

**MONTPELIER-ROXBURY
706 STUDY COMMITTEE**

**December 19, 2016
Montpelier High School
3:30 PM-5:00 PM**

Agenda

- 3:30** **Welcome and review of agenda**
Review membership and criteria for quorum
- 3:40** **Introduction to Act 46 and to 706 Study Committees**
- 4:00** **Member introductions and sharing of hopes and concerns**
- 4:30** **Proposed schedule and approach**
Scheduling of next meeting
- 4:40** **Decisions**
Committee chair
Consultant
- 4:50** **Public Comment**
- 5:00** **Adjourn**

**Montpelier-Roxbury
706 Study Committee**

December 19, 2016

Committee Charge

“To study the advisability of forming a union school district . . .”

Target date: Late Spring, 2017

Goals of Act 46

- *Provide substantial equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities.*
- *Lead students to achieve or exceed the State's Education Quality Standards.*
- *Maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with the goal of increasing the district-level ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff.*
- *Deliver education at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.*
- *Promote transparency and accountability.*

General Strategy

- Create somewhat larger districts with a single board (supervisory district) or, where necessary, a multi-board structure (supervisory union) with as few boards “as practicable.”
- Current patterns of choice and operating are protected from a forced change.

Elements of Approach

- Boards talk with each other and neighbors and initiate action.
- Incentives kick in for creating unified districts early on.
- Financial pressures begin to apply with loss of ADM Hold Harmless and Small Schools phase- out.
- AOE quality reviews begin and will influence process.
- Ultimately, AOE/State Board can decide on realignment in fall, 2018—effective July, 2019.

Timetable

June 2015	Bill signed into law.
FY'16-FY'17	Incentives available for merging “Protections” begin to disappear
Nov. 30, 2017	Submission of “alternative proposal”
June 1, 2018	Secretary’s proposed realignment
Nov. 30, 2018	State Board plan adopted
July 1, 2019	Implementation

Incentives for Action

Goal: Encourage timely action.

Incentives Available:

Accelerated Incentives vote by 7/1/16

RED (and related) Incentives by 7/1/17

Conventional Mergers by 7/1/19

Keep Small Schools Grants as “Merger Grants”

Keep ADM Hold Harmless

Potential protection from state-imposed plan

Chapter 11 of Title 16: Union School District Formation Process

- **Create a study committee: (16 VSA 701 & 706)**
“To study the advisability of forming a union school district . . .”
- **Representation is proportional to the equalized pupils from the member district town**

Chapter 11 of Title 16: Union School District Formation Process

- **The study committee is a public body subject to open meeting laws and must elect a chair to preside over meetings.**
- **The committee should establish a charge to help guide its work, which includes an analysis of whether to form a union school district.**
- **“The study committee may determine that it is inadvisable to form a union school district or it may prepare a report in the form of an agreement between member districts for the government of the proposed union school district.” 16 VSA 706b(b)**

Chapter 11 of Title 16: Union School District Formation Process

- **Once the report is complete, it is submitted to proposed member district boards for review and comment and is then sent to the Agency of Education/State Board of Education for approval. (16 VSA 706c)**
- **If the SBE approves the report, the proposal goes to the electorate on the date set in the report; the vote MUST be by Australian ballot, at separate school district meetings held on the same day and during the same hours (16 VSA 706d). The required contents of the warning are spelled out in 16 VSA 706f. (Exception for “advisable” districts).**
- **At the same election, the voters shall also elect directors by Australian ballot to represent the district on the union school board in the event the union is approved by the voters. (16 VSA 706e)**

Act 46 of 2015: Sustainable Governance Structures

Any new structure is expected to be designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Provide equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities**
- **Lead students to meet or exceed the Education Quality Standards**
- **Maximize operational efficiencies through greater flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with a goal of increasing district-level student-to-staff ratios**
- **Promote transparency and accountability**
- **At a cost taxpayers, parents, and other stakeholders value.**

The plan submitted to the SBE should address each of these goals.

MONTPELIER-ROXBURY STUDY COMMITTEE

HOPES AND CONCERNS

December 19, 2016

HOPES

We will be honest and clear with each other.

From the beginning, we need to be clear that all of the children of any unified district will “be the children of all of us”.

We will engage in out-of-the-box thinking.

We will stabilize/increase student enrollment in Montpelier.

That increased high school enrollment will mean added options.

This effort will produce better outcomes for all students.

We will find a pathway that is good for kids and taxpayers!

More diversity is a good thing.

CONCERNS

We can lose focus with too long a timeline.

Support in Montpelier is questionable—this doesn’t seem logical to many.

Concerns that Montpelier wants to remain isolated from this overall effort.

Will finances work for all involved?

Might Roxbury not feel connected to a new school district—both students and parents.

The uncertainty around us will prevent our process from being clear and focused.

Roxbury will be concerned about which grades it will retain.

We don’t want to lose PK services in Roxbury.

Logistics and costs need to be sorted out.

Need to manage the high school choice swap with U-32.

Sorting out issues of distance and related practicalities will be the key.