Report on Act 46 of 2015

Section 6(d) Accelerated Activity;
Supervisory Union Becoming a Supervisory District;
Enhanced Tax Incentives; Data and Report.

REPORT

January 2019

Report to the House Committees on Education, Appropriations and Ways and Means and to the Senate Committees on Education, Appropriations and Finance.

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VERMONT
AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Legislation

Act 46 of 2015: *An act relating to making amendments to education funding, education spending, and education governance*

Summary

Act 46 (2015), Section 6(d) requires the Secretary to report to the House and Senate Committees on Education and on Appropriations, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on Finance "regarding the districts merging under [the accelerated merger process created by Sec. 6(d) of Act 46], conclusions drawn from the data collected, and any recommendations for legislative action."

Report

Overview

The stated purpose of Act 46 was "to encourage and support local decisions and actions that:

(1) provide substantial equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities statewide;

(2) lead students to achieve or exceed the State's Education Quality Standards, adopted as rules by the State Board of Education at the direction of the General Assembly;

(3) maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with a goal of increasing the district-level ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff;

(4) promote transparency and accountability; and

(5) are delivered at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value." *Act 46, Sec. 2.*

Act 46 established a multi-year, phased process that provided multiple opportunities for school districts to unify existing disparate governance entities into "sustainable governance structures" that were designed to meet the identified educational and fiscal goals, while recognizing and reflecting local priorities.

The Act stated that the preferred model of governance is a unified union school district (*i.e.*, PreK-12) that (1) provides for the education of its resident students either by operating all grades; by operating PreK-6 or PreK-8 and tuitioning the remaining grades; or by tuitioning all grades and (2) is large enough to function effectively as a supervisory district (*i.e.*, a single-district supervisory union ("SU")). The identified operating / tuitioning structures represented the most common governance structures in the State at the time the Legislature enacted the law. *Act 46, Sec. 5(b).*

Act 46 acknowledged that the creation of a supervisory district is not always "possible" or "the best" means to accomplish the Act's stated goals and that there will be SUs with multiple merged and/or unmerged districts in some regions of the State ("Alternative Structures"). *Act 46, Sec. 5(c), as amended by Act 49 (2017), Sec. 7.*

Act 46 created or incorporated three incentivized phases of voter-approved merger, all of which relied upon a decades-old statutory process for the creation of union school districts.

Districts that did not expect to be a member of a new unified union school district by July 1, 2019 were required to evaluate their ability to meet or exceed State goals, to talk with other districts, and to present proposals to the Secretary and State Board of Education. *Act 46, Sec. 9.*

The Legislature directed the Secretary of Education to review the Section 9 Proposals, meet with the boards of the districts that submitted them, and develop a proposal to merge districts where necessary to meet the goals of the Act. *Act 46, Sec. 10(a).*

The Legislature required the State Board to review and analyze the Secretary's proposal and issue a final statewide order merging previously unmerged districts and redrawing supervisory union boundaries into more sustainable models of governance that meet State goals, to the extent the State Board determined the changes were *necessary, possible, and practicable* for the region. *Act 46, Sec. 10(b).* Act 46 restricted the State Board's discretion in Sec. 8(b), stating in part:

> The State Board shall approve the creation, expansion, or continuation of a supervisory union only if the Board concludes that this alternative structure:
>
> (1) is the best means of meeting the goals set forth in Sec. 2 of this act in a particular region; and
>
> (2) ensures transparency and accountability for the member districts and the public at large ...

Act 46, Sec. 10 exempted three categories of districts from consideration in the State Board's Final Report and Order. Act 49, Secs. 3, 4, and 8 created three additional categories. ***See Appendix A*** for the specific districts exempt under each category.

The overarching phased nature of Act 46, as amended by Act 49, is apparent:

- Voter-Approved Mergers

  After self-evaluation/analysis and regional conversations per 16 VSA Chapter 11

  - Accelerated – "Phase 1 Mergers" (Act 46 of 2015)

    All districts in an SU become a single unified district

    - voter approval: 07.01.16
    - fully operational: 07.01.17
  - "REDs" & Variations – "Phase 2 Mergers" (Acts 153 of 2010 & 156 of 2012)

    (included Side-by-Side mergers & MUUSDs)

    - voter approval: 11.30.17 (Act 49 of 2017)
    - fully operational: by 07.01.19
  - Later "Conventional" Mergers – "Phase 3 Mergers" (Act 46)

    - voter approval: no legislative deadline
    - fully operational: by 07.01.19

- Proposals by Nonmerging Districts Not Otherwise Exempted from the Process (Act 46 and Act 49)

  After self-evaluation/analysis and regional conversations per Act 46, Sec. 9

  - proposal due: 12.26.17

- Secretary of Education's Statewide Governance *Proposal* (Act 46)

  - proposal due: 06.01.18

- State Board of Education's *Final* Statewide Report and Order (Act 46)

  Makes governance changes to districts and boundaries changes for SUs to the extent necessary, possible, and practicable

  - issued: by 11.30.18
  - effective: 07.01.19

Agency Activity in 2018

Most of the Agency's work in 2018 centered on review and analysis of the Section 9 Proposals submitted by 46 districts or groups of districts subject to the State Board's Final Report and Order, conversations with the boards of the 96 affected districts, and preparation of the document setting forth the Secretary's Proposal.

In addition, the Agency continued to assist voter-approved unified union school districts in 2018 as they transitioned to their new governance structure.

