

AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Barre, Vermont

TEAM: School Governance Team

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education find that the proposed unified union school district formed by the Danville School District, located in the **CALEDONIA CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION** (CCSU), and the Cabot School District and Twinfield Unified Union School District, located in the **WASHINGTON NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION** (WNESU) is “in the best interests of the State, the students, and the school districts,” and will the State Board therefore vote to approve the attached report of the **CDT Act 46 Study Committee** (Study Committee)?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- 1. That the State Board of Education finds that the proposed formation of a new unified union school district by the Cabot School District, the Danville School District, and the Twinfield Unified Union School District, provisionally to be named the CDT UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT, is “in the best interests of the State, the students, and the school districts” pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 706c(b).**
- 2. That the State Board of Education votes to approve the attached report of the Study Committee.**
- 3. That the State Board of Education votes to approve the temporary assignment of the new unified union school district, if approved, to the CCSU for administrative and other transitional assistance. Assignment would be for the interim period beginning on the date on which the unified union school district becomes a legal entity pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 706g and ending on July 1, 2018, and would not modify the governing structure of the existing systems.**

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 16 V.S.A. § 706c; Act 46 of 2015; Act 153 of 2010, Secs. 2-4, as amended; Act 156 (2012), Sec. 15, as amended

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

I. General

The WNESU consists of two PK-12 districts:

- the Cabot School District, which operates one school for all grades for students residing in Cabot
- the Twinfield Unified Union School District, which operates one school for all grades for students residing in Marshfield and Plainfield

The CCSU consists of four PK-12 school districts with three distinct models of governance:

- the Danville School District, which operates schools for all grades
- the Barnet School District and the Walden School District, both of which operate schools through grade eight, pay tuition for all remaining grades, and (together with the Waterford School District) are presenting a merger proposal to their voters on May 23 (the proposed Caledonia Cooperative UUSD)
- the Peacham School District, which operate schools through grade six and pays tuition for all remaining grades

After passage of Act 46, five of the districts within the two SUs formed two distinct study committees under 16 V.S.A. § 706. The Caledonia Cooperative Study Committee presented its proposal to the State Board at its March 2017 meeting and will present it to the electorate of each community on May 23, 2017. The CDT Study Committee will present its proposal to the State Board at its May 16 2017 meeting, and, if approved, will present it to the electorate of each community on June 20, 2017.

- If both proposals are approved, then the new unified districts would be eligible for tax rate reductions and other transitional assistance available under the “Side-by-Side” program established in Act 156 of 2012, Sec. 15.
- If the voters approve creation of the CDT proposal, but the Caledonia Cooperative proposal is not approved by its voters, then the CDT Unified Union School District will not be formed unless the 2017 Vermont General Assembly enacts legislation that would otherwise enable the CDT Unified Union School District to receive tax rate reductions and other transitional assistance.

If both proposals are approved, then both study committees intend that the two new unified districts will be members of a new, enlarged supervisory union that would include the Peacham School District. Given the variety of potential outcomes related to these two proposals, the uncertain governance decisions of other districts in the region (e.g., the Blue Mountain SD), and the State Board’s need to respond to other requests for SU boundary changes in the region (e.g., the Kingdom East UUSD and the NEK Choice UUSD) – it would be premature at this time for the State Board to define the precise boundaries of an enlarged supervisory union. We advise the State Board to wait to evaluate these issues until after the governance structures in this region are clearer.

II. The CDT Unified Union School District

The CDT Act 46 Study Committee proposes the creation of a UUSD that would provide for the PK-12 education of resident students by operating schools offering all grades (New Unified District) beginning on July 1, 2018.

The Study Committee identifies the following school districts as “necessary” to the proposal pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 706b(1): Cabot, Danville, Twinfield.

The Study Committee does not identify any school districts as “advisable” to the proposal pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 701b(2).

In FY2016, the combined PK-12 average daily membership (ADM) of the “necessary” districts was 865.19, broken down as follows: Cabot-162.74; Danville-326.23; Twinfield-376.15 (Marshfield-212.39; Plainfield-163.76).

If approved by the State Board, the electorate of each “necessary” district will vote on June 20, 2017 whether to approve creation of the New Unified District.

The New Unified District, which would be known provisionally as the CDT Unified Union School District, would unify two existing PK-12 operating school districts into a single district responsible for operating all schools within the district, would replace three current governing bodies with one unified union school board, and would combine two supervisory unions into a new, larger SU.

On the first day of full operations, high school students residing in all four member towns would be eligible to attend either of the *two* high schools operated by the New Unified District under intra-district choice policies to be developed by the District’s board. The New Unified District would not operate high school grades in Cabot.

The New Unified District would be governed by a unified school board of nine members, with two members initially allocated to Cabot, three to Danville, two to Marshfield, and two to Plainfield. Membership would be closely proportional to the towns’ relative populations and would be adjusted if necessary to reflect each decennial census. Each member would be elected by the voters of the town in which the member resides. A town would never have fewer than two representatives.

A school could not be closed during the first four years of operation unless approved by the voters of the town in which the building is located. In years five and after, a school could be closed upon (1) a 75% vote of the Unified District School Board after at least three public hearings, with at least one member from each town voting in the affirmative and (2) subsequent ratification by a majority of the voters in each of the individual member towns.

If a school building is closed and would no longer be used for the direct delivery of student education programs, then the town in which the school building is located would have the right of first refusal and could purchase the property for \$1.00, provided that the town agreed to use the property for public and community purposes for a minimum of five years. The proposal includes separate provisions addressing sale of the Twinfield school building.

All future votes on the budget, Board membership, and other public questions would be by Australian ballot.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS: By enacting Act 46, which incorporated the provisions of Act 153 (2010), the General Assembly declared the intention to move the State toward sustainable models of education governance designed to meet the goals set forth in Section 2 of the Act. It was primarily through the lens of those goals that the Secretary has considered whether the Study Committee’s proposal is “in the best interests of the State, the students, and the school districts” pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 706c.

The Study Committee developed a comprehensive vision for a new unified union school district, identified guiding principles, evaluated current challenges in their systems, and considered the opportunities and challenges inherent in unification.

Unlike many other districts that have presented proposals to the State Board, the three districts included in this proposal do not have a long tradition of collaboration. The Study Committee observed, however:

In truth, no future is ever certain. ... What is known is that the dual challenge of declining enrollments and increased educational cost facing each of our communities shows little sign of abating any time soon.

To fully address these challenges, the committee has been led to the conclusion that all of us must confront whether maintaining our current educational cultures truly supersedes the benefits of coming together. Moving beyond what we know and what we are used to is hard. But throughout the course of this study, the committee has come to realize that we all share a common desire to do what is best for our children. ... [W]e have come to understand that there is more that unites us than that divides us.

The Study Committee reviewed and analyzed a wide variety of information including enrollment trends, spending trends, staffing patterns and ratios, allied arts offerings, student assessments, short- and long-term capital needs, and other data.

The Committee identified 14 potential models for restructuring the delivery of education, first narrowing the focus to five potential models and then to two models plus the option of submitting a proposal to maintain the current governance structures.

Each potential model was evaluated regarding its capacity both to “provide sustainable and more affordable educational programs” and to “better utilize teachers and resources ... to [s]trengthen instruction for every students [and e]nhance program opportunity ... at a more affordable cost for taxpayers.” The Committee’s report lists the “core feedback” from community forums and identifies the opportunities and challenges of each of the top five potential models that the Study Committee considered.

The Study Committee ultimately concluded that the best restructuring option involves closing the Cabot High School and maintaining those grades at the Danville and Twinfield schools. Although grades 9-12 would no longer be operated in Cabot, the Study Committee believes that Cabot’s more project-based instructional programs should be integrated into the other two schools.

EDUCATION IMPLICATIONS:

The Study Committee identified a range of potential educational benefits in its proposal, including:

1. The ability of each of the three schools to continue to operate PK-8

2. The opportunity for high school students in the four towns to choose between the two high schools to be operated by the New Unified District, perhaps on a semester-by-semester basis
3. The ability to interact with a larger cohort of peers
4. Increased access to more opportunities in the allied arts
5. Enhanced co-curricular options
6. The opportunity to redirect operational savings to enhance existing instruction

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Study Committee's report stated that consolidation of the two supervisory unions would streamline operations and reduce administrative redundancy. It identified potential ongoing Central Office savings of \$360,000 per year (in addition to the projected \$273,000 savings from the Caledonia Cooperative proposal).

In addition, it identified over \$400,000 in annual savings due to the proposed high school restructuring. These savings would be offset by additional costs for transportation and other items, resulting in a projected net annual savings of \$175,000.

Finally, the Study Committee projected an estimated 0.5% - 1.0% reduction in annual growth in spending due to maximizing operational efficiencies (e.g., large-scale purchasing, contract negotiations, and better asset coordination) that could equal approximately \$65,000-125,000 over a five year period.

Overall, the Study Committee estimates that its proposal would result in potential cost reductions of \$2.7 – 2.8 million over a five-year period.

See also Act 153, as amended, for cost implications to the State.

In making this recommendation, the Secretary acknowledges the proud history of these communities and the sense of loss that is an inevitable part of any transition, even a transition that promises to leave these communities able to provide stronger and better community-based education into the future.

The Study Committee's proposal is aligned with the goals of the General Assembly as set forth in Act 46 of 2015 and with the policy underlying the union school district formation statutes as articulated in 16 V.S.A. § 701.

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Donna Russo-Savage, Principal Assistant to the Secretary,
School Governance
Brad James, Education Finance Manager

Type of Merger	
<i>Please refer to the related eligibility worksheets to determine baseline eligibility for each merger type.</i>	(column reserved for agency use)
<input type="checkbox"/> Accelerated Merger (Act 46, Section 6)	
A Regional Education District (RED) or one of its variations (Act 153 (2010) and Act 156 (2012)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> RED (Act 153, Secs. 2-3, as amended by Act 156, Sec. 1 and Act 46, Sec. 16) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Side by Side Merger (Act 156, Sec. 15) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts involved in the related merger: Barnet, Walden, Waterford <input type="checkbox"/> Layered Merger (Union Elementary School District) (Act 156, Sec. 16) <input type="checkbox"/> Modified Unified Union School District (MUUSD) (Act 156, Sec. 17, as amended by Act 56 (2013), Sec. 3) 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Conventional Merger – merger into a preferred structure after deadline for an Accelerated Merger (Act 46, Section 7)	

Dates, ADM, and Name	
Date on which the proposal will be submitted to the voters of each district (16 V.S.A. § 706b(b)(11)): June 20, 2017	
Date on which the new district, if approved, will begin operating (16 V.S.A. § 706b(b)(12)): July 1, 2018	
Combined ADM of all “necessary” districts in the current fiscal year: 865.12	
Proposed name of new district: CDT Unified Union School District	

Please complete the following tables with **brief, specific** statements of how the proposed union school district will comply with the each of the listed items. *Bulleted statements are acceptable.*

The Proposed School District is in the Best Interest of the State, Students, and School Districts – as required by 16 V.S.A. § 706c		
<p><u>Goal #1:</u> The proposed union school district will provide substantial equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities.</p> <p><i>Act 46, Sec. 2(1)</i></p>	<p>After analyzing the elementary program offerings in Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield, it was discovered that there were differences in student access to: <i>(See Appendix 5)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foreign Language – No instruction in Cabot and Twinfield at grade 6; Spanish only in Cabot grades 7&8. ● Design and Tech Ed Studies – Offered only in Twinfield (7&8) and Danville at grades 6,7,8. ● More extensive offerings in Music (individual instruction, Band, and Jazz band) at Cabot in grades 7&8. <p>While these differences in instructional opportunity are not extensive, they do represent the need for a board and community discussion in a new unified district concerning the breadth and scope of curricular offerings in the unified arts in each elementary school in order to ensure equity of opportunity for every student in the new district. <i>(See Article 16 in Proposed Articles of Agreement)</i></p> <p>In our high schools, the Committee viewed the unique curricular profiles of each district’s high schools as a strength to be built upon, despite the fact that curricular offerings vary from school to school, by restructuring and coordinating the delivery of these programs and insuring student access through a system of intra-district choice, as well as making it possible for high school students to take courses at either of the unified district’s two remaining high school programs during the course of their high school career. <i>(See Articles 14 and 16 in Proposed Articles of Agreement)</i></p> <p>As a result, we have crafted two major recommendations in this plan to address these issues through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A projected investment in restructuring the delivery of high school programs in the new district (paired with the operational efficiencies that come with 	

restructuring to fund these investments).

