

Barre Unified Union School District

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Barre City Elementary & Middle School • Barre Town Middle & Elementary School • Spaulding High School • Central Vermont Career Center

Doing whatever it takes to ensure success for every child.

David Wells, M.Ed. - Superintendent of Schools

*Mary Ellen Simmons, Ed.D. – Asst. Superintendent of Instruction
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Josh Allen – Communications Specialist*

*Lisa Perreault, SFO - Business Manager
Carol Marold – Director of Human Resources
Emmanuel Ajanma, MAT – Director of Technology
Jamie Evans – Director of Facilities*

*Annette Rhoades, M.Ed., CAGS – Asst. Director of Special Services
Jon Strazza, MS.Ed. – Asst. Director of Special Services
Rebecca Webb, M.Ed. – Act 166 Regional Coordinator*

February 2, 2021

Dear Members of the General, Housing and Military Affairs Committee:

Barre Unified Union School District (BUUSD) Board of Directors supports H.63. We believe this bill helps to balance appropriate access to health care benefits while also proposing reasonable cost containment to ensure the financial sustainability of the benefits.

We are requesting that this letter be entered into the written testimony of the Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs on H.81 and posted on the Committee's website.

Health care benefit increases continue to jeopardize educational opportunities for students and are causing the district to defer necessary maintenance and safety upgrades to our buildings.

The following information regarding BUUSD's health care benefits illustrates the need for cost containment:

For FY22, we have dedicated \$6,759,412 to healthcare expenses in our budget. This includes the district's contribution to monthly premiums, Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRA), and Health Savings Accounts (HSA) and represents 13.3% of our budget. That percentage in FY21 is currently 11.7%. FY20 was 9.4%.

Healthcare costs for us are up 18.8% for FY22, while the budget we have developed is up only 4.15%. Cost reductions in other areas have had to occur in order to propose a budget that our community could and would accept. These increases are not sustainable and have and will impact programming and positions, which will eventually impact student opportunities.

The cost of healthcare as a percentage of the average cost of compensation (salary) of our teachers is 19.6%. For our support staff the average cost of healthcare as a percentage of the average cost of compensation is 22.3%.

Sincerely,

David Wells
Superintendent