



VERMONT PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION
MEMO
From the Desk of Jay Nichols

January 12, 2021 testimony
Senate Education

Status Update: A little table with some notes/thoughts

Issue/concern	Notes/comments	Action?
Broadband	The pandemic is further proof that we have an opportunity gap in VT that is really stacked against students in poverty.	Need connectivity throughout state as a fundamental Vermont right.
Hybrid Learning/Remote	Educators have done a great job with hybrid but it is a poor substitute for five days of in-person instruction. Remote is very ineffective especially for the students who need the most support	Need more students back to in-person instruction.
Substitute Teachers	Very hard to find substitutes. In some cases when schools have had to go remote it is simply because they don't have the staff.	Fingerprinting and sharing of records between agencies needs to be addressed.
Hiring teachers/Staff /Administrators	This is becoming a critical issue across the nation. VT rural areas are hit especially hard.	Educator Retirement Bill presented by VPA.
School Budgets	Some principals being directed to cut budgets even though they know the social, emotional and academic needs of their students have never been higher than they are right now.	Using federal funds and other sources to the degree possible to keep the taxpayer rate burden down

		is important or we may see major school budget issues this year.
Early Childhood	Act 166 has widen the chasm between the haves and have nots. We should have universal preschool full day options for all 4 years old's. This is important for education and our future economy. The sooner we can provide full service supports for our most vulnerable students the better.	VPA has made public statement that 4 year old's in VT should have access to full-day early kindergarten.
Education Funding	Weighting Study. This could easily devolve into an issue of winners and losers. We worry about that and think that is less likely to happen in the Senate than the House and hope this committee will take the lead on this.	We will work with legislature and administration as thought partners any way that we can.
Act 46	We think any major changes to governance structures is ill advised at this time. We would like schools to have to stay in the districts they are now in to continue to realize some of the educational opportunities Act 46 can provide.	Any legislations should block people from pulling out of merged district unless they can prove how it would be better for students.
Educational Recovery	Many students have lost a lot of learning. Some students have either dropped out or defacto dropped out by not showing up. The social emotional needs are immense.	Flexibility with federal funds to provide tutoring, hiring extra personnel, work study, internships, credit recovery etc. <u>to do whatever needs to be done to prevent students from falling through the cracks.</u>