- b. Policies on Intra-district **school choice**, which will allow families to self-select which high school campus/program is the best match for their children.

A. Restructuring and Investment

As part of the research of this committee, we undertook a thorough investigation to determine the most effective program configurations/offerings and the best utilization of existing facilities across our three campuses to meet the needs of our high school students. All of our current schools have the capacity to serve more students. This challenge attributable to declining school enrolments in our schools create real, ongoing fiscal challenges to our communities in providing sustainable, affordable, and quality educational programs to our students. **To that end, the Committee has proposed a plan to restructure our current high school configuration by closing Cabot High School and operating two autonomous high school programs for all students in the new unified union district: one at Danville High School and one at Twinfield High School. All high school students across the new unified union would be able to choose which of the two schools to attend according to intra-district choice policies that would be adopted by the new unified union school board prior to the operating date of the new district.**

{Note: See Section 4: Restructuring Opportunities due to Unification, Page 20}

We clearly need to invest in our students and programs. At the same time, we believe strongly in "funding the journey" through operational efficiencies found in merging into a new unified district and supervisory union. This committee would charge the new board with further exploring the restructuring recommendations made in this report and developing a comprehensive **investment plan** in curriculum, instruction, programming, student support, and infrastructure to both increase student performance and address the current differences in educational opportunities.

This committee believes small differences between campuses are not major issues

(and in fact represent great points of uniqueness). However, we also believe over the long term this district will need a unified plan on the expectations of "core" curriculum to be offered at each campus and specific variations which would be encouraged in the spirit of innovation and campus differentiation.

B. Intra-District School Choice

This Committee also believes that our district can achieve much more together than separately. To achieve the goals of maximizing educational opportunities for all students, fostering local innovation, and providing greater access to unique educational programming, this committee recommends that the new Board of School Directors develop policies, for offering intra-district choice at the high school level, (along with reasonable access to transportation) to the families/guardians of secondary students within the new unified district. We believe this will allow for continued investments, differentiation, and uniqueness at each high school campus, while at the same time unlocking a new set of educational opportunities for students and families.

Final Reflections on Strengthening Student Performance and Programmatic Opportunity

Clearly each of our schools has a unique profile of educational strengths and opportunities. (*See Exploratory Report, Appendix 15*). However, each has operational and instructional challenges that require creative, thoughtful, and focused attention/support if our young people are to reach their true potential, and if our schools are to rank with the best in Vermont. Taken together, every recommendation that follows is designed to address issues of instructional cohesiveness, equity and opportunity and therefore enhance the well-being and performance of every young person in our care.

The Committee believes that the creation of a single unified school board will create new and enhanced opportunities in strategic investment, governance, and accountability PreK-12 to address both the existing and emerging needs of students, as well as, the educational goals central to Act 46. The Committee believes this can best be achieved by a unified union district that strives:

In our elementary schools to:

1. Equalize opportunities in all elementary schools for:
 - Technology access and programming.
 - Instruction in World Languages, Performing and Visual Arts, Health, Wellness, and Physical Education
2. Continue working to create core instructional programs whose goal is ensuring that all students, consistent with their individualized learning plans, will reach or exceed proficiency in local and state assessments by 2021.

In our high schools to:

- a. Graduate students on the basis of proficiency in and mastery of established core skills and content – students who are literate, informed citizens ready for the next step in their lives, whether that be post-secondary studies; career, technical, or vocational education; military service; or the work force.
- b. Offer multiple pathways towards graduation that address the needs and aspirations of a diverse student body.
- c. Ensure that all students are critical thinkers, able to communicate and share their ideas effectively.
- d. Offer every student a well-rounded academic experience (humanities, math, and science; arts and foreign languages; life and technical skills, etc.), as well as a diverse range of co-curricular activities/offerings (athletics, clubs and performing arts).
- e. Offer advanced and extended/enhanced learning opportunities that address student needs and interests across all curricular areas. (Advanced Placement; Dual Enrollment)
- f. Enable cross-disciplinary learning activities.
- g. Offer vibrant, service learning programs that foster within every student, both civic values and the requisite leadership skills to make a difference in their communities.

Across the district to:

Develop and support educational programs that:

- a. Result in innovative schools that “break the mold.”
- b. Ensure academic excellence as measured by a range of objective measures including, but not limited, to state assessments, SAT/ACT scores, matriculation rates and college acceptances.
- c. Provide opportunities for students of different ages to learn and work together – e.g. older and younger students sharing their experience – working with and learning from one another.
- d. Foster within students a sense of compassion, respect, and empathy towards others.
- e. Extend student learning into the world through vibrant partnerships and place-based learning that takes advantage of what is unique about our local communities, cultural heritage and land.
- f. Renews its commitment to graduating citizens who understand the fundamental principles and structures that define and support the operation of a democratic, civil society – civic education and the history of America’s political institutions.
- g. Teach and nurture within students the habits of mind and heart essential to academic and personal success.
- h. Engage and challenge students to do their best.

Develop and support instructional strategies that:

- a. Enable students to progress in their learning in accordance with their specific needs, interests, learning styles, and personal goals.
- b. Differentiate according to student needs and provide the appropriate combination of personal and instructional intervention, remediation and/or enhancement.
- c. Foster creativity and appreciation for the arts through curricular and co-curricular programs.
- d. Create personal resiliency and constructive responses to adversity and academic challenge.
- e. Develop skills in personal inquiry, collaboration and mutual problem-solving.
- f. Foster life-long learning in students.
- g. Utilize experiential/hands-on, project-based learning strategies.
- h. Prepares students for the creative, productive, responsible use and ethical application of current and emerging technologies including their impact on

	<p>society.</p> <p>Foster a safe, supportive, nurturing learning environment that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Creates opportunities for students to form strong relationships across grade levels. b. Ensures and protects every student’s right to learn, free of distraction or personal harassment. c. Celebrates the diverse contributions of every student, as well as, the differences that make every student unique. d. Communicates to students the highest expectations for academic achievement, compassionate behavior, and personal responsibility, and provide the requisite supports for helping them achieve those goals. e. Is engaging and fun. <p>Establish a shared, unified educational vision that supports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Coordinating and sharing best practices across the district’s schools. b. Exploring new and emerging instructional models for addressing the needs of all children. <p>Summary Conclusion:</p> <p>In summary, this committee sees tremendous potential for improving learning opportunities and the performance outcomes of our students. There is no reason we should accept differences in achievement for students who live within miles of each other.</p> <p>Together, we believe that we can construct a unified PreK-12 educational system which maximizes the potential of all our students through, <i>“Enriched learning environments that provide more opportunities for students to learn within and from a larger, more diverse community of peers and teachers.”</i></p>	
<p><u>Goal #2:</u> The proposed union school</p>	<p>In approaching the issue of strengthening academic performance and providing substantive equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities for all</p>	

district will 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.

Act 46, Sec. 2(2)

students, the Committee looked at the goal of achieving educational excellence in two ways:

- a. **Performance** – How students are actually performing academically across the district.
- b. **Programmatic Opportunity** – The equity in quality and variety of program opportunities afforded students across the schools serving the students of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield.

In our investigation, we found significant variations in both performance and programmatic opportunity for our students. We strongly believe that we need to invest to improve both performance and opportunity. The analyses that follows highlights the insights we uncovered on the educational and programmatic needs and challenges facing our schools in these areas.

A. STRENGTHENING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT/PERFORMANCE:

*“Leading Students to Achieve or Exceed the State’s Educational Quality Standards”
(Act 46 Goal #2)*

As the Committee noted in its Core Principles, a central goal of unification should be to create “Diverse learning opportunities that result in high levels of student achievement for all students.”

In the view of the Committee, maximizing student potential must be the central goal of any district unification among Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield. After examining the most recent **2016 Smarter Balanced Testing Data (SBAC)** (*See Appendix 7*) and assessing the educational opportunities and challenges currently shaping the work of our schools, the Committee found:

- Noticeable variability in student performance outcomes within and between the schools that make up our three autonomous PreK-12 school districts.

{Note: For Core recommendations to address educational quality see recommendations under goal #1 above.}

Finally, after due deliberation of 14 restructuring options for the new district, the Committee elected to recommend Option 4 to its voters - closing Cabot High School, maintaining but coordinating and enhancing the existing high school curricular and extra-curricular programs at Danville and Twinfield High Schools, developing policies on intra-district choice that would allow high school students to select the secondary school program that better meets their particular interests and needs (as well as, exploring the introduction of intra-district choice PreK-8) (*See Article 14*), and charging the new unified board to:

“Initiate a district-wide curriculum and instructional planning process prior to the opening of school in August 2018 to explore the most effective way to:

- a. Coordinate instructional programs at the high school level,
- b. Offer project-based learning activities and programs for students across the district.
- c. Create, before the first year of operation, a plan to provide a smooth transition for high school students moving to a new campus.” (*See Article 16*)

The Committee believes that this option is the best means for:

- a. Building upon the spirit of educational innovation and instructional development already going on in our schools
- b. Ensuring the sustainable delivery of a quality education for every student in the communities of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield.
- c. Enhancing/Expanding the range and scope of educational opportunity for every student served by the new district.
- d. Providing for the delivery of a more uniform core of educational experiences, PreK-12.
- e. Creating a larger more diverse cohort of students (and teachers) that would better serve the educational and developmental needs of our children.
- f. Realizing significant savings in operational expenses through the unification of central office services and the optimization/coordination of existing

	<p>programming, particularly at the high school level, that could be used to enhance existing instruction, ensure equity of educational opportunity, and/or restrain current and future trends in educational spending and tax rates.**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Creating new patterns of professional collaboration, support, and development between and among our teachers, administrators, and support staff. h. Providing unified structures for governance and educational leadership grounded in new, district-wide patterns of strategic planning, accountability, transparency, and leadership reflecting the collective aspirations of students, parents, and taxpayers across the new district. <p>** For a thorough examination of the operational costs and benefits of district unification and restructuring the current delivery of high school programs in a new unified district see Part C, page 23 of this report.</p> <p>SUMMARY THOUGHTS:</p> <p>For the Committee, the key point is that without merging, <u>this</u> or any other future plan for creating greater educational opportunity through a more efficient use of existing resources is significantly more difficult under the laws that govern the operation of school districts in Vermont.</p> <p>In addition, a decision not to merge into a single unified union means that individual districts of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield will have to address the ongoing challenge of maintaining strong educational programs in the face of uncertain enrollments and rising costs <u>without</u> the resources and/or educational support of neighboring communities.</p>	
<p><u>Goal #3:</u> The proposed union school district will maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with a goal of increasing the district-level</p>	<p>During its study, the Committee identified the following opportunities for achieving and sustaining financial and operational efficiencies through unification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. State Tax Incentives over 4 years; Merger Implementation Grants II. Large Scale Purchasing/Contract Negotiation with Private Vendors 	

ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff.

