2021

RE: State Board of Education – Roles & Responsibilities Update & Other Governance Matters

Dear Rep. Webb, Sen. Campion & Members of the House & Senate Education Committees:

Section 18 of Act 66 directed the Agency of Education (AOE) and State Board of Education (SBE) to jointly report to the House & Senate Education Committees on or before December 15th of this year with recommendations for potential re-alignment of AOE and SBE roles and responsibilities.

I am writing to request your support for an informal extension of this deadline to later in January 2022, which I think can be accomplished by filing an interim update by the December deadline, and a final report in January.

The AOE and SBE have had some preliminary discussions, and a committee has been formed to engage in this important work, but given competing priorities, it has become clear that more time is needed to provide the General Assembly with a thoughtful recommendation.

Another consideration is the recent appointment of Dr. Tammy Kolbe to the SBE. I have asked Dr. Kolbe to lead the committee that will be developing the recommendations that will ultimately be presented to the General Assembly. She will be a tremendous help to this process, and I want to give her and her committee sufficient time to get this right. Please let us know if you are supportive of this approach or have any questions or concerns.

Separate and apart from the above matter, I want to bring renewed attention back to the statutory construct for governing school district withdrawals and dissolutions. The State Board of Education remains concerned about the unintended consequences of some aspects of this activity; particularly in the absence of appropriate safeguards to ensure the sustainability and equity of educational opportunities for Vermont students.

Sincerely,



Oliver Olsen
Chair, State Board of Education

CC: Dan French, Secretary of Education
State Board of Education Members

