

# Act 46 Independent School Governance Study Minutes

MVU Library  
October 17, 2016  
7:00 PM

## Committee Members and Staff:

Bob Berger - Chair, Connie Beyor, Toby Maguire, Bob Irish, Terri O'Shea, and Winton Goodrich

Absent: Jason McConnell

Visitors: Jay Denault

## **Agenda:**

7:00 Call meeting to order  
Minutes

Tonight's Tasks: What do we need to do at this meeting?

- Check-in on assignments and discuss what they mean to our study
  - Town perspectives on merger (Nov. meeting)
    - Pros for merging
      - Catholic parishes work together
      - Share successful practices
      - Create single contract and pay structure
        - Share and transfer staff
      - Might create more employment stability
      -
    - Fear of losing local control (cultural reasons for non-merger)
      - Highgate
        - Formerly 14 schools
        - White building constructed in 1941 – Brick building in 1960
        - Concern about board representation
        - At-large voting for current MVU board
        - Budget voted from the floor at Town Meeting
        - Attempted Australian Ballot in 1980s – Failed
        - School is emergency shelter
        - Cassidy 20 acres donated to school
        - Previous partnerships across communities was not successful - Ambulance, Arena
        - Effective partnership with Swanton/Highgate Hydro Electric
        -
      - Swanton
        - Citizens want to vote on a merger or something
        - May lose some identity
        - Like proportional representation

- Previous partnerships across communities was not successful – Little League, Ambulance, Arena
- Effective partnership with Swanton/Highgate Hydro Electric
- Village/Town municipal government
- Stronger identify with MVU
- Franklin
  - Concern about board representation – smallest town
    - Pay same cost per pupil but with fewer citizens
  - Concern about say in elem. school
  - Could lose what makes Franklin unique
  - Budget voted on floor at Town Meeting
  - Huge support for school
  - Fear loss of community
  - Inequality of debt
  - Tax offsets
  - Geography
  - Potential school closure and having no say in process
  - Academic performance is exemplary but would not realize many other gains if all boards merged
  - Low per pupil cost
  - Merger would increase cost
  - AOE Report - Roots of Success
  - Traditions and Rituals
    - Memorial Day celebration at Franklin
    - Marching Band
- Sheldon
  -
- MVU
  - Distance to towns
  - Traditions and Rituals
    - MVU Skit Night and Musical
    - Powder Puff Football
    - Haunted Forest
    - Trunk or Treat
- Any empirical evidence?
  - Concern about debt sharing and future bond votes
  -
- Programs administered by town and not school
- 
- What is going on with other alternative structure unions
  - Franklin West – Georgia, Fairfax, Fletcher
    - Merge and build central high school – Become 14<sup>th</sup> largest in VT
    - Merge but maintain choice
      - Could merge with Sheldon
    - Equal pupil spending
    - Create efficiency

- Tax concerns
  - AOE overstepping role implementing Act 46
  - Lose choice
  - Let voters choose
  - May be tinkering with Act 46 by legislature
  -
- Continue to discuss ability to meet goals (goal one and master schedules)
- Dig deeper into supervisory demographics
  - Win
- Walk through components of DMC study with respect to achieving Act 46 Goal 3
  - Ratio of SLPs and students needing service
  - Compare % of instruction time for FNW and Vermont students on IEPs
  - Student/staff ratios

| <b>Student/Staff Ratio</b> |                     |                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><i>School</i></b>       | <b><i>FNWSU</i></b> | <b><i>Vermont</i></b> |
| Franklin                   |                     |                       |
| Highgate                   |                     |                       |
| MVU                        |                     |                       |
| Sheldon                    |                     |                       |
| Swanton                    |                     |                       |

| <b>Student/Licensed Teacher Ratio</b> |                     |                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><i>School</i></b>                  | <b><i>FNWSU</i></b> | <b><i>Vermont</i></b> |
| Franklin                              |                     |                       |
| Highgate                              |                     |                       |
| MVU                                   |                     |                       |
| Sheldon                               |                     |                       |
| Swanton                               |                     |                       |

| <b>Class Size Ratio</b> |                     |                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><i>School</i></b>    | <b><i>FNWSU</i></b> | <b><i>Vermont</i></b> |
| Franklin                |                     |                       |
| Highgate                |                     |                       |
| MVU                     |                     |                       |
| Sheldon                 |                     |                       |
| Swanton                 |                     |                       |

| <b>Student/Administrator Ratio</b> |                     |                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><i>School</i></b>               | <b><i>FNWSU</i></b> | <b><i>Vermont</i></b> |
| Franklin                           |                     |                       |
| Highgate                           |                     |                       |
| MVU                                |                     |                       |
| Sheldon                            |                     |                       |

|         |  |  |
|---------|--|--|
| Swanton |  |  |
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7:10 – 7:15      Guests