Act 46, Sec. 2(3)

- a. Technology
- b. Books & supplies
- c. Maintenance needs

III. Shared Administrative, Staffing, and Service Delivery Models

- a. Coordinate teaching/staffing assignments (responding to changing school demographics, program, and building needs)
- b. Eliminate administrative redundancy
- c. Streamline existing service models (transportation, maintenance)
- d. Coordinate financial administration/reduce bureaucracy
 - i. One audit instead of five.
 - ii. Board services/support (stenographer, legal, dues, etc)
 - iii. Purchasing process
- e. Increase efficiency in state and federal data collection and reporting
- f. Coordinate use of facilities

IV. Further Collaboration of Special Education and Behavioral Management Services

- a. Review of out-of-house vs in-house delivery models and opportunities
- b. Alternative program delivery

V. Asset Coordination

- a. Transportation
- b. Buildings and grounds
- c. Deferred maintenance
- d. Long-term capital planning
- e. Food-service

PROJECTED COST SAVINGS DUE TO UNIFICATION OVER 5 YEARS:

1. Unification of Central Office Services: \$360,000/year (ongoing)

The creation of a Side-by-Side Supervisory Union between Washington Northeast and Caledonia Central with the merging of two central offices into

one, is estimated to save about ~\$633,000 union-wide. If the funds were attributed to each of the new unified districts that make up the new Supervisory union based on a comparison of their relative Average Daily Membership (number of students served) then the savings for Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield in year one (ongoing) would be approximately **\$360,000?** (57% of ADM) and the savings for Barnet, Walden, and Waterford would be approximately **\$273,000** (43% of ADM)

Potential Savings - Central Office Unification:
~\$633,000

Cabot, Danville, Twinfield:
~\$360,000

Barnet, Walden, Waterford:
~\$273,000

Potential Central Office Savings over five years = ~\$1,800,000 (See Appendix 11)

2. Restructuring Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield High Schools – Option 4: Close Cabot High School; maintain schools at Danville and Twinfield : \$174,597 per year (ongoing)

Reductions in Instructional Staff at Cabot High School:
\$321,523*

Elimination of High School Sports Programs
\$46,871

Reduction in Professional Development Costs
\$10,000

Close Two Satellite Buildings
\$35,660

Total Projected Savings for Option 4:
\$414,054

****Note: Saving in staff reductions adjusted to account for salary adjustments needed to create a unified bargaining agreement for the teachers in Cabot. (See Appendix 13)***

Additional Transportation Costs

\$70,000

Loss of Tuition Revenues

\$54,000

Cost of creating unified bargaining agreement for Danville teachers

\$115,457**

Total Projected expenses of Option 4:

\$239,457

Net Operational Saving – Option 4

\$174,597

****Note: Projected cost increase salary needed to create a unified bargaining agreement for the teachers in Danville. (See Appendix 13)***

Potential Savings Due to High School Restructuring over 5 years =

~\$872,985 (See Appendix 12)

3. Additional Savings through Maximizing Efficiencies:

.05% Operation cut in the growth rate of Educational Spending =

~13,000/year (ongoing)

1% Operation cut in the growth rate of Educational Spending =

~25,000/year (ongoing)

The financial model outlined in the next section was used to approximate these savings and to project the impact on future tax rates of realizing a modest reduction in the annual growth of budget and educational spending over the next 5 years of .5% due to maximizing the operational efficiencies outlined in this section of report for a new unified district.

Potential Operational Savings over five years = \$65,000 - \$125,000

TOTAL OPERATIONAL SAVINGS OVER 5 YEARS DUE TO UNIFICATION PLAN = ~2,737,985 - \$2,797,985

PROJECTED SAVINGS AND REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS DUE TO MERGER INCENTIVES:

1. Unified Tax Rate and Merger Financial Incentives:

The Committee estimated the impact the incentives embedded in Act 46 would provide for the communities that would make up the new district. The law provides for a set of incentives for those districts adopting consolidation. Using two different financial models (The MD Model and Town Share Model) the Committee found that over a five-year period, the committee found that the impact of a new unified tax rate the application of incentives (8 cents, 6 cents, 4 cents, and two cents) due to merging in FY19 along with the retention of small schools grants could result in an estimated reduction in total property taxes in Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield in the range of \$2,414,972 to \$3,847,597.

Note: See, “Part D – Financial/Tax Rate Projections” beginning on page 42.

2. Maintaining Existing Small School Grants:

Embedded within each financial model, is the projected impact of the Cabot School losing its small school’s grant. Districts that receive small schools grants that fail to participate in an incentivized merger risk losing their small schools grants beginning in FY 2020. The criteria for maintaining these grants as an unmerged district are noted in (*Appendix 15*).

Currently the Cabot School District receives a yearly grant of \$147,836 (FY’17);

	<p>Over the next five years, failing to participate in an incentivized merger (in this case a side-by side) could result in a total loss of this revenue for the Cabot School District of ~\$591,344 beginning in 2020.</p> <p>Total Cost Savings and Projected Revenues Due to Merger with Incentives over 5 years: \$2,414,972 - \$3,847,597</p> <p>TOTAL PROJECTED SAVINGS/REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS OVER 5 YEARS DUE TO UNIFICATION PLAN: \$5,152,957 - \$6,645,582</p> <p>(INCLUDES BOTH OPERATIONAL SAVINGS, UNIFIED RATE, AND MERGER INCENTIVES)</p> <p>The Committee believes that these operational cost savings and the projected tax savings due to a new unified rate and incentives could be used to invest in the transition, improve school infrastructure, or reduce tax rates at the discretion of the new board. In addition, maintaining the districts’ small schools grants, while providing no new revenue to the new unified district, is absolutely essential to the financial wellbeing of the Cabot School. Without these funds, Cabot would have to cut spending or raise revenues to maintain current programming.</p>	
<p><u>Goal #4:</u> The proposed union school district will promote transparency and accountability.</p> <p><i>Act 46, Sec. 2(4)</i></p>	<p>The Committee identified the following operational and governance recommendations that a unified board should undertake to more effectively promote operational transparency and accountability.</p> <p>OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish a clear, unified system of governance. b. Attract the very best educators to our district, by offering competitive salary 	

	<p>packages and supporting their personal growth and development with engaging and meaningful professional development opportunities and to achieve this goal in a manner that is fiscally responsible and attentive to the values of community members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Support class sizes that foster effective learning environments. d. Create communication and marketing strategies that ensure that our district’s educational opportunities and programs are recognized throughout Vermont as nurturing, rigorous, and competitive - a place to which families will want to move, live and raise their children. e. Develop long-term, school development strategies that respond to the needs and aspirations of our students, teachers, and staff and ensure the quality and fiscal sustainability of our schools. f. Consolidate the management of operations including building maintenance, custodial, technical, health services and food services to allow administrators to focus more on the educational needs of their schools. g. Streamline administrative services to eliminate redundancy in state and federal reports, audits, budget development, and data collection. h. Offer programs that provide value to the community at a cost that communities are willing to support. <p style="text-align: center;">GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a unified educational mission (PreK-12). b. Establish standards for educational performance and Board practices. c. Responsibly enhance educational opportunities within the context of current, available resources. d. Preserve and strengthen policies that put children first and to do so at a cost that is both sustainable and affordable. 	
<p><u>Goal #5:</u> The proposed union school district will deliver education at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.</p>	<p>The Committee believes that achieving this goal depends upon creating within the new unified district a real sense of community ownership, identity and culture. To this end, the Committee recommends that the new Board work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a sense of identity and culture across the new school district. 	

<p><i>Act 46, Sec. 2(5)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Support strategies across the district that will foster new levels of parental and community involvement in our schools including meaningful opportunities to contribute to student learning (community volunteers; school/community partnerships). c. Provide extensive opportunities for community involvement in all matters that come before the board including: educational vision and goals, district policy, and budget. d. Support parents in becoming active, meaningful, and responsible partners in their children’s education. 	
<p><u>Regional Effects:</u></p> <p>What would be the regional effects of the proposed union school district, including: would the proposed union school district leave one or more other districts geographically isolated?</p> <p><i>Act 46, Section 8(a)(2)</i></p>	<p>Only Peacham would be left geographically isolated by the formation of this side by side. But Peacham has a different operating structure than all the other districts in this area and chose not to participate in either study focused on forming the proposed side by side.</p>	

Articles of Agreement – as required by 16 V.S.A. § 706b(b)(3) - (10), (13)

<p>(3) The grades to be operated by the proposed union school district</p> <p>The grades, if any, for which the proposed union school district shall pay tuition</p>	<p>The CDT Unified Union School District will continue to operate grades Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12.</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>(4) The cost and general location of any proposed new schools to be constructed</p> <p>The cost and general description of any proposed renovations</p>	<p>No new construction contemplated at this time.</p>	
<p>(5) A plan for the first year of the proposed union school district's operation for:</p> <p>(A) the transportation of students</p> <p>(B) the assignment of staff</p> <p>(C) curriculum</p> <p>The plan must be consistent with existing contracts, collective</p>	<p>Upon an affirmative vote of the electorates of the forming districts and upon compliance with 16 VSA – 706g, the CDT Unified Union School District shall exercise all of the authority which is necessary for it to prepare for full educational operations beginning on July 1, 2018.</p> <p>The CDT Unified Union School District would, between the date of its first organizational meeting under 16 VSA – 706j and June 30, 2018, undertake all of the planning and related duties necessary to begin operations of the new unified union school district on July 1, 2018, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Preparing for and negotiating contractual agreements; b. Preparing and presenting a budget to the voters for fiscal year 2019; c. Preparing for the CDT Unified Union School District annual meeting, March 6, 2018; d. Transacting any other lawful business that comes before the Board. <p>The authority exercised by the new CDT Unified Union School District shall not limit or alter the ongoing</p>	