The Agency frequently answered questions from and provided guidance to school board members, superintendents, community members, and the press regarding newly-created unified union school districts, the Section 9 Proposal process, the process for developing the Secretary's Proposal, and the State Board's Final Report and Order.

Finally, the Agency continued to expand its School Governance Webpage, which is organized into six separate pages. The pages provide substantive information as well as links to statutes, fact sheets, worksheets, guidance documents, answers to frequently asked questions, merger proposals, proposals for "alternative governance structures" under Section 9, the Secretary's Statewide Governance Proposal and its Appendices, and the State Board's Final Report and Order. ***See Appendix B*** for a description of those pages and links to each.

Governance Activity – As of January 1, 2019

Voter-Approved Unified Union School Districts

From July 1, 2015 through January 1, 2019, the voters in 151 school districts approved creation of 38 new unified union school districts: When numbers attributable to the Mount Mansfield Modified Unified Union School District, created shortly before enactment of Act 46, are included: the voters in 161 school districts approved creation of 39 unified districts, for a net reduction of 122 districts.

For more detail, see "School District Governance Data" at ***Appendix C***, the list of voter-approved unified union school districts at ***Appendix D*** (identifying the forming districts, the

operating/tuitioning structure, and the date of full operations), and the related map at ***Appendix F***.

State Board of Education's Final Report and Order

The State Board of Education's Final Report and Order addresses the 96 districts that were not legislatively-exempted from its consideration. The Order merged 45 districts by forming 11 new union school districts (seven PreK-12 districts and four union elementary or union elementary/middle school districts) and by enlarging two existing union school districts. In addition, the Order conditionally required an additional four town elementary districts to merge with four existing modified unified union school districts. The State Board's Order made no changes to the governance structure of the remaining 47 districts.

For more detail, see "School District Governance Data" at ***Appendix C***, the districts subject to the State Board's Order at ***Appendix E*** (identifying the districts that were merged into a new union school district, that were added to an existing union school district, and that retained the current governance structure), and the related map at ***Appendix G***.

Observations

Of the 38 voter-approved unified union school districts formed after the enactment of Act 46, 21 became operational in July 2018 and five more will not be operational until July 2019. An additional 11 new union school districts created by the State Board's Final Report and Order also will become operational on July 1, 2019.

As a result, only 12 new unified union school districts have been operational for at least one full fiscal year. These districts have reported operational benefits such as a greater flexibility to share staff, resources, and programs among schools and the ability to offer intra-district K-6 or K-8 choice among the unified district's schools.

Fiscal benefits are also evident, although most districts have chosen to strengthen collaboration and governance with existing school structures, prior to seeking substantial operational changes.

The primary conclusion from this work continues to be that successful system transformation takes time and is challenging work. Newly merged boards need to grieve letting go of who they were before they can focus on what their new community might become. In order to build strong collaborative governance, merging communities need to take the time to build trust, develop new habits for working together, and embrace and develop a shared and coherent vision. In communities that have taken the time to build trust and common cause, the subsequent work of collaborating to reduce cost and improve quality comes easier.

In addition, many merging systems have chosen to see unification as a chance to think through systems comprehensively. For example, a cohort has worked with Nate Levenson of the District Management Group on a variety of systems issues, including plans for using attrition to shift the skill sets employed by the district and to manage staffing ratios.

Educational Consequences

In general, communities that have approved creation of unified union school districts anticipate that the flexibility inherent in a unified structure will enable educational benefits such as:

- Increased ability to share staff, resources, and programs among schools.
- Opportunity to offer intradistrict K-6 or K-8 choice among the schools the unified union district operates.
- Transformation of the district's elementary schools into magnet schools.
- Reconfiguration of grades to address shrinking populations and to create more robust peer groups.
- Improved communication within and between departments and grade levels (to support, *e.g.*, better alignment of world languages across buildings).
- Elimination of bureaucratic redundancies and centralization of supports so that administrators are able to focus on their roles as educational leaders.
- Creation of a unified program of educator recruitment, induction, and mentoring, including for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers.

Specific observations from some of the operational districts include:

Mill River Unified Union School District (operational July 2016)

- The district has implemented full elementary school choice throughout the district.
- The district has experienced an increase in the number of public high school choice students enrolled in its high school due to the ability to offer more flexible, appealing options.
- A focused instructional vision throughout the district has created alignment and consistency for students and schools.
- The district is sharing staff among multiple schools. This has allowed more individuals to be hired as full-time employees and has resulted in better cohesion, continuity, and staff morale.
- The district's current visionary operations and plans for the future attract far more qualified candidates for openings than before creation of the district.
- The district has aligned, streamlined, targeted, and personalized professional development schedules and opportunities.
- The district notes that some communities have taken more time coming to terms with the concept of a single district and have not yet recognized (i) what the cost would have been if they had continued to operate as a single-town district and (ii) what opportunities have been made available as a result of merger.
- The four communities have different local "flavors" and communication needs, which has required the district to work more actively on community engagement and communication strategies.

Otter Valley Unified Union School District (operational on July 1, 2016; member of the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union)

- The district hired a facilities director and has begun long range facilities planning.

