

Commission for the Future of Public Education

Public Comment
August Meeting 2024

I appreciate your openness to gathering and circulating relevant research, reports, data and substantive information regarding topics relevant to the Commissions work. Thank you for expressing your intention to make decisions based on evidence.

“The Commission shall review and take into consideration existing educational laws and policy, including legislative reports the Commission deems relevant to its work and, at a minimum, 2015 Acts and Resolves No. 46, 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173, 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 127, and 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 76. “

Currently there are existing gaps in the information available related to Act 46. The last legislative report was submitted in 2019 and further reports required in 2020 and 2021 have not materialized.

No comprehensive external analysis of progress or lack of it towards meeting of the goals of Act 46 has taken place.

2025 is the 10-year anniversary of the passage of Act 46 and an evaluation of the outcomes is not only overdue but pertinent to the work of the commission and of interest to Vermonters.

- Has the law met its goals?
- What has worked and what hasn't?
- In March 2024 school budgets in town school districts passed at more than twice the rate of those in Act 46 merged districts - 83% vs 38%. Why?
- What can we learn from the enactment of Act 46 to inform the future of Public Education in Vermont?

Decisions related to the future of Public Education in Vermont should not be made based on assumptions but evidence as you have correctly stated in your meetings.

As a commission when you find gaps in evidence will you use given resources to require the gaps are filled?

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ACT 46 GOALS By enacting this legislation, the General Assembly intends to move the State toward sustainable models of education governance. The legislation is designed 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.