<p>bargaining agreements, and other provisions of law, including 16 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 3 (transition of employees)</p>	<p>authority and/or responsibilities of the school boards that make up the current Supervisory Union which will remain in existence during the transition period for the purpose of completing any and all business not given under law to the new unified union district board. In essence, each individual district board would maintain its current authority until the new district becomes operational on July 1, 2018. The existing districts and supervisory union will remain in operation after July 1, 2018 only to conclude any business.</p> <p>In summary, an affirmative vote of the electorate would also result in, but not be limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Employees throughout the current Supervisory Union offered continuing employment following the 2017-2018 school year, consistent with all legal requirements, would become employees of the new CDT Unified Union School District. b. All assets of the pre-existing districts would be transferred to the new unified union district for the sum of \$1.00 as of July 1, 2018. c. Debts and liabilities of the pre-existing districts and supervisory union would be transferred to the new unified union district as of July 1, 2018. d. Following the certification of the election results by the Agency of Education to the Secretary of State (30-45 days after the vote), an organizational meeting of the new unified district would be convened by the Secretary of the Agency of Education or designee in accordance with Title 16, 706j. e. The newly elected members of the CDT Unified Union School District, consistent with statute, would begin the work of preparing for the district’s first day of operations - hiring a superintendent, defining administrative and operational roles and responsibilities, establishing policy, negotiating contracts, developing budgets, providing transportation, and establishing new structures for community engagement. f. Through June 30, 2018, the three pre-existing boards would continue to govern their respective districts and/or schools. The existing districts and supervisory union will remain in operation after July 1, 2018 only to conclude any business. 	
<p>(6) The indebtedness of the proposed merging districts that the proposed union</p>	<p>During the course of its study, the Committee identified the following short (5 year) and long (5+ years) term capital/facility needs (buildings and technology) that would be facing the new unified district:</p>	

<p>school district shall assume.</p>	<p>Cabot: Air handler controls: \$45,000 Cafeteria roof: \$43,000 Gym building renovation \$ 2.6 M (est.) Satellite renovation (ADA, roofing, siding, drainage, plumbing and mechanical) \$520,000+ per building (est) or replacement space as needed with new configuration \$3.8 - \$4.2M (est, including paving, grounds, etc.) **</p> <p>** Under the current proposal which includes the closing of Cabot’s high school program, the renovation of all the satellite buildings would no longer be needed to serve the remaining elementary and middle school students at the Cabot school.</p> <p><i>(Note: Black River Design building and grounds assessment and draft plans available)</i></p> <p>Danville: 5+ years - replace roof and 10 air exchange units</p> <p>For IT Danville will need to replace: Hardware, Switches, Firewalls, Server, Computers for both staff and students, Some wiring upgrades to parts of the buildings</p> <p>Twinfield: Replace panel boxes: \$100,000 (over 4 years) Paving project: \$90,000 (2018) Boiler replacement: \$ 535,000 (approved- payments over 10 years) Locker and bathroom renovations: \$50,000</p> <p>Finally, each district in the proposed merger brings with it the following reserve funds and short/long term debt:</p> <p>Short and Long Term Reserve Funds</p> <p>Cabot: <i>As of FY16 Audit:</i> \$79,394 Reserve Fund, \$63,667 Capital Projects</p> <p>Danville: As of FY16 Audit: -\$89,100 deficit (Covered with FY18 budget), Capital Reserve \$11,859</p>	
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Twinfield: *As of FY16 Audit:* \$65,283 Reserve Fund, \$25,000 Capital Projects

Short and Long Term Debt

Cabot: *As of FY16 Audit:* \$235,298

Danville: \$0

Twinfield: *As of FY16 Audit:* \$696,201

(7) The specific pieces of real property owned by the proposed merging districts that the proposed union school district shall acquire, including:

- * their valuation
- * how the proposed union school district shall pay for them

Statement of Values (Property, Buildings, Etc.)

Cabot: \$6,688,190.00
Danville: Buildings \$14,429,800; total \$17,071,000
Twinfield: \$10,283,223.00

District	Name	Square Feet	Year Built	Building Value	Business Personal Property	Site Improvements	Computer Equipment	Vehicles	Total Value
Danville	Danville School	79,594	1900	14,417,800	1,095,400	84,100	200,000	334,000	16,131,300
Danville	Mechanical Building	150	1980	12,000	2,000	-	-		14,000
DANVILLE TOTALS				14,429,800	1,097,400	84,100	200,000	334,000	16,145,300

Name	Property Type	Address 1	Building Value	Business Personal Property	Site Improv. Insurable	BI/EE	Total Insured Value
School House	School	6328 US Rt 2	\$82,309	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000,000	\$1,082,309

	<p>Twinfield School School 106 Nasmith Brook Rd \$10,260,900 \$766,500 \$306,600 \$0.00 \$11,334,000</p> <p>Twinfield High Storage 106 Nasmith Brook Rd \$22,323 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$22,323</p> <p>Cabot High School School 25 Common Rd \$2,360,700 \$121,500 \$40,000 \$0.00 \$2,522,200</p> <p>Cabot Elem #1 School 49 Gym Rd \$395,800 \$23,900 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$419,700</p> <p>Cabot Elem #2 - Learning Center School 50 Gym Rd \$395,800 \$23,900 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$419,700</p> <p>Cabot Elem #3 - Primary Unit School 51 Gym Rd \$534,900 \$31,800 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$566,700</p> <p>Shop Bldg Storage Main St \$228,790 \$54,129 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$282,919</p> <p>Gym/Auditorium Gym 26 Gym Rd \$1,933,400 \$35,100 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$1,968,500</p> <p>Cabot WoodchipPlant Mechanical Building Gym Road \$148,600 \$5,000 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$153,600</p> <p>Performing Arts Center School Gym Rd \$365,700 \$23,000 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$388,700</p> <p>Industrial Arts Building School 52 Gym Road \$324,500 \$54,100 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$378,600</p>	
(8) [repealed 2004 Acts and Resolves No. 130, Sec. 15]		
(9) Consistent with the proportional representation requirements of the Equal Protection Clause, the method of apportioning the representation that each proposed member town shall have on the proposed union school board * no more than 18 members total	<p>The Unified District Board of Directors shall be composed of nine (9) individuals elected by Australian ballot by the voters of the municipalities in which they reside. Each municipality within the Unified District shall be guaranteed at least two resident representatives.</p> <p>Based on the 2010 census, the new unified union board will consist of two (2) representatives residing in and representing Cabot; three (3) residing in and representing Danville; two (2) residing in and representing Marshfield; two (2) residing in and representing Plainfield.</p> <p>The Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield specific numbers of directors are consistent with current census figures. Each time there is a new decennial census, the proportionality of representation reflected in the specific numbers of directors allocated to each municipality shall be aligned to the new counts if necessary.</p>	

<p>* each member town is entitled to at least one representative</p> <p>* <i>see also</i> 16 V.S.A. § 706k(c): one or more at-large directors</p> <p>* <i>see also</i> 16 V.S.A. § 707(c): weighted voting</p>	<p><i>2010 Census Information:</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Cabot:</td><td>1,433</td><td>22%</td></tr> <tr><td>Danville:</td><td>2,196</td><td>34%</td></tr> <tr><td>Marshfield:</td><td>1,588</td><td>25%</td></tr> <tr><td>Plainfield:</td><td>1,243</td><td>19%</td></tr> <tr><td>Total:</td><td>6,460</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>Town</th> <th>Representation</th> <th>% Representation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Cabot:</td><td>2</td><td>22%</td></tr> <tr><td>Danville:</td><td>3</td><td>33%</td></tr> <tr><td>Marshfield:</td><td>2</td><td>22%</td></tr> <tr><td>Plainfield:</td><td>2</td><td>22%</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Cabot:	1,433	22%	Danville:	2,196	34%	Marshfield:	1,588	25%	Plainfield:	1,243	19%	Total:	6,460		Town	Representation	% Representation	Cabot:	2	22%	Danville:	3	33%	Marshfield:	2	22%	Plainfield:	2	22%	
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<p>(10) The term of office of directors initially elected, to be arranged so that one-third expire on the day of each annual meeting of the proposed union school district, beginning on the second annual meeting, or as near to that proportion as possible</p>	<p>School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot for three year terms, except for those initially elected at the time of the formation of the new Unified District CDT Unified Union District). In the initial election of School Directors, the terms of office will be as follows:</p> <table border="0" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Term Ending March 2019</th> <th>Term Ending March 2020</th> <th>Term ending March 2021</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Cabot</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Danville</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Marshfield</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Plainfield</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The terms of the initial school directors indicated above will include the months in between the organizational meeting and the first annual meeting in 2018.</p> <p>Nominations for the office of CDT Unified Union School Director representing a specific town shall be made by filing, with the clerk of that district/town proposed as a member of the Unified District, a statement of nomination signed by at least 30 voters in that district/town or one percent of the legal voters in the district/town, whichever is less, and accepted in writing by the nominee. A statement shall be filed not fewer than 30, nor more than 40 days prior to the date of the vote.</p> <p>Pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. – 706j(b), directors initially elected to the new district shall be</p>		Term Ending March 2019	Term Ending March 2020	Term ending March 2021	Cabot	1		1	Danville	1	1	1	Marshfield		1	1	Plainfield	1	1												
	Term Ending March 2019	Term Ending March 2020	Term ending March 2021																													
Cabot	1		1																													
Danville	1	1	1																													
Marshfield		1	1																													
Plainfield	1	1																														

	<p>sworn in and assume the duties of their office.</p> <p>Thereafter, members of the Board of School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot at the unified school district's Annual Meeting, and nominations shall follow the procedures established in 17 VSA § 2681. Terms of office shall begin and expire on the date of the school district's annual meeting. In the event the district's annual meeting precedes Town Meeting Day, the Director's terms shall expire on Town Meeting Day.</p>	
<p>(13) Any other matters that the study committee considers pertinent, including whether votes on the union school district budget or public questions shall be by Australian ballot</p> <p><i>(please list each matter separately)</i></p>	<p>Article 12. Australian Ballot Voting</p> <p>The CDT Unified Union School District shall elect its school board members, vote the annual school district budget, and decide public questions by Australian ballot. Votes will be commingled as required by state law.</p> <p>Article 13. Provision for Closure of a School</p> <p>The New Unified Union District Board may not close any school conveyed to the New Unified Union District by a Forming District within the first four (4) years of operation of the New Unified Union District unless approved by voters in the town in which the building is located. After four (4) years of operation, the New Unified Union District may close a school conveyed to the New Unified Union District by a Forming District under the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board shall hold at least three public hearings regarding the proposed school closure. At least one of the public hearings shall be held in the community in which the school is located; and 2. If after conducting public hearings, the Board of Directors intends to vote on whether to close a school, it shall give public notice of its intent to hold a vote on whether to close a school, stating the reason for the closure, at least ten days prior to the vote. ; and 3. Upon an affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the New Unified Union Board of Directors, including at least one representative from each of the towns that make up the new unified union school board; and 4. The closure shall be effective only if approved by a majority vote of <u>each</u> of the member towns voting at a special vote warned for this purpose. The votes shall be counted and reported <u>by town</u>, voting by Australian ballot. 	

Article 14. Intra-District Choice

Before July 1, 2018, the Board of School Directors shall develop policies for offering intra-district choice (PreK-12) to the families or guardians of students matriculating in grades for which the Unified District operates multiple buildings as soon as practicable.

Policies respecting choice shall consider issues including, but not limited to, transportation, socio-economic equity, proximity to the selected building, unity of siblings, and the capacities of receiving schools and sending schools.

Article 15. Community Input Policies

The New Unified Union Board shall provide timely and sufficient opportunity for local input on policy and budget development. Structures to support and encourage public participation within the New Unified Union District will be established by the New Unified Union Board of School Directors on or before July 1, 2018. These structures shall include but not be limited to local school councils that have an advisory responsibility in key areas, including but not limited to New Unified Union District’s budget development and hiring of principals and operate in an advisory capacity.