- The district shares teachers among schools to ensure equity of programs. For example, three schools did not have a library program. The district was able to begin programs in each school by sharing a librarian from a fourth school.
- The district now shares library services, nursing, art, and Spanish across more than one school, allowing the district to offer and fill full time teaching positions and offer more equitable programs to its students.
- No teacher who initially received a reduction in force ("RIF") notice lost a job in the district, despite the reduction of 12 teaching positions in the unified district. The district was able to move previously RIF'd teachers to different positions by taking advantage of retirements. This could not happen when the district was organized as multiple, distinct school districts.
    - The district not only retains the teacher, but it also retains the investment in the teacher, including advertising costs and professional development investments.
- The district offers elementary school choice among its five elementary schools. This helps families and also helps the district to identify programmatic inequities, with a commitment to fixing them.

Maple Run Unified School District (operational July 1, 2017)

- The district added foreign language to a small elementary school to ensure equity of offerings.
- The district increased arts offerings in all schools.
- The district went from 15 different teacher/staff master agreements to 2 master agreements.
- The district has increased coordination around facilities use, curriculum development, technology, transportation, budget creation, hiring, etc.
- The district's administrators are working together in a collaborative manner to address issues.
- The school board is "working for the betterment of ALL students . . . going from a culture of me to we."
- The students are developing relationships with their peers in other schools in the district, and thinking of themselves as Maple Run students.

Kingdom East Unified Union School District (operational July 1, 2018)

- All students now have access to transportation to and from school. Not all forming districts offered transportation before merger, which had resulted in lower attendance rates, especially in the winter.
- Students in two schools now have access to high quality after-school programs which were previously unavailable to them.
- All schools within the district now have content coaching in math and literacy.
- All of the district's new teachers have mentors and a formal mentoring program.
- Behavioral supports are available for educators working with children who are struggling. The behavior specialist observes and works with individual teachers and teams.

- The district offers increased opportunities for professional development coursework, including that all teachers have the opportunity for the equivalent of 6 NVU college credits.
- The district has created Professional Learning Groups – coordinated professional development where groups of teachers in similar grade bands work together on student learning outcomes.
- All of the district's schools have a published a Continuous Improvement Plan.
- The district is increasing its support and coordination of leadership within its schools. For example, the principals from each school visit all schools and observe classrooms and work together on learning and outcomes.
- Board meetings rotate among the seven different schools, enabling board members to gain the perspective of the needs of multiple schools.
- The district has increased its social media presence (e.g., facebook participation).
- There has been an increase in school choice among the elementary schools in the district.
- A multi-year collective bargaining agreement increased teachers' salaries to be more in line with other districts in the region.
- Simultaneously transitioning to a new unified union school district, closing one supervisory union, and continuing to do all of the usual reports, analyses, and other yearly items has been difficult.

Financial Consequences

Districts were conservative in projecting savings in initial years. Proposals for merger looked at immediately quantifiable annual cost reductions – such as the need for fewer audits, payment of fewer board member stipends, reduced legal costs, bulk purchasing, and other miscellaneous savings. Projections in this category varied from a potential annual cost reduction of less than $20,000 to a potential annual cost reduction of $300,000, with most in the $100,000-200,000 range. Proposals with lower projections were generally from SUs that included an existing union high school district and that already had a high level of coordinated services, bulk purchasing, etc. throughout the SU. In these situations, large initial savings from consolidation of services and operations were not expected because many of the savings in this category had already been realized.

Proposals for merger did not identify specific dollar amounts for the savings anticipated to arise from, for example, sharing staff among schools, staff attrition, grade-reconfiguration, facility repurposing, and centralized maintenance services and training – but listed items such as these from which they expected to see savings.

In general, the operational districts have reported that unification has provided opportunities to "even-out" enrollment among schools and to improve student-to-teacher ratios.

Specific observations from some of the operational districts include:

Mill River Unified Union School District (operational July 2016)

- The district has experienced average annual savings in the $500,000-800,000 range compared to pre-merger, primarily due to centralized facilities management, staffing efficiencies, sharing of staff, and conservative spending.

- Surpluses have also fallen in the $500,000-800,000 range.
- Decisions resulting in savings have a smaller impact than the district would like on local tax rates due to the education funding formula, including the effect of the common level of appraisal (CLA). Tax rates can increase even if the district saves money.
- The lack of state funding for capital projects over the last decade has created a "near crisis level of deferred maintenance in many locations," requiring the pursuit of bond questions and difficult budgeting decisions in order to support older buildings and keep them viable.

Otter Valley Unified Union School District (operational on July 1, 2016; member of the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union)

- The district reconfigured three small elementary schools, all of which had been operating prekindergarten through grade 6 classrooms, as follows:
    - One school is providing prekindergarten, with a private child care partner sharing the space.
    - One school is operating kindergarten through grade 4, with class sizes that are close to 15 students.
    - One school is operating grades 5 and 6.
- This plan allowed for the reduction of four teaching positions and additional paraprofessional positions, leading to a total reduction of $1.5 million in the district's budget between FY2018 and FY2019.
- The district eliminated 12 teaching positions after creating the unified district. By offering a retirement incentive, the district shifted teachers to other schools as openings from retirement arose.

Maple Run Unified School District (operational July 1, 2017)

- The district increased arts in all schools.
- The district realized about $900,000 in staff savings through attrition during this school year.
- The district realized $2,000,000 in overall savings since it became operational in 2017.

Kingdom East Unified Union School District (operational July 1, 2018)

- Elimination of the Essex-Caledonia SU resulted in fiscal savings (shared with the two other new unified districts that enabled the SU elimination).
- Centralized, shared responsibility for facilities enabled collaboration leading to installation of a heating pellet plant that increases energy efficiency.
- Increased enrollment from students living in neighboring districts resulted in increased revenue.
- The Vermont Rural Education Collaborative has awarded mini grants to more schools than in the past.
- The district has greater accountability and has increased fiscal responsibility. For example, the unified district identified that:
    - One of the forming districts had been paying tuition to an independent school that is not eligible to receive publicly funded tuition dollars.