7:15 – 7:45      Report Outs from Committee Members

1. Check-in and discussion of cultural barriers to unification
  - i. Religious influence when MVU was created
    1. MVU built on diocese land and original plan included a religious center
    2. Five pods create shape of a cross
  - ii. Interest in equal voting by all communities
  - iii. Committee members’ perspectives on cultural barriers from each school/community
  - iv. Board governance
  - v. Any empirical evidence
  
2. Identity of programs that are administered by the town and not administered in schools
  - i. Town recreation programs – All
    1. Highgate Arena
  - ii. Community Service graduation requirement
  
3. What other alternative structures are being proposed
  - i. VSBA Regional Meeting (10/18) and VSA Fall Conf. (10/20)

7:45 – 8:15      Goals One and Two: How are we doing at meeting them?

1. Report on master schedules
  
2. Deeper look at supervisory union data

| <b>SBAC Scores</b> |                 |              |                |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>School</i>      | <i>District</i> | <i>FNWSU</i> | <i>Vermont</i> |
| Franklin           |                 |              |                |
| Highgate           |                 |              |                |
| MVU                |                 |              |                |
| Sheldon            |                 |              |                |
| Swanton            |                 |              |                |

| <b>NECAP Science Scores</b> |                 |              |                |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>School</i>               | <i>District</i> | <i>FNWSU</i> | <i>Vermont</i> |
| Franklin                    |                 |              |                |
| Highgate                    |                 |              |                |
| MVU                         |                 |              |                |
| Sheldon                     |                 |              |                |
| Swanton                     |                 |              |                |

| <b>NECAP Writing Scores</b> |                        |                     |                       |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><i>School</i></b>        | <b><i>District</i></b> | <b><i>FNWSU</i></b> | <b><i>Vermont</i></b> |
| Franklin                    |                        |                     |                       |
| Highgate                    |                        |                     |                       |
| MVU                         |                        |                     |                       |
| Sheldon                     |                        |                     |                       |
| Swanton                     |                        |                     |                       |

8:15 – 8:45 Goal Three, Four and Five: How are we doing at meeting them?

1. Look at data
2. What goes well
3. Areas for improvement
4. Ways to continually improve
  - i. Developing unified contract with consistent pay and benefits

8:45 – 9:00 Other and Next Steps for Nov. 3rd

1. Terri - Research table of subjects and measurements for Goals 4 and 5
2. Committee – List of benefits for merging – Identify rituals and celebrations
3. Bob Irish – Master for all programs
4. Win – Analysis of EQS and current state
5. Analysis of Chittenden East (Mt. Mansfield MUUD)
  - a. Analysis of student performance – pre and post UU
  - b. Tax rates

9:00 Adjournment

Continue assessing data needed regarding the SU’s current ability to meet or exceed each of the Act 46 goals below.

- (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;
  - Data needed: Education Quality Standards - <http://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-state-board-rules-series-2000.pdf>
    - Side by side EQS – Where we are and where we are going

| <b>Education Quality Standards – Side by Side Analysis</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b><i>Current Standards</i></b>                            | <b><i>Education Quality Standards</i></b> |
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- (3) Maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with a goal of increasing the ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff;
- (4) Promote transparency and accountability; and
- (5) Delivered at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value:
  - State cost per pupil comparisons
  - Budget trends

Adjourn at 9:12 (Connie and Bob) 4/0

Future Study Committee Meetings - MVU Library from 7:00 to 9:00 PM:

- Nov. 3 - Nov. 16 - Nov. 29 - Dec. 14

Act 46 Independent Study Time Line

- August through December – Research Study options
- December 14, 2016 – Complete Study draft
- December, 2016 - Provide draft Study recommendations for local school board review
- January 4, 2017 - Present Study recommendations to SU Board
- January 20, 2017 – Include Study recommendations in Town Reports
- February, 2017 - Information meetings
- March, 2017 - Community vote on Study recommendations at Town Meetings
- October, 2017 – School boards present Act 46 rationale to the State Board of Education