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 Retired Superintendent Champlain Valley School District
 April 30, 2026

Testimony to the House Education Committee
 Supervisory Unions/ School Districts

	Supervisory Union	School District
Focus	Multiple districts, each with its own mission-vision/ set of goals - Focused on providing what's best for their own students	One mission/ vision/ set of goals Focused on providing what's best for all students
Board Work Plans	Several work plans - possibly aligned, but not necessarily. Several board meeting schedules - again, possibly aligned, but not necessary	One work plan aligned with the district mission/ vision and goals established at the board/ admin retreat
Board Meetings	Individual district board meetings each month as well as the SU board meeting	One schedule for ONE board based on work plan (see above)
Finance/ Budgets	Individual budgets for each district and for SU - with shared services billed back to districts	One budget for the district - based on the needs of all students - ensuring equity of opportunity for all students
Facilities Buildings and Grounds	Individual plans for each district are determined based on need and the ability of each district to support maintenance and upgrades	One plan for the district that takes into account the needs of all
Curriculum and Instruction Professional Development	A confederation of the willing	Plan by design
Culture	Individual communities supporting their schools and students to the best of their abilities	Communities united under a single commitment to support all students wherever they attend school
Equity and Autonomy	Individual boards and administrations focused on the local level	Single board and unified administrator team collectively focused on ensuring equity and autonomy for all students

Testimony to Senate Education, April 15, 2026 re: Process for merging CSSU - CVSD

Historical Perspective/ Readiness Factors

2003-2013: Focused work on moving toward a single, cohesive educational system

- Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Curriculum and Professional Development
- Supervision and Evaluation
- Executive Committee (School Board chairs)
- School Board meetings, retreats, shared goals
- LEAD Team (Principals and CO Administration)
- CULTURE (communities, districts, schools, principals, teachers)

The Merger Process/ Act 46 Experience

Study Committee - year of deliberation, data comparison, and public meetings

Equity and Autonomy

Fiscal Fairness (per pupil cost, bonds, neglected facilities)

School Choice

Transition

Governance: operating parallel board structures during the transition

Community buy-in: Equity and Autonomy Matrix; Facilities 3-5 year plan; CULTURE

Financial Considerations

Collective Bargaining Agreements

- Staffing (salaries and benefits had mostly been completed pre-merger)
- Teacher assignments/ school day schedules

Student Data Systems

*We did not promise big savings; we promised better educational opportunities for all of our students without giving up “autonomy.” We promised \$500K and realized a bit more than that (on a \$90M +/- budget).

Grant Money/ Incentives

- The real monetary incentive for us was the tax break over five years
- The grant money provided more than covered our expenses; this would be very different for a system that had not already done much of the work in advance of a merger
- Merged systems that combine currently unrelated school districts would need much more assistance and funding to support their efforts