- One of the forming districts had been providing free meals not only to students but also to staff.

The Agency does not yet have enough quantitative data to analyze how and if saving have been realized locally beyond anecdotes such as those mentioned above. It is important to remember that only 12 new unified union school districts have completed a full fiscal year of operations under their new governance structures. The Agency plans to begin more formally collecting data from these new systems, in order to better and more uniformly evaluate efficiencies and opportunities created by unified union school districts.

Appendices

A. Districts that are Legislatively Exempt from the State Board's Final Report and Order
B. The Agency of Education's School Governance Webpage – Overview and Links
C. School District Governance Data
D. Voter-Approved Unified Union School Districts
E. Districts Created, Enlarged, or Maintaining Current Governance Structure Pursuant to State Board's Final Report and Order
F. Map – Voter-Approved Merger Activity as of July 1, 2019
G. Map – State Board's Final Order Issued November 30, 2018

Appendix A
Districts Legislatively-Exempted from SBE's Final Report and Order

Interstate School Districts *(Act 46 (2015), Sec. 10(c)(1) - re-designated by Act 49, Sec. 8 as (e)(1))*

Rivendell Interstate School District

School Administrative Unit #70 (Dresden)

Regional Career Technical Center District *(Act 46 (2015), Sec. 10(c)(2) - re-designated by Act 49, Sec. 8 as (e)(2))*

Patricia A Hannaford Career Center School District

River Valley Technical Center School District

Southwest VT Regional Technical School District

New Union Districts – Operational 2013-2019 and Eligible for Tax Rate Reductions etc. under Acts 153, 156, or 46 *(Act 46 (2015), Sec. 10(c)(3) - re-designated by Act 49, Sec. 8 as (e)(3))*

See Appendix D

A Supervisory District (i.e., a single-district SU) with 900+ ADM *(Act 49 (2017), Sec. 8 – added new exemption in 2017 by adding subdivision (4) to Act 46, Sec. 10(e)(4))*

Burlington

Colchester

Hartford

Milton

Rutland City

St Johnsbury

South Burlington

Springfield

Winooski

Districts Receiving Early Exemption as the "1" District in a "3-by-1" or "2-by-2-by-1" Proposal *(Act 49 (2017), Secs. 3 and 4)*

Alburgh School District (K-8o; 9-12t)

Ira School District (K-12t)

Peacham School District (K-6o; 7-12t)

Rutland Town School District (K-8o; 9-12t)

Marlboro School District (K-8o; 9-12t)

Appendix B
The Agency of Education's School Governance Webpage – Overview and Links

Options – Provides an overview of the multi-year process created by Act 46 that required each school district in the State to conduct a rigorous self-examination of its current ability to meet or exceed the educational and fiscal goals of Act 46 and consider the opportunities that can arise from regional cooperation, including though merger.

Guidance – Provides links to information regarding, *e.g.*, creating a unified union school district pursuant to decades-old statutory provisions; formal "§ 706 study committee" conversations; options for membership on a union school board, and the creation of "alternative governance structure" proposals. Most of the data needed for self-evaluation – whether in connection with a proposed merger or an "alternative governance structure" under Act 46, Sec. 9 – is also available through links on this page.

- A separate page available through the Guidance page provides post-merger tips on targeted issues, such as a checklist of tasks for business offices during the transition phase and responses to frequently asked questions regarding the respective duties and authority of the merging boards and the new unified board.

Merger Activity – Provides a map of current activity and a synopsis of community votes on proposals to create unified union school districts. It also includes links to access each study committee's report, proposed articles of agreement, and appendices that were approved by the State Board of Education and presented to the local electorate for a vote.

"Section 9 Proposals" – Provides an overview of the "Section 9" phase of the process and links to the proposals submitted by districts and groups of districts (when electronic copies were provided to the Agency).

Secretary's Proposed Statewide Governance Proposal – Provides an overview of the process leading to the Secretary's Proposal, issued on June 1, 2018. Also provides links to the Secretary's Proposal and its appendices, including:

- Appendix F: "Snapshots" of each Section 9 Proposal, which inserts language directly from each Section 9 Proposal into a common format for easier comparison.
- Appendix G: Common data points for each district that submitted a Section 9 Proposal.

State Board of Education's Final Report and Order – Provides an overview of the process leading to the State Board's Final Report and Order, issued November 30, 2018. Also provides links to the Order and to default articles of agreement issued for each of the 11 districts created by the Order.

Appendix C
School District Governance Data
July 1, 2013 – July 1, 2019

Governance Changes:

- FY13 – Prior to enactment of Acts 153, 156, and 46 = 276 districts
- FY16 – Prior to enactment of Act 46 = 267 districts
- FY20 – After voter-approved mergers under Acts 153, 156, and 46 = 154 districts
    - After State Board mergers = 120 districts
    - (Potential mergers of NMEDs with MUUSDs = 116)

    ### Net Reduction since FY13

    - 122 – Due to new union districts created under Acts 153, 156, & 46
    - 34 – Due to SBE's Final Report and Order
    - (4 – Potential, due to NMEDs/MUUSDs)
- 59 SUs in FY16 – 51 SUs as of November 30, 2018 (two will not be dissolved until July 1, 2019 and July 1, 2021).

