

Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed School District Map for Southern Grand Isle County

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a parent and constituent from the Town of Grand Isle to share my concerns regarding the proposed draft school district map and its impact on families in southern Grand Isle County.

I appreciate the intent behind the redistricting effort and the goal of promoting equity across the state. I also cannot imagine being in your position and trying to make everyone in the state happy. However, the current draft map does not reflect the geographic realities, transportation routes, employment patterns, and family circumstances that shape daily life in our community.

My family's situation highlights these concerns. My son will be attending school off-island in Colchester next year, prior to the proposed changes taking effect. Under the current draft map, I have no clarity as to whether he would then be required to change schools again once the new district is implemented. For a child, being forced to switch schools multiple times in a short period is disruptive and unfair.

At the same time, my daughter will not begin attending school off-island until after the proposed changes take effect, meaning she would be directly impacted by the new map. I would not want my children assigned to different schools or districts, creating additional logistical challenges for our family and unnecessary disruption to their education and stability.

Like many families in southern Grand Isle County, we are a working family whose employment is based in Chittenden County due to proximity. Our daily commute, childcare arrangements, and after-school activities are all oriented toward Chittenden County. It would not make sense for our children to attend school in Franklin County, which is farther away and not aligned with our work schedules or transportation routes.

For decades, families in South Hero and the Town of Grand Isle have intentionally chosen schools in Colchester, Essex, and South Burlington because those schools are closer, more accessible, and better aligned with the realities of family life. Redirecting students away from these schools would result in longer commutes, increased transportation challenges, disruptions to work schedules and childcare, and added stress for working families.

These impacts fall most heavily on families who are simply trying to balance work, school, and family responsibilities, and they undermine the equity goals the map is intended to support.

I respectfully urge you to revise the proposed map so that families in South Hero and the Town of Grand Isle retain the option to send their children to schools in South Burlington, Colchester, or Essex. Preserving this flexibility supports students, keeps siblings together, allows families to maintain stability, and reflects the real geographic and economic realities of our region.

Thank you for your time and for considering the voices of the families who are directly affected by this decision.

Melissa & Cagney Hamblett

Grand Isle, VT