

Dear

Governor Scott has presented a radical plan to reduce the costs of Vermont's public schools. Components of the proposed plan will completely overhaul our public education system without due consideration for Vermont's unique rural landscape and the role our schools play in our communities. Any reform must consider the adverse impacts on rural children, elementary schools and communities, and must ensure actual savings for taxpayers.

Our public schools are under terrific pressure. They have endured years of change and upheaval. Students are struggling and teachers are leaving the profession. Is now the time for unproven reforms and a major overhaul of our schools? We understand the need to address the rising cost of education while avoiding adverse impacts on our children and communities. And we must ensure actual savings for taxpayers.

I believe Vermont needs thoughtful, community-driven reforms that strengthen rather than dismantle our public education system. Instead of pursuing a one-size-fits-all approach, please come up with alternative solutions that support Vermont's diverse educational landscape:

- Keep elementary school students close to home. Support elementary schools as community hubs that enhance both early learning and economic development.
- Encourage regional collaboration for secondary schools by streamlining upper grade education delivery, including tech schools, while maintaining flexibility for local needs. Regional conversations allow schools to complement each other in terms of offerings.
- Remove costs from the Education Fund that are the result of political rather than educational needs. Skyrocketing health care, student mental health services, and teacher pension costs should not be paid from the property tax.
- Support local school boards working in collaboration as supervisory unions.
- Act now to smooth funding cliffs in the property tax system.
- Vermont needs balanced, research-backed solutions that truly benefit Vermont students, families, taxpayers and communities. Closing community elementary schools and dismantling local governance is not the answer.

Thank you for considering these ideas

Sincerely

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