Voter-Approved Mergers:

- Since the enactment of Act 46 (2015):
    - Voters in 151 districts located in 141 towns formed 38 new union school districts
    - 3 of the 38 new union districts were not eligible for tax rate reductions and other transitional assistance and were therefore subject to consideration in the State Board's Final Report and Order
- Since the enactment of Acts 153 (2010), 156 (2012), and 46:
    - Voters in 161 districts located in 146 towns formed 39 new union school districts
    - (These numbers do not double-count the Mtn Towns RED or its member towns, which were involved in two mergers since FY13)
- Of the 7 merger <u>proposals</u> that the voters did <u>not</u> approve, where not new district was created (using the most recent vote if there was more than one proposal; not including proposals that were later approved):
    - Voters in 8 districts located in 9 towns approved merger
    - Voters in 18 districts in 18 towns did not approve merger

    (When counting districts, the numbers above do not include 5 union high school districts because the UHSD voters vote as members of the elementary district)

- In addition, in 8 merger proposals that resulted in a new union district, the voters in 8 districts did not approve the proposal and are not members of that new district

Section 9 Proposals:

- 46 districts or groups of districts submitted oral or written Sec. 9 Proposals
    - 96 districts, including 11 union high school districts
    - 90 towns
    - Of the 46 proposals
        - 9 proposed that the SBE require merger
        - 30 proposed to retain the same governance structure
        - 3 requested the opportunity to propose merger to their voters or to create an interstate school district
        - 4 either made no proposal or proposed something that the State Board has no authority to require

The State Board's Final Report and Order:

- SBE's Report and Order addresses the 96 districts:
    - Merged 45 districts in 39 towns to:
        - Form 11 new union school districts
        - Enlarge 2 existing union school districts

          Net reduction of 34 districts
    - *Conditionally* required an additional 4 town elementary districts to merge with 4 MUUSDs
    - Did not change the governance structure of 47 districts

      Note: It is not easy to determine with how many of the Sec. 9 Proposals the SBE agreed and with how many it disagreed – e.g., a group of districts submitted a Sec. 9 Proposal jointly, and the SBE agreed with the proposal as to some of the districts and disagreed with it as to others (e.g., Orleans Southwest districts, Windham Northeast districts)

Students:

Of the 78,733 *Kindergarten*-Grade 12 students living in Vermont in the 2017-2018 academic year, approximately:

- 36,752 (46.7%) of them live (or will live) in a voter-approved unified school district created since the enactment of Act 46 in 2015 (including the Mt Mansfield MUUSD)
- 16,495 additional students live in pre-existing supervisory districts (Burlington, etc.) – totaling 53,247 students (67.6%)

10,694 additional students will live in a union school district created by the State Board of Education's Final Report and Order – totaling 63,941 students (81.00%)

Appendix D
Voter-Approved Unified Union School Districts
Acts 153 (2010), 156 (2012), 46 (2015), and 49 (2017)

Name of New Unified District	K-12 Operating / Tuitioning Pattern	Original SUs(s) *(districts merged, if fewer than all in SU)*	Date on which Fully Operational
Addison Central School District	K-12 o	Addison C	07.01.17
Addison Northwest School District	K-12 o	Addison NW	07.01.17
Barstow Unified Union School District	K-8 o / 9-12 t	Rutland NE *(Chittenden; Mendon)*	07.01.16
Caledonia Cooperative School District *	K-8 o / 9-12 t	Caledonia C *(Walden; Barnet)* and Essex-Caledonia *(Waterford)*	07.01.18
Champlain Islands Unified Union School District *	K-6 o / 7-12 t	Grand Isle *(Grand Isle; Isle la Motte; North Hero)*	07.01.19
Champlain Valley School District	K-12 o	Chittenden S	07.01.17
Echo Valley Community School District	K-8 o / 9-12 t	Orange N *(Orange; Washington)*	07.01.18

Name of New Unified District	K-12 Operating / Tuitioning Pattern	Original SUs(s) *(districts merged, if fewer than all in SU)*	Date on which Fully Operational
Elmore-Morristown Unified Union School District **	K-12 o	Lamoille S *(Elmore; Morristown)*	07.01.16
Essex-Westford Educational Community UUSD	K-12 o	Essex and Chittenden C	07.01.17
First Branch Unified School District	K-8 o / 9-12 t	White River Valley *(Chelsea; Tunbridge)*	07.01.18
Granville-Hancock Unified School District	K-12 t	White River Valley *(Granville; Hancock)*	07.01.18
Green Mountain Unified School District	K-12 o	Two Rivers *(Andover; Baltimore; Cavendish; Chester; Green Mountain UHSD)*	07.01.18
Harwood Unified Union School District	K-12 o	Washington W	07.01.17
Kingdom East Unified Union School District	K-8 o / 9-12 t	Caledonia North *(Burke; Lyndon; Newark; Sutton; Millers Run (Sheffield; Wheelock))* and Essex-Caledonia *(Concord; Lunenburg)*	07.01.18

