

Dear Senator/Representative,

Recently, the Vermont House of Representatives made it clear in the Budget Adjustment Act that After School Program funding would be allocated through the Education Fund into the oversight of local school districts. We understand that there is pressure from private businesses, some nonprofits, and religious organizations to have direct access to those funds and they are asking the Senate to make a change in the Budget Adjustment Act that would allow for these taxpayer funds to go directly to organizations that may or may not have fiscal transparency and serve all children.

School leaders are committed to serving all children and ensuring financial accountability for public dollars. We partner with private and nonprofit organizations when it makes sense to do so for our children and will continue to do that. We also will continue to make sure that public dollars are utilized in a transparent manner so that Vermont children and taxpayers are not discriminated against. In this time of real fiscal crisis, transferring funds from the Education Fund to private businesses and nonprofits without school district oversight is inconsistent with Vermont's values of democracy, financial accountability, and equity for all our state's children.

School Districts can still partner with public and private organizations where it makes sense to do so but having the money go through the LEA ensures that all children have equal access AND financial accountability.

Rebecca Fillion
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