Article 16. Instructional Planning/PBL Strategies

The new unified board shall initiate a district-wide curriculum and instructional planning process prior to the opening of school in August 2018 to explore the most effective way to

- d. Coordinate instructional programs at the high school level,
- e. Offer project-based learning activities and programs for students across the district.
- f. Create, before the first year of operation, a plan to provide a smooth transition for high school students moving to a new campus.

Article 17. Changing the Operating Structure of a School – Grades Offered

Permanently changing the operating structure of a school in the new unified union district for more than a single school year to address temporary fluctuations in enrollments may only occur under the following

conditions:

1. Board shall hold at least three public hearings regarding the proposed changes. At least one of the public hearings shall be held in the community in which the school is located; and
2. If after conducting public hearings, the Board of Directors intends to vote on whether to change the operating structure of that school, it shall give public notice of its intent to hold such a vote, stating the reason for the change in operational structure, at least ten days prior to the vote; and
3. An affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the New Unified Union Board of Directors approving the change in the operational structure; and
4. The new operating structure shall be effective only if approved by a majority vote of each of the member towns voting at a special vote warned for this purpose. The votes shall be counted and reported by town, voting by Australian ballot.

It is understood that this article does not apply to the closing of Cabot's high school program effective July 1, 2018 or the creation of intra-district school choice policies.

Article 18. Renaming the New District

It is understood that the current name for the new unified union district, the "CDT Unified Union School District," is provisional for the purposes of legal identification in these articles and may be changed by a majority vote of school directors of the new unified union school district.

**C.D.T. Unified Union School District
Act 46 Study Committee – Final Report
May 8, 2017**

**Cabot School
Danville School
Twinfield Union School**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cabot, Danville, Twinfield Act 46 Study Committee Members	Page 3
Executive Summary	Page 4
Lawyers Certification Letter	Page 7
Report – Introduction	Page 9
Part A: Educational Vision For Unification	
• Section 1: Guiding Principles	Page 14
• Sections 2 & 3: Strengthening Student Performance and Programmatic Opportunity	Page 16
○ Strengthening Student Achievement/Performance	Page 16
○ Enhancing Programmatic Opportunity	Page 20
• Section 4: Restructuring Opportunities Due to Unification	Page 25
• Section 5: Promoting Operational Transparency and Accountability	Page 34
• Section 6: Providing a Quality Education at Cost Voters Value	Page 35
Part B: Maximizing Financial and Operational Efficiencies	Page 36
Part C: Financial Cost/Benefit Analysis:	Page 37
Part D: Financial/Tax Rate Projections	Page 42
Part E: Transition Planning	Page 63
Part F: Articles of Agreement	Page 65
Appendices:	Page 74

CABOT, DANVILLE, TWINFIELD ACT 46 STUDY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair

Chris Tormey - Cabot

Members

Representing Cabot School District

Ry Hoffman
Chris Tormey

Representing Twinfield Union School District

Scott Harris
Lauren Cleary
Sarah Watkins
Ian Covey
Chandra Miller

Representing Danville School District

Bruce Melendy
Tim Sanborn
Dave Towle

Sharing one position:
Robert Edgar and Ginni Lavelly

Administrative and Consultant Support

Nancy Thomas – Superintendent, Washington Northeast:

Mathew Forrest – Superintendent, Caledonia Central

Christin Kimball – Business Manager W.N.E

Patricia Amsden – Business Manager C.C.

Peter Clarke - Consultant

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Act 46 is a far-reaching law with ambitious objectives to improve student outcomes, create equity in the quality and variety of student opportunity, increase transparency of school operations, and reduce overall education costs. At its heart, the law seeks to address these issues through the lever of simplified and unified governance mechanisms at the district level – in other words, the creation of a single board with a unified budget, accountable for the outcomes of all the students in the district.

As this study committee confronted the questions raised by this law, we spent a lot of time defining our aspirations as districts while also trying to understand how we could best structure ourselves to achieve those aspirations, as well as, the goals of the law. After a careful study of the educational programs currently offered by each of our school districts, the Committee believes that there are real opportunities for reorganizing the delivery of educational services in a unified district - specifically closing Cabot High School and instituting a program of intra-district school choice between the remaining two high school programs at Danville and Twinfield (and perhaps eventually PreK-12).

The Committee believes that this option, among the many that were studied, would enhance instruction, better serve students, and create operational savings that could be used to strengthen and enhance existing programs (PreK-12) without additional support from taxpayers. Among the opportunities that derive from unifying and restructuring our existing school programs are:

- I. Enhancing/Expanding the range and scope of educational opportunity for every student served by the new district – new opportunities that go beyond the courses or instructional programs we would be able to offer, but provide a broader exposure for every student to larger and more diverse cohort of young people with whom to grow and learn, as well as an increased range of extracurricular offerings for every student. In unifying our school districts and better coordinating our educational programs, the Committee sees opportunities to work together to better address the individual and collective aspirations of the students we serve.
- II. Strengthening our educational programs at a cost that the tax payers can support. The Committee believes it is essential to act now to ensure the long-term, sustainable delivery of a quality education for every student in the Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield school systems by working together to optimize class sizes and eliminate program redundancy in order to judiciously redirect those operational savings to moderate future tax increases and to achieve performance outcomes for students that are competitive with the best schools in the State.
- III. Building upon the spirit of educational innovation and instructional development already going on in our schools by providing greater opportunities for teachers across our three schools to collaborate on learning initiatives. Unification would provide all

teachers with professional learning partners at every grade level and academic discipline.

- IV. Sharing resources in the face of declining enrollments to ensure the equitable delivery of a more uniform and exciting core of educational experiences, PreK-12, and providing additional educational options for students.
- V. Establishing unified structures for governance and educational leadership grounded in new, district-wide patterns of strategic planning, accountability, transparency, and leadership reflecting the collective aspirations of students, parents, and taxpayers across the new district.

As the Committee explored these opportunities, we also came to recognize the many challenges that come with merging our districts and restructuring our educational programs. Among those challenges are:

- I. The increased uncertainty of students, parents, and taxpayers alike concerning how these proposed changes will actually play out. Topping the list are concerns that citizens have expressed about the:
 - a. Loss of local control,
 - b. Personal connection that citizens feel towards their current boards and schools,
 - c. Closing of Cabot's high school program,
 - d. Social and emotional challenges facing students transitioning to a new high school,
 - e. Diminished access to extra-curricular activities that might occur unless the new district expands the range of activities currently being offered,
 - f. Potential loss of Cabot's educationally-transformative, Project Based learning programs,
 - g. Creation of a single budget, debt structure, and long-term facility plan,
 - h. Need to create new patterns of trust and civic engagement among and between our communities.
- II. The need to:
 - a. Create new transportation patterns/options that are cost-effective, time-sensitive, and equitable so that all students will have access to the full range of curricular and extra-curricular programs offered by a unified district,
 - b. Attain the appropriate balance between optimizing class sizes and ensuring an individualized, student-centered instructional program,
 - c. Establish new patterns of parental engagement in governing a larger school district to ensure that local concerns are heard and respected.

In trying to identify and explore both the opportunities and challenges facing any decision to unify our districts, the Committee sought to map the way forward. In truth, no future is ever certain. Opportunities must be grasped and can only be realized through perseverance and hard work. Challenges must be faced squarely and addressed creatively. What is known is that the dual challenge of declining enrollments and increased educational cost facing each of our communities shows little sign of abating any time soon.

To fully address these challenges, the committee has been led to the conclusion that all of us must confront whether maintaining our current educational cultures truly supersedes the benefits of coming together. Moving beyond what we know and what we are used to is hard. But throughout the course of this study, the Committee has come to realize that we all share a common desire to do what is best for our children. In working together these past 18 months, we have come to understand that there is more that unites us than divides us.

The Committee's core aspirations remain that:

- Every student in a unified district graduates feeling that their life goals have been fully supported by communities unified in the collective pride that we all take in the children we are preparing to send into the world.
- Parents will continue to find their young people ready to move forward in their lives with the academic tools, self-assurance, and personal resilience they will need to succeed in a changing world.

Finally, it is our hope that in achieving these goals, we will attract more people to the schools and the towns we all live in, so that we can, in the future, grow and thrive as local communities.

LAWYERS CERTIFICATION LETTER

LYNN, LYNN, BLACKMAN & MANITSKY, P.C.

April 27, 2017

Mathew Forest, Superintendent of Schools
Caledonia Central Supervisory Union
PO Box 216
Danville, VT 05828

Nancy Thomas, Superintendent of Schools
Washington Northeast Supervisory Union
PO Box 470
Plainfield, VT 05667

Re: Proposed CDT Unified Union School District Board Membership

Dear Nancy and Mat:

I am writing to confirm that the current proposal for the pertaining to Board membership of the proposed CDT Unified Union School District meets the requirements of the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution and 16 VSA §796(b)(9).

The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment requires equal voting strength, and protects against dilution of the right to vote by disproportionate representation. This guarantee extends to the election of local school official who exercise general governmental powers. *Hadley v. Junior Coll. Dist.*, 397 U.S. 50, 53 (1970). Mathematical precision, however, is not necessary; rather “the overriding objective must be substantial equality of population among the various districts.” *Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533, 569, 579 (1964). The Supreme Court has held that generally, an apportionment plan with a maximum population deviation under 10% is considered a minor deviation. *Brown v. Thomson*, 462 U.S. 835, 842 (1983). A plan with larger disparities, however, remains Constitutional if there is a rational basis for the larger deviation. *Reynolds*, 377 U.S. at 579.

Article 8 of the Articles of Agreement identify a proportional representation model for the new board. It lays out the initial Board membership of two members each from Cabot, Marshfield, and Plainfield and of three members from Danville. With a population for the Unified Union School District of 6460 residents: Cabot has 22% of the population and board representation equal to 22%; Marshfield has 25% of the population and board representation equal to 22%; Plainfield has 19% of the population and board representation equal to 22%; and Danville has 34% of population and board representation equal to 33.33%. The apportionment plans set forth in Article include a maximum deviation of no more than three percent. This falls well within the parameters of a minor deviation. The Articles of Agreement further ensure compliance by tying future composition and recalculation to the Federal Census on decennial basis.

Superintendents Mathew Forest and Nancy Thomas
April 27, 2017
Page 2

Under the requirements of 16 VSA § 706(b)(9), the board must have at least one representative from each community. The proposal has at least two members for each community. This requirement is thus satisfied. Further, the statute requires that the board have no more than 18 members. With the proposed nine member board this element is also met.

Based on our analysis, the proposed Articles of Agreement meet the requirements of the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution and 16 VSA §796(b)(9).

Sincerely,

LYNN, LYNN, BLACKMAN & MANITSKY, P.C.



Pietro J. Lynn, Esq.
plynn@lynnlawvt.com

cc: Peter Clarke, Act 46 Study Committee Consultant
Donna Russo-Savage, Vermont Agency of Education

**A UNIFIED VISION FOR DELIVERING A QUALITY EDUCATION
TO THE CHILDREN OF CABOT, DANVILLE, MARSHFIELD, AND PLAINFIELD**

Introduction:

Process:

Act 46 is a far-reaching piece of legislation that has led the School Districts of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield to explore the potential benefits of unifying their existing governance structure into a single, supervisory district with a single school board responsible for serving every student in the communities of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield. It is a bill whose central goal is to improve the educational quality of our schools and to achieve that goal at an affordable and sustainable cost that taxpayers will value.