Name of New Unified District	K-12 Operating / Tuitioning Pattern	Original SUs(s) *(districts merged, if fewer than all in SU)*	Date on which Fully Operational
Lamoille North MUUSD	K-12 o *(7-12 Cambridge)*	Lamoille N	07.01.17
Ludlow-Mount Holly Unified Union School District	K-12 o and then K-6 o / 7-12 t	Two Rivers *(Mt Holly; Ludlow; Black River UHSD)*	07.01.18
Maple Run Unified School District	K-12 o	Franklin C	07.01.17
Mettawee School District	K-6 o / 7-12 t	Bennington-Rutland *(Pawlet; Rupert Mettawee UESD)*	07.01.18
Mill River Unified Union School District	K-12 o	Rutland S	07.01.16
Montpelier Roxbury School District	K-12 o	Montpelier and Washington S *(Roxbury)*	07.01.18
Mt Abraham Unified School District	K-12 o	Addison NE	07.01.18
Mt Ascutney School District **	K-12 o	Windsor SE *(West Windsor; Windsor)*	07.01.19

Name of New Unified District	K-12 Operating / Tuitioning Pattern	Original SUs(s) *(districts merged, if fewer than all in SU)*	Date on which Fully Operational
Mt Mansfield MUUSD	K-12 o (5-12 Huntington)	Chittenden East	
NEK Choice School District	K-12 t	Caledonia N *(E Haven)*; Essex-Caledonia *(Granby; Guildhall; Kirby; Maidstone; Victory)*; and Essex North *(Bloomfield, Brunswick, Lemington, Norton)*	07.01.18
Northern Mountain Valley USD **	K-8 o / 9-12 t	Franklin NE *(Bakersfield; Berkshire)*	07.01.19
Orange Southwest Unified Union School District	K-12 o	Orange SW	07.01.17
Paine Mountain School District	K-12 o	Orange N *(Williamstown)* and Washington S *(Northfield)*	07.01.18
Otter Valley Unified Union School District	K-12 o	Rutland NE *(Brandon; Goshen; Leicester; Pittsford; Sudbury; Whiting; Otter Valley UHSD)*	07.01.16

Name of New Unified District	K-12 Operating / Tuitioning Pattern	Original SUs(s) *(districts merged, if fewer than all in SU)*	Date on which Fully Operational
Quarry Valley Unified Union School District	K-12 o	Rutland C *(W Rutland, Proctor) and* Rutland SW *(Poultney)*	07.01.18
River Valleys Unified School District	K-6 o / 7-12 t	Windham C *(Dover; Wardsboro)*	07.01.19
Rochester-Stockbridge Unified District	K-6 o / 7-12 t	White River Valley *(Rochester; Stockbridge)*	07.01.18
Slate Valley MUUSD	K-12 o *(9-12 Orwell)*	Addison-Rutland	07.01.18
Southern Valley Unified School District	K-8 o / 9-12 t	Windham SW *(Halifax; Readsboro)*	07.01.18
Taconic & Green Regional School District	K-8 o / 9-12 t	Bennington Rutland *(Danby; Dorset; Manchester; Mountain Towns (Weston; Peru; Landgrove; Londonderry), Mt Tabor; Sunderland)*	07.01.18
Twin Valley Unified School District	K-12 o	Windham SW *(Whitingham; Wilmington)*	07.01.18
Wells Springs Unified Union School District	K-6 o / 7-12 t	Rutland SW	07.01.18

Name of New Unified District	K-12 Operating / Tuitioning Pattern	Original SUs(s) *(districts merged, if fewer than all in SU)*	Date on which Fully Operational
West River Modified Union Education District (L&G Towns)	K-12 o *(7-12 Windham)*	Windham Central *(Brookline; Jamaica; Newfane; Townsend; {Windham}; Leland & Gray UHSD)*	07.01.19
White River Unified District	K-12o	White River Valley *(Bethel; Royalton)*	07.01.18
Windsor Central MUUSD	K-12 o *(7-12 Barnard)*	Windsor Central *({Barnard}; Bridgewater; Killington; Pomfret; Reading; Woodstock; Woodstock UM/HSD)* and Two Rivers (*Plymouth)*	07.01.18

*** Eligibility for tax rate reductions and other transitional assistance as the "3" in a "3-by-1" structure per Act 49, Sec. 3**

**** Newly-created UUSD:**

- **not eligible for tax rate reductions and other transitional assistance**
- **not exempt from consideration as part of the State Board's Final Report and Order**

Appendix E
Districts Subject to Final Report and Order issued November 30, 2018

SBE-Created Unified Union School Districts (PreK-12) (merging 25 districts)

Barre UUSD *(Barre City; Barre Town; Spaulding UHSD)*

Enosburgh-Richford UUSD *(Enosburgh; Richford)*

Franklin Northwest UUSD *(Franklin; Highgate; Swanton; Missisquoi UHSD)*

Lamoille South UUSD *(Elmore-Morristown UUSD; Stowe)*

Oxbow UUSD *(Bradford; Newbury; Oxbow UHSD)*

Washington Central UUSD *(Berlin; Calais; East Montpelier; Middlesex; Worcester; U-32)*

Windham Southeast UUSD *(Brattleboro; Dummerston; Guilford; Putney; Brattleboro UHSD)*

SBE-Created Union Elementary or Elementary-Middle School Districts (PreK-6 or PreK-8) (merging 17 districts)

Orleans Central UESD – K-8o *(Albany; Barton ID; Brownington; Glover; Irasburg; Orleans ID)*

Orleans Southwest UESD – K-6o *(Greensboro; Hardwick; Woodbury; Lakeview UESD)*

Southwest Vermont UESD – K-6o *(Bennington; Pownal; Shaftsbury; Woodford)*

Windham Northeast UESD – K-8o *(Athens; Grafton; Westminster)*

Districts Merged into Existing UUSD (merging 2 districts)

Montgomery – K-8o; 9-12t *(Northern Mountain Valley USD)*

Sheldon – K-8o; 9-12t *(Northern Mountain Valley USD)*

Conditionally-Merged Districts (conditionally merging 5 districts)

Barnard – K-6o *(Windsor Central MUUSD)*

Cambridge – K-6o *(Lamoille North MUUSD)*

Huntington – K-4o *(Mount Mansfield MUUSD)*

Orwell *(Slate Valley MUUSD)* – **conditions met; is a unified union school district**

Windham – K-6o *(River Valleys MUUSD)*

Retaining Current Governance Structure (not changing structure of 47 districts)

Battenkill Valley SU *(SBE moved both districts into Southwest VT SU, effective FY2021)*
- Arlington – K-12o
- Sandgate – K-12t

Bennington-Rutland SU
- Winhall – K-12t

Caledonia Central SU
- Danville – K-12o

Essex North SU
- Canaan – K-12o

Franklin West SU
- Fairfax – K-12o
- Fletcher – K-6o; 7-12t
- Georgia – K-8o; 9-12t

Grand Isle SU
- South Hero – K-8o; 9-12t

North Country SU
- Brighton– K-8o
- Charleston – K-8o
- Derby – K-6o
- Holland – K-6o
- Jay – K-6o (jointly with Westfield)
- Lowell – K-8o
- Morgan – K-6t
- Newport City – K-6o
- Newport Town – K-6o; 7-8t
- Troy – K-8o
- Westfield – K-6o (jointly with Westfield); 7-8t
- North Country UHSD – 7/9-12o
- Coventry – K-8o; 9-12t

Orange East SU
- Blue Mountain UUSD – K-12o *(towns of Groton; Ryegate; Wells River*)
- Waits River UUSD – K-8o; 9-12t *(towns of Corinth; Topsham*)
- Thetford – K-6o; 7-12 designate

Orleans Central SU
- Westmore – K-8t
- Lake Region UHSD – 9-12o

Orleans Southwest SU
- Craftsbury – K-12o
- Stannard – 7-12t
- Hazen UHSD – 7-12o
- Wolcott – K-6o; 7-12t

Southwest Vermont SU
- North Bennington ID – K-6t
- Mount Anthony UHSD – 7-12o

Washington Northeast SU *(SBE moved both districts into Caledonia Central SU; effective FY2020)*
- Cabot – K-12o
- Twinfield UUSD – K-120 *(towns of Marshfield; Plainfield*)