After a year-long exploratory study that began in September of 2015, the school boards of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield voted in the summer of 2016 to form a joint 706b Study Committee to review and assess the benefits and challenges of merging their existing PreK-12 school districts into a single unified union school district, governed by a single school board representing the communities currently served by three neighboring but autonomous school boards.

To facilitate these studies, the committee secured a consultant, Mr. Peter A. Clarke, from the *Act 46 Project*, a joint initiative of the Vermont School Boards Association, Vermont Superintendents Association, and Vermont School Board's Insurance Trust.

Over the past 12 months, the committee met bi-weekly in open session. The committee has attempted to maintain a transparent record of its work through ongoing postings to the S.U.'s website of its meeting schedule, minutes, working documents, and draft findings. Prior to the completion of this report, the committee held multiple public forums in every community across both supervisory unions on a variety of issues related to district unification to elicit comment on its findings and then used that feedback to revise and strengthen its final report and recommendations. Finally, the Committee submitted its final report to each of the local school boards engaged in the study for review and comment. ***(See Appendix 17)***

Focus of Deliberations:

At the heart of the law are five key goals, which the committee saw as essential guides to its work:

- *To provide substantive equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities statewide.*
- *To lead students to achieve or exceed the State’s Educational Quality Standards.*
- *To 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*
- *To promote transparency and accountability.*
- *To achieve these goals at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.*

Central to the committee’s deliberations concerning any potential plan to unify into a single, unified district governed by a single school board was one central overriding question:

How would unification benefit our children? Specifically, how would a new, unified district governance structure provide better, more equitable learning opportunities for our children and better support them to achieve or exceed the State’s Educational Quality Standards?

In examining this key question, the committee examined the educational, cultural, financial, and operational opportunities and challenges, that would attend any plan for district unification.

Specifically, during the exploratory phase of the Committee’s work (***See Appendix 16***), it identified and examined:

- The Central Questions Guiding their Study of Unification,
- The Opportunities and Challenges of Unification - Educational, Cultural, Financial, and Operational,
- The Current Enrollment and Staffing Patterns of the Schools in Each District
- The programs and resources available to students
- Financial and Tax implications of a merger among the districts that would make up a new unified district, including the impact of potential incentives under the law, and the potential loss of hold harmless funds and small schools grants.

Having completed the exploratory stage of its deliberations, the Committee has considered a broad range of structural options for delivering a unified PreK-12 program across all four communities and shared this work with community members in a number of public forums, the committee’s Final Report seeks to outline:

- A. An Educational Vision for Unification** that would address the specific goals of Act 46. The committee believes that it is not enough to simply point out the potential opportunities that might attend a unification of existing governance structures but to provide voters with concrete examples of how a unified district might in fact operate, and the opportunity to evaluate specific initiatives that would equitably address the educational needs of students throughout the current supervisory union. That vision includes:
- Section 1: A Statement of Guiding Principles for Unification.
 - Section 2: An Analysis of Student Performance/Achievement and Recommendations
 - Section 3: An Analysis of Current Program Equity Across the Supervisory Union
 - Section 4: An Analysis of Restructuring Opportunities designed to Strengthen and Sustain the Delivery of a Quality Education for Every Student at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.
 - Section 5: Recommendations for Promoting Operational Consistency, Transparency, and Accountability.
 - Section 6: Recommendations for Strengthening and Sustaining the Delivery of a Quality Education for Every Student at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.
- B.** A plan for **Maximizing Efficiencies** through Financial Accounting, Budgeting, and Administration.
- C. Financial Cost/Benefit Analysis** due to Unification
- D.** The Projected Impact on **Homestead Tax Rates** due to unification.
- E.** A **Transition Plan** should the voters approve the proposed plan for district unification.
- F.** Specific **Articles of Agreement** for consideration by the voters of each sending district as required by law.

Final Note: Neighboring Districts: Forming a Side-by-Side

It is the Committee's understanding, that an affirmative vote of the electorate of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield school districts and an affirmative vote of at least two of the three districts of Barnet, Walden, Waterford to approve their own separate unified union district would lead to the unification of two neighboring Supervisory Unions - *Washington Northeast* which serves the districts of Cabot and Twinfield; and *Caledonia Central* which serves the PreK-12 operating district of Danville, and the elementary operating districts of Barnet, Walden, and Peacham – forming a single Supervisory Union that would that would be made up of two side-by-side unified union school districts – The “CDT Unified Union School District” (Cabot, Danville,

and Twinfield) and the “Caledonia Cooperative Unified Union School District” (Barnet, Walden, and Waterford) – and be eligible for incentives under the law (Act 156).

It is the intent that this new supervisory union would be called the Washington Caledonia Supervisory Union and result in the consolidation of two existing administrative central offices currently serving two separate Supervisory Unions, resulting in the creation of a single central office serving both new unified union school districts.

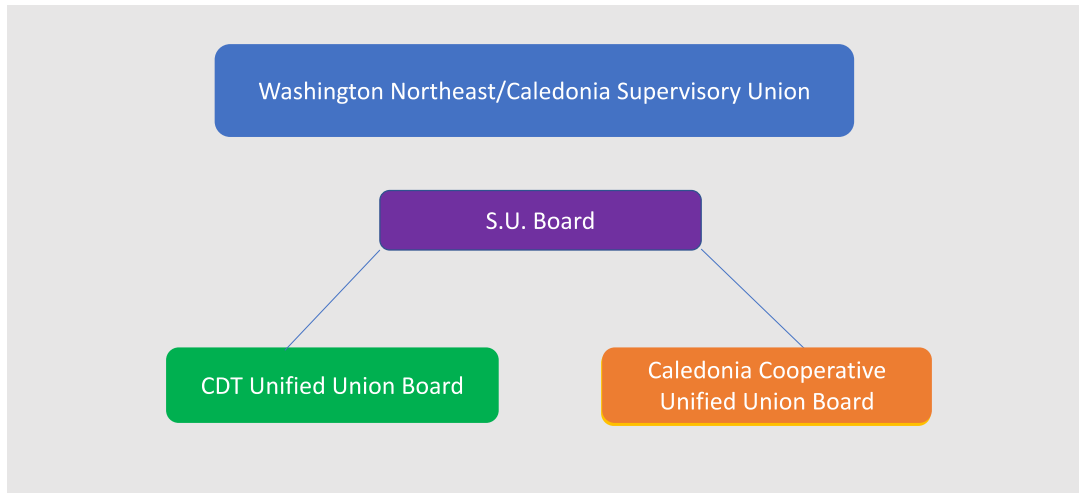
Note: The Waterford School District, currently served by Essex-Caledonia Supervisory Union will, as a result of an affirmative vote of its electorate become a member of the new Caledonia Cooperative Unified Union.

If, a new Supervisory Union is formed taking the place of the both the Washington Northeast and Caledonia Central Supervisory Unions, this new supervisory union would be called the Washington Caledonia Supervisory Union and result in the consolidation of two existing administrative central offices currently serving two separate Supervisory Unions, resulting in the creation of a single central office serving both new unified union school districts.

The new supervisory union would serve:

- One PreK-12 unified union district (PreK-12 operating) for the communities of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield;
- One Pre-K-12 unified union district (PreK-8 operating/9-12 tuitioning) serving the communities of Barnet, Walden, and Waterford; and potentially
- The Peacham School District which is currently a member of the Caledonia Central Supervisory Union, but who is unable to pursue a merger with it neighboring elementary districts because of its PreK-6 operating structure that tuitions students 7-12, until the State Board finalizes it’s state-wide governance plan.

Side-By-Side Governance Model



It is the recommendation of the Committee that should the Caledonia Cooperative Unified Union fail to be approved by voters, that the unification of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield into a single unified union under the governance of a single school board only proceed as planned if the legislature during its current legislative session creates a new form of approved structure that would enable the merger to receive tax incentives under the law.

PART A: AN EDUCATIONAL VISION FOR UNIFICATION
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SECTION 1: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR UNIFICATION

One of the central challenges of unification is recognizing the important relationship that community members have traditionally had with their local schools and the uncertainty that goes with establishing new patterns of governance. In establishing these guiding principles of educational governance, the Committee sought to articulate core principles that would guide the work of a new unified board and foster confidence in each of our school communities concerning the new unified district’s educational operations and educational quality.

Note: A fundamental understanding inherent in this report is that any new unified board will seek to implement key provisions of the Committee’s findings/vision to insure the realization of these principles and to keep faith with the expressed wishes of voters who voted for unification based on the vision, principles, and recommendations expressed in this report.

VISION STATEMENT

The Committee envisions a new unified district dedicated to the work of creating vibrant, progressive, student-centered schools designed to graduate knowledgeable, creative, skilled, compassionate, and engaged citizens ready to take their place in the world.

We believe that this vision can best be attained by:

The creation of:

- a. Flexible and responsive learning environments that address the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of every student.
- b. Diverse learning opportunities that result in high levels of student achievement for all students.
- c. Holistic instructional practices that put students at the center of their own learning.
- d. Rigorous and relevant educational programs designed to prepare students for the next step in their lives as skilled, purposeful, and resilient young people.
- e. Measurable learning goals that reflect a variety of benchmarks, (including student well-being) grounded in state and local standards which reflect the specific needs of individual students.
- f. Enriched learning environments that provide more opportunities for students to learn within and from a larger, more diverse community of peers and teachers.
- g. Instructional programs that support students to set personal goals and shape the direction of their learning, including opportunities to contribute meaningfully to their school and to their communities.

- h. Learning opportunities that connect students to the world around them through internships, community-based learning, public service, and independent study.

Establishing full access for all students to the range of community and environmental resources that exist across our schools.

Fostering a unified and collaborative network of teachers, staff, and administrators dedicated to the success of every student in its care.

Preserving, enhancing, and creating school traditions that are rooted in and built upon what makes our communities special.

Maximizing operational efficiencies across our schools by optimizing class sizes, reducing duplication, and consolidating operational services through thoughtful planning and innovative programming.

Encouraging new patterns of parent and community engagement that continue to foster a sense of pride in our schools, communicate the scope and direction of the work being undertaken by our educators, promote what is unique and special about our district's educational programs, and celebrate our students' progress and success.

**SECTIONS 2 AND 3: STRENGTHENING STUDENT PERFORMANCE &
PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITY**

Introduction:

In approaching the issue of strengthening academic performance and providing substantive equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities for all students, the Committee looked at the goal of achieving educational excellence in two ways:

- a. **Performance** – How students are actually performing academically across the district.
- b. **Programmatic Opportunity** – The equity in quality and variety of program opportunities afforded students across the schools serving the students of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield.

In our investigation, we found significant variations in both performance and programmatic opportunity for our students. We strongly believe that we need to invest to improve both performance and opportunity. The analyses that follows highlights the insights we uncovered on the educational and programmatic needs and challenges facing our schools in these areas.