White River Valley
- Sharon – K-6o; 7-12t
- Strafford – K-8o; 9-12 designate

Windham Central SU

Stratton PK-12t

Windham Northeast SU

Rockingham – K-8o

Bellow Falls UHSD – 9-12o

Windham Southeast SU

Vernon – K-6o; 9-12t

Windham Southwest SU

Searsburg – K-12t

Stamford – K-8o; 9-12t

Windsor Central SU

Pittsfield – K-12t

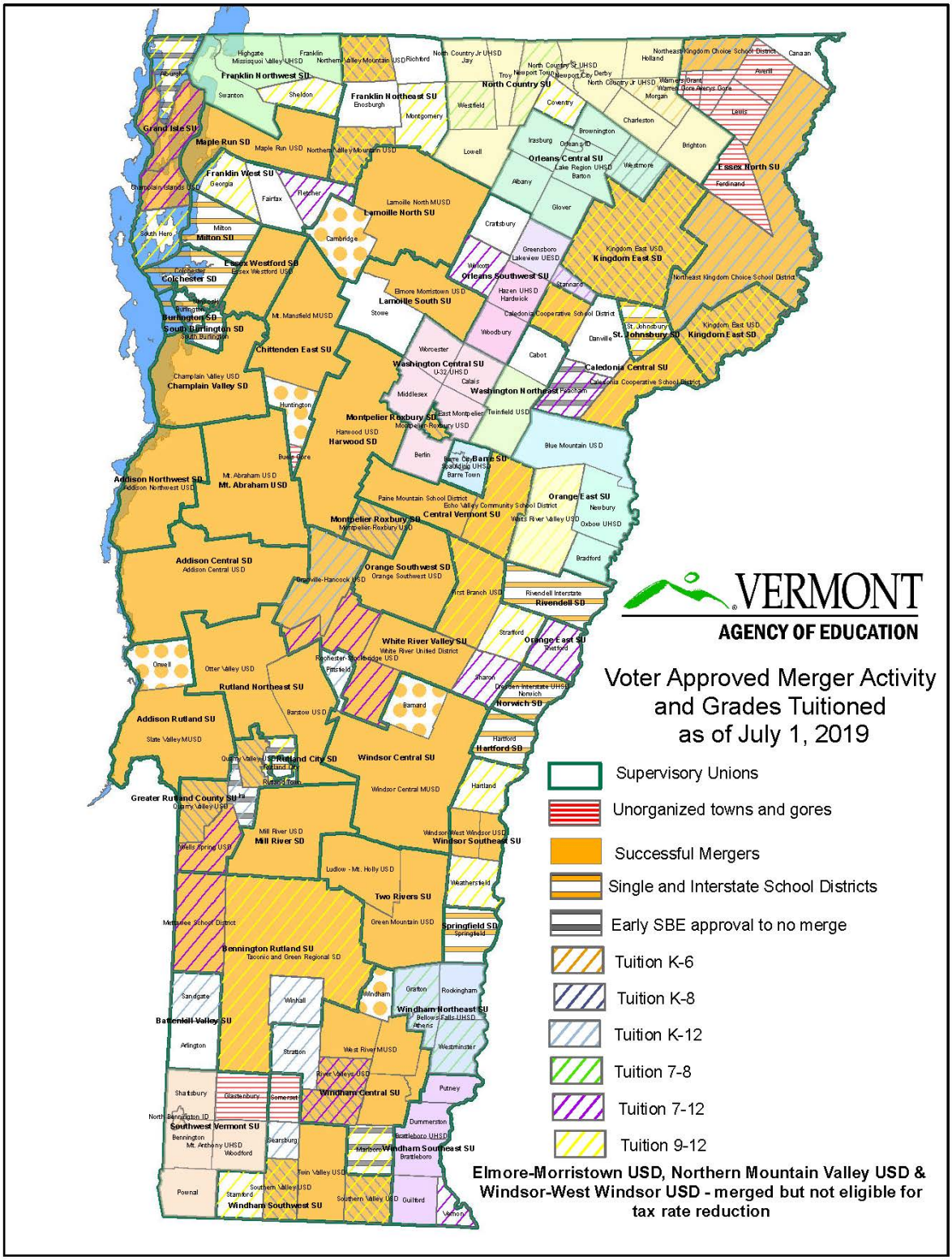
Windsor SE

Hartland – K-8o; 9-12t

Weathersfield – K-8o; 9-12t

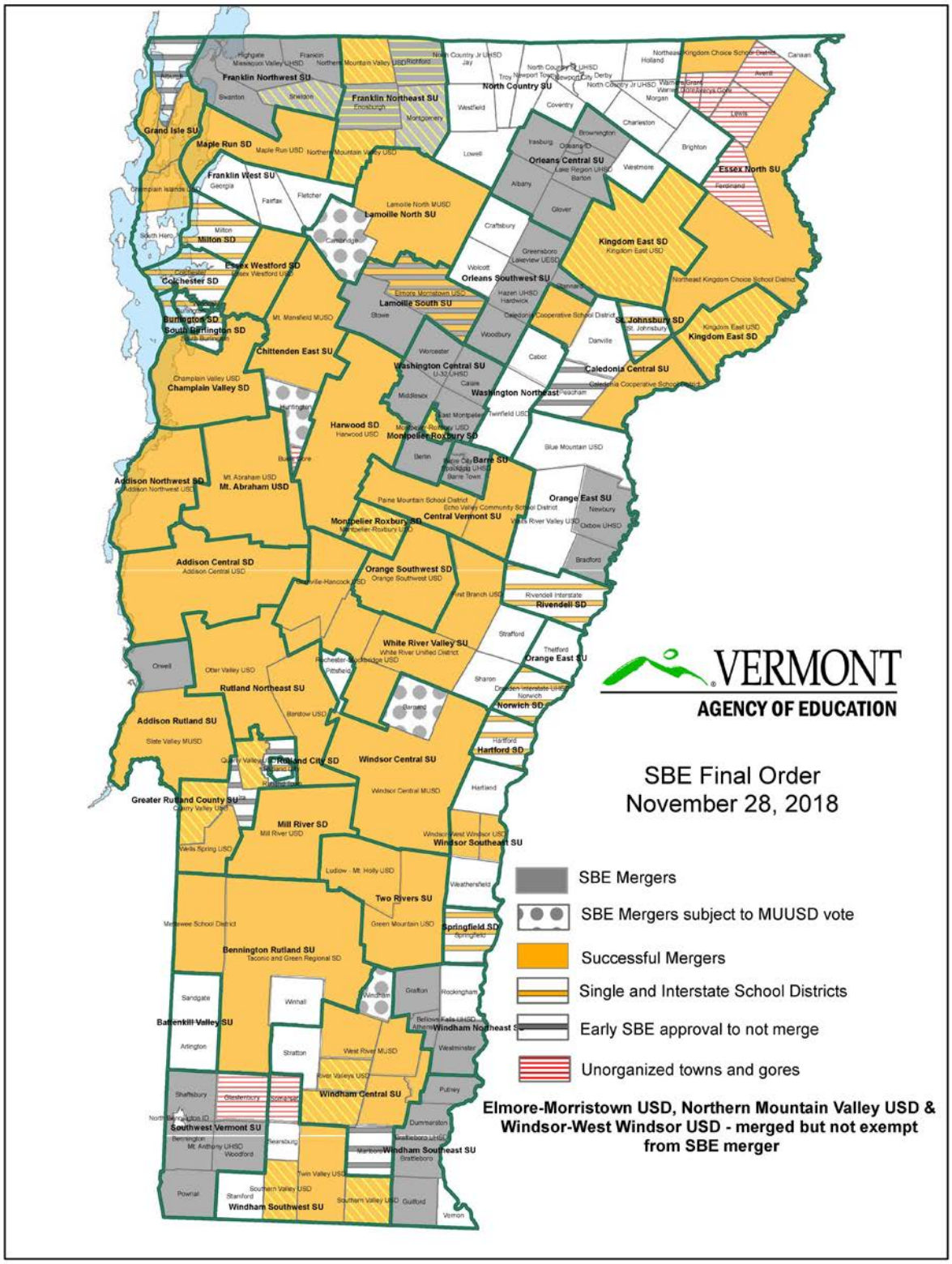
Windsor-West Windsor UUSD – K-12o

Appendix F
Map – Voter-Approved Merger Activity as of July 1, 2019



[Category Data Associated with this Map]

Appendix G
Map – State Board's Final Order Issued November 30, 2018



[Category Data Associated with this Map]