A. STRENGTHENING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT/PERFORMANCE:

***“Leading Students to Achieve or Exceed the State’s Educational Quality Standards”
(Act 46 Goal #2)***

As the Committee noted in its Core Principles, a central goal of unification should be to create “Diverse learning opportunities that result in high levels of student achievement for all students.”

In the view of the Committee, maximizing student potential must be the central goal of any district unification among Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield. After examining the most recent **2016 Smarter Balanced Testing Data (SBAC)** (*See Appendix 7*) and assessing the educational opportunities and challenges currently shaping the work of our schools, the Committee found:

- Noticeable variability in student performance outcomes within and between the schools that make up our three autonomous PreK-12 school districts. (*See Figures 1 and 2.*)

2016 Smarter Balanced Test Results – Cabot/Danville/Twinfield					
English - % Proficient and Above					
Grade		Cabot	Twinfield	Danville	Vermont
3	All	25%	74%	64%	54%
4	All	43%	48%	26%	54%
5	All	47	64%	43%	58%
6	All	15%	48%	70%	56%
7	All	71%	65%	64%	57%
8	All	67%	66%	72%	58%
11	All	64%	50%	68%	57%

Figure 1

2016 Smarter Balanced Test Results – Cabot/Twinfield/Danville					
Math - % Proficient and Above					
Grade		Cabot	Twinfield	Danville	Vermont
3	All	13%	65%	72%	56%
4	All	43%	59%	47%	50%
5	All	27%	18%	34%	43%
6	All	15%	37%	47%	41%
7	All	71%	27%	56%	46%
8	All	33%	24%	48%	44%
11	All	36%	22%	47%	38%

Figure 2

Finally, in comparing our students' academic performance against the best in the state, we also found room for improvement. *(See Figure 3.)*

**Vermont Smarter Balanced Testing Results 2016
Top Ten/Twenty Schools Testing Results**

Grade	English ALL Top 10	English ALL Top 20	Math ALL Top 10	Math ALL Top 20
3	83-96%	77-96%	81-92%	79-92%
4	80-89%	75-89%	81-90%	75-90%
5	84-96%	78-96%	73-85%	64-85%
6	80-94%	75-94%	73-89%	63-89%
7	77-94%	73-94%	67-85%	62-85%
8	80-94%	77-94%	68-82%	63-82%
11	71-82%		48-67%	

Figure 3.

Note: This Chart shows the percentage of students who scored proficient or above of the ten (and twenty) highest scoring public schools in Vermont for all students and for lower income students (FRL = Free or Reduced Lunch)

B. ENHANCING PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITY:***“Providing Substantive Enhancement in the Quality and Variety of Educational Opportunities”
(Act 46, Goal #1)***

After analyzing the elementary program offerings in Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield, it was discovered that there were differences in student access to: **(See Appendix 5)**

- **Foreign Language** – No instruction in Cabot and Twinfield at grade 6; Spanish only in Cabot grades 7&8.
- **Design and Tech Ed Studies** – Offered only in Twinfield (7&8) and Danville at grades 6,7,8.
- More extensive offerings in **Music** (individual instruction, Band, and Jazz band) at Cabot in grades 7&8.

While these differences in instructional opportunity are not extensive, they do represent the need for a board and community discussion in a new unified district concerning the breadth and scope of curricular offerings in the unified arts in each elementary school in order to ensure equity of opportunity for every student in the new district. **(See Article 16 in Proposed Articles of Agreement)**

In our high schools, the Committee viewed the unique curricular profiles of each district’s high schools as a strength to be built upon, despite the fact that curricular offerings vary from school to school, by restructuring and coordinating the delivery of these programs and insuring student access through a system of intra-district choice, as well as making it possible for high school students to take courses at either of the unified district’s two remaining high school programs during the course of their high school career. **(See Articles 14 and 16 in Proposed Articles of Agreement)**

Core Findings:

As a result of our analysis and discussions, we believe that these differences in programmatic opportunity must be addressed along with the earlier differences in student performance noted in this report as a central part of any plan for unification.

To that end, we believe that it is important to assert from the beginning that "equity" does not mean "exactly the same." We expect schools in a new unified district to innovate, to be different, and to make specific investments which provide different programmatic offerings. However, we also want to ensure that we are offering our students a core set of educational opportunities and the best possible match between their interests and abilities in the programs we do offer.

Core Recommendations:

As a result, we have crafted two major recommendations in this plan to address these issues through:

- a. A projected **investment** in restructuring the delivery of high school programs in the new district (paired with the operational efficiencies that come with restructuring to fund these investments).
- b. Policies on Intra-district **school choice**, which will allow families to self-select which high school campus/program is the best match for their children.

A. Restructuring and Investment

As part of the research of this committee, we undertook a thorough investigation to determine the most effective program configurations/offering and the best utilization of existing facilities across our three campuses to meet the needs of our high school students. All of our current schools have the capacity to serve more students. This challenge attributable to declining school enrolments in our schools create real, ongoing fiscal challenges to our communities in providing sustainable, affordable, and quality educational programs to our students. **To that end, the Committee has proposed a plan to restructure our current high school configuration by closing Cabot High School and operating two autonomous high school programs for all students in the new unified union district: one at Danville High School and one at Twinfield High School. All high school students across the new unified union would be able to choose which of the two schools to attend according to intra-district choice policies that would be adopted by the new unified union school board prior to the operating date of the new district.**

{Note: See Section 4: Restructuring Opportunities due to Unification, Page 20}

We clearly need to invest in our students and programs. At the same time, we believe strongly in "funding the journey" through operational efficiencies found in merging into a new unified district and supervisory union. This committee would charge the new board with further exploring the restructuring recommendations made in this report and developing a comprehensive **investment plan** in curriculum, instruction, programming, student support, and infrastructure to both increase student performance and address the current differences in educational opportunities.

This committee believes small differences between campuses are not major issues (and in fact represent great points of uniqueness). However, we also believe over the long term this district will need a unified plan on the expectations of "core" curriculum to be offered at each campus and specific variations which would be encouraged in the spirit of innovation and campus differentiation.

B. Intra-District School Choice

This Committee also believes that our district can achieve much more together than separately. To achieve the goals of maximizing educational opportunities for all students, fostering local innovation, and providing greater access to unique educational programming, this committee recommends that the new Board of School Directors develop policies, for offering intra-district choice at the high school level, (along with reasonable access to transportation) to the families/guardians of secondary students within the new unified district. We believe this will allow for continued investments, differentiation, and uniqueness at each high school campus, while at the same time unlocking a new set of educational opportunities for students and families.

Final Reflections on Strengthening Student Performance and Programmatic Opportunity

Clearly each of our schools has a unique profile of educational strengths and opportunities. **(See Exploratory Report, Appendix 15)**. However, each has operational and instructional challenges that require creative, thoughtful, and focused attention/support if our young people are to reach their true potential, and if our schools are to rank with the best in Vermont. Taken together, every recommendation that follows is designed to address issues of instructional cohesiveness, equity and opportunity and therefore enhance the well-being and performance of every young person in our care.

The Committee believes that the creation of a single unified school board will create new and enhanced opportunities in strategic investment, governance, and accountability PreK-12 to address both the existing and emerging needs of students, as well as, the educational goals central to Act 46. The Committee believes this can best be achieved by a unified union district that strives:

In our elementary schools to:

1. Equalize opportunities in all elementary schools for:
 - Technology access and programming.
 - Instruction in World Languages, Performing and Visual Arts, Health, Wellness, and Physical Education
2. Continue working to create core instructional programs whose goal is ensuring that all students, consistent with their individualized learning plans, will reach or exceed proficiency in local and state assessments by 2021.

In our high schools to:

- a. Graduate students on the basis of proficiency in and mastery of established core skills and content – students who are literate, informed citizens ready for the next step in their lives, whether that be post-secondary studies; career, technical, or vocational education; military service; or the work force.
- b. Offer multiple pathways towards graduation that address the needs and aspirations of a diverse student body.
- c. Ensure that all students are critical thinkers, able to communicate and share their ideas effectively.
- d. Offer every student a well-rounded academic experience (humanities, math, and science; arts and foreign languages; life and technical skills, etc.), as well as a diverse range of co-curricular activities/offering (athletics, clubs and performing arts).
- e. Offer advanced and extended/enhanced learning opportunities that address student needs and interests across all curricular areas. (Advanced Placement; Dual Enrollment)
- f. Enable cross-disciplinary learning activities.
- g. Offer vibrant, service learning programs that foster within every student, both civic values and the requisite leadership skills to make a difference in their communities.

Across the district to:

Develop and support educational programs that:

- a. Result in innovative schools that “break the mold.”
- b. Ensure academic excellence as measured by a range of objective measures including, but not limited, to state assessments, SAT/ACT scores, matriculation rates and college acceptances.
- c. Provide opportunities for students of different ages to learn and work together – e.g. older and younger students sharing their experience – working with and learning from one another.
- d. Foster within students a sense of compassion, respect, and empathy towards others.
- e. Extend student learning into the world through vibrant partnerships and place-based learning that takes advantage of what is unique about our local communities, cultural heritage and land.
- f. Renews its commitment to graduating citizens who understand the fundamental principles and structures that define and support the operation of a democratic, civil society – civic education and the history of America’s political institutions.
- g. Teach and nurture within students the habits of mind and heart essential to academic and personal success.
- h. Engage and challenge students to do their best.

Develop and support instructional strategies that:

- a. Enable students to progress in their learning in accordance with their specific needs, interests, learning styles, and personal goals.
- b. Differentiate according to student needs and provide the appropriate combination of personal and instructional intervention, remediation and/or enhancement.

- c. Foster creativity and appreciation for the arts through curricular and co-curricular programs.
- d. Create personal resiliency and constructive responses to adversity and academic challenge.
- e. Develop skills in personal inquiry, collaboration and mutual problem-solving.
- f. Foster life-long learning in students.
- g. Utilize experiential/hands-on, project-based learning strategies.
- h. Prepares students for the creative, productive, responsible use and ethical application of current and emerging technologies including their impact on society.

Foster a safe, supportive, nurturing learning environment that:

- a. Creates opportunities for students to form strong relationships across grade levels.
- b. Ensures and protects every student's right to learn, free of distraction or personal harassment.
- c. Celebrates the diverse contributions of every student, as well as, the differences that make every student unique.
- d. Communicates to students the highest expectations for academic achievement, compassionate behavior, and personal responsibility, and provide the requisite supports for helping them achieve those goals.
- e. Is engaging and fun.

Establish a shared, unified educational vision that supports:

- a. Coordinating and sharing best practices across the district's schools.
- b. Exploring new and emerging instructional models for addressing the needs of all children.

Summary Conclusion:

In summary, this committee sees tremendous potential for improving learning opportunities and the performance outcomes of our students. There is no reason we should accept differences in achievement for students who live within miles of each other.

Together, we believe that we can construct a unified PreK-12 educational system which maximizes the potential of all our students through, ***“Enriched learning environments that provide more opportunities for students to learn within and from a larger, more diverse community of peers and teachers.”***

SECTION 4: RESTRUCTURING OPPORTUNITIES DUE TO UNIFICATION

“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”

(Act 46, Goal #3)

Introduction:

One of the potential benefits of district unification is the opportunity to evaluate the current instructional delivery models that define our configuration of school programs to more effectively achieve the central goals of Act 46.

In examining the current utilization of teachers throughout the supervisory union vs. student enrollment patterns, it became clear that the student/teacher ratios at many grade levels stand in need of optimization in order to most effectively utilize our communities’ available resources.

As noted earlier in this report our high schools, in particular, have the capacity to serve more students than they currently are serving based on the enrollment patterns in each individual school. This makes achieving a quality education more costly than it otherwise might be if existing schools were restructured to better serve the needs of students and taxpayers alike.

With these factors in mind, the committee explored 14 potential “models” for restructuring the delivery of a PreK-12 education built upon our existing programs and schools. After considerable deliberation, these options were narrowed first to five and then to two, including an additional option for submitting an alternative plan to the State Board. Using the feedback garnered through community forums, these three options were narrowed finally to one. The committee’s work in narrowing these options focused primarily on finding the best configuration for delivering an enhanced high school program to every student in a unified district.

These models included:

1. Continuing to operate three autonomous high school programs as they are currently structured at Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield.
2. Continuing to operate three high school programs at Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield, but restructure the program offerings at each school to establish unique magnet programs at each school to eliminate program duplication and expense, and allow students to choose which school best met their educational needs.
3. Creating one high district school with 2-3 campuses, each with a different curricular focus/speciality where students would study. This model would result in students spending part of their high school career studying at each campus.

4. Closing Cabot High School and giving all high school students the choice to select one of the two remaining high schools as their school of choice.
5. Closing Cabot High School but retaining a Project-Based Learning Institute at that campus which any student in the new unified union district could choose to attend as a means for meeting their core graduation requirements.

Each model (as well as the original 14) was evaluated in terms of its capacity to:

- A. Provide sustainable and more affordable educational programs and avoid, potentially, the necessity of facing the difficult prospect of closing any school should enrollments continue to decline or program costs become simply unaffordable in the eyes of taxpayers.
- B. Better utilize existing teachers and resources throughout the district to:
 - i. Strengthen instruction for every student.
 - ii. Enhance program opportunity for all our students at a more affordable cost for taxpayers.

In assessing each of these options, the committee began by noting the unique educational strengths of each of the three existing PreK-12 schools in Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield. **(See Appendix 1)**

In addition, the Committee considered the core feedback from each of the community forums held in January at the Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield schools. The key issues expressed by community members at those forums included:

1. Cost as a key consideration.

- People hope for cost savings
- They are worried that costs could go up

2. The hope that students will have more options.

- More academic options for high school students, including a variety of learning opportunities that work for students with different learning styles
- Expanded extracurricular options
- Broader social network and diversity of peer group

3. The concern of community members about change and the unknown.

- Would this really increase opportunities?
- How would offerings be distinctive enough to offer students diverse options?
- Could this stabilize the system over time, allowing our high schools to be viable?
- Impact of statewide policy on budgets and other district issues

4. The concern about the loss of town identity and voice.

- What would the impact be on our civic life?
- Right now there is competition and misperceptions across schools.
- How would decisions be made moving forward?

5. The impact of transportation – getting students to different schools and/or programs.

- Distances, and visualization of the distance
- Costs
- Implications for the length of the school day

Educational Opportunities and Challenges of each model:

1. *Restructuring Option 1: Maintain current high school programs*

Opportunities included:

- a. All three schools continue to operate Pre-k through grade 8 schools as they are now.
- b. Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield High Schools continue to operate, building on the existing strengths of those high schools.
- c. High school students from all four towns would be able to attend their choice of high school and might be able to take courses at another high school on a semester-by-semester basis – increased learning opportunities; larger cohort of peers with whom to study and learn.
- d. Maintain current extra-curricular programs and school identities.
- e. Transportation to and from each of the schools would be offered in the morning and afternoon.
- f. Co-curricular options, such as track, cross-country running, skiing, drama, would continue or expand at all three schools.
- g. Includes tax incentives, transition grant of \$150,000 and continuation of small schools grant of \$151,000.

Challenges Included:

- a. Operating three campuses would make coordinating instructional opportunities and optimizing class sizes more difficult – fewer operational cost savings, duplication in course offerings.
- b. The overall cost and creation of bus schedules that minimize the time students spent getting to their school of choice.
- c. Declining enrollments make operating three separated high schools less sustainable over time.

2. Restructuring Option 2: Create three magnet schools

Opportunities included:

- a. All three schools continue to operate pre-k through grade 8 schools as they are now.
- b. Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield High Schools continue to operate, but strategically begin moving, over time, to establish even more unique programming and instructional identities as the primary means for expanding educational opportunity across the district – schools would seek to avoid any program duplication except perhaps in core instruction.
- c. High school students from all four towns would be able to attend their choice of high school and might be able to take courses at another high school on a semester-by-semester basis - increased learning opportunities; larger cohort of peers with whom to study and learn.
- d. Maintain current extra-curricular programs and school identities.
- e. Transportation to and from each of the schools would be offered in the morning and afternoon.
- f. Co-curricular options, such as track, cross-country running, skiing, drama, would continue at all three schools.
- g. Includes tax incentives, transition grant of \$150,000 and continuation of small schools grant of \$151,000.

Challenges included:

- a. Operating three campuses would make coordinating instructional opportunities and optimizing class sizes more difficult – fewer operational cost savings.
- b. The overall cost and creation of bus schedules that minimize the time students spent getting to their school of choice.
- c. Declining enrollments make operating three separated high schools less sustainable over time.

3. Restructuring Option 3: Create one district high school with 2-3 campuses

Opportunities included:

- a. All three schools continue to operate Pre-k through grade 8 schools as they are now.
- b. Twinfield, Danville, and Cabot High Schools are unified into one operating, diploma-granting high school offering the best programming from all three schools.

- c. Twinfield Union and Danville High campuses (and possibly Cabot's) would continue to offer instruction, maintaining the existing strengths of those high school programs.
- d. Combined athletic and extra-curricular opportunities – greater competitive edge?
- e. High school students from four towns would be able to attend any campus and could choose to move between campuses on a semester-by-semester basis as they completed their requirements for graduation - increased learning opportunities; larger cohort of peers with whom to study and learn.
- f. Transportation to and from each of the schools would be offered in the morning and afternoon.
- g. Includes tax incentives, transition grant of \$150,000 and continuation of small schools grant of \$151,000.

Challenges Included:

- a. The challenge of creating one high school identity/culture – e.g. one school, one set of teams, one graduation, etc.
- b. Increased competition for participation in varsity sports and other extra-curricular activities.
- c. The overall cost and creation of bus schedules that minimize the time students spent getting to various campuses.
- d. Additional transportation needed to get students to after school activities if they not being held at the campus you are attending.
- e. School leadership – One leadership team administering three separate campuses.
- f. Operating three campuses would make coordinating instructional opportunities and optimizing class sizes more difficult.

4. *Restructuring Option 4: Close Cabot High School; maintain schools at Danville and Twinfield*

Opportunities included:

- a. All three schools continue to operate pre-k through grade 8 schools as they are now.
- b. Twinfield Union and Danville High Schools continue to operate, building on the existing strengths of those high schools.
- c. Cabot High School, grades 9 – 12, would no longer operate, but plans would be made to integrate more project-based instructional programs at Danville and Twinfield. High school students from all four towns would be able to attend either Danville or Twinfield Union High Schools and might be able to take courses at the other high school on a semester-by-semester basis - increased learning opportunities; larger cohort of peers with whom to study and learn.

- d. Transportation to and from each of the schools would be offered in the morning and afternoon.
- e. Co-curricular options, such as track, cross-country running, skiing, drama, chess could expand at Danville and Twinfield.
- f. Realizing significant savings in operational expenses, particularly at the high school level, that could be used to enhance existing instruction, ensure equity of educational opportunity, and/or restrain current and future trends in educational spending and tax rates.**
- g. Includes tax incentives, transition grant of \$150,000 and continuation of small schools grant of \$151,000.
- h. Making the unified district's two remaining high schools more sustainable in the face of uncertain funding and declining enrollments.

**** For a thorough examination of the operational costs and benefits of district unification and restructuring the current delivery of high school programs in a new unified district see Part C, page 23 of this report.**

Challenges included:

- a. The loss of a cherished and valued high school program in Cabot and a sense of community identity.
- b. Increased competition for participation in varsity sports and other extra-curricular activities, perhaps offset by a greater range of extra-curricular activities and teams offered at each of remaining high schools
- c. The overall cost and creation of bus schedules that minimize the time students spend getting to their school of choice.

5. *Restructuring Option 5: Close Cabot High School; maintain schools at Danville and Twinfield and a Project-Based Learning Institute at Cabot.*

Opportunities included: Same as Option 4, with the addition of:

- a. A special instructional institute for high school students located at the Cabot School dedicated to an integrated program of project-based learning designed to initially serve approximately 30 students from across the new district and to take advantage of the Cabot School Performing Arts Center (CSPAC) and a robust technology infrastructure. The CSPAC building is a community-rooted resource, providing a flexible black-box theater, performance, and academic presentation space.

Additional challenges included

- a. The cost of maintaining a special institute thereby lowering the operational savings projected in option number 4.
- b. Uncertainty over enrollment at the Institute.

- c. The lack of consensus about the status of the Institute as a diploma granting school – Would the institute be a program or a school?

Preferred Restructuring Model – Option 4

After due deliberation, the Committee elected to recommend Option 4 to its voters - closing Cabot High School, maintaining but coordinating and enhancing the existing high school curricular and extra-curricular programs at Danville and Twinfield High Schools, developing policies on intra-district choice that would allow high school students to select the secondary school program that better meets their particular interests and needs (as well as, exploring the introduction of intra-district choice PreK-8) (**See Article 14**), and charging the new unified board to:

“Initiate a district-wide curriculum and instructional planning process prior to the opening of school in August 2018 to explore the most effective way to:

- a. Coordinate instructional programs at the high school level,
- b. Offer project-based learning activities and programs for students across the district.
- c. Create, before the first year of operation, a plan to provide a smooth transition for high school students moving to a new campus.” (**See Article 16**)

The Committee believes that this option is the best means for:

- a. Building upon the spirit of educational innovation and instructional development already going on in our schools
- b. Ensuring the sustainable delivery of a quality education for every student in the communities of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield.
- c. Enhancing/Expanding the range and scope of educational opportunity for every student served by the new district.
- d. Providing for the delivery of a more uniform core of educational experiences, PreK-12.
- e. Creating a larger more diverse cohort of students (and teachers) that would better serve the educational and developmental needs of our children.
- f. Realizing significant savings in operational expenses through the unification of central office services and the optimization/coordination of existing programming, particularly at the high school level, that could be used to enhance existing instruction, ensure equity of educational opportunity, and/or restrain current and future trends in educational spending and tax rates.**
- g. Creating new patterns of professional collaboration, support, and development between and among our teachers, administrators, and support staff.
- h. Providing unified structures for governance and educational leadership grounded in new, district-wide patterns of strategic planning, accountability, transparency, and leadership reflecting the collective aspirations of students, parents, and taxpayers across the new district.

**** For a thorough examination of the operational costs and benefits of district unification and restructuring the current delivery of high school programs in a new unified district see Part C, page 23 of this report.**

SUMMARY THOUGHTS:

For the Committee, the key point is that without merging, this or any other future plan for creating greater educational opportunity through a more efficient use of existing resources is significantly more difficult under the laws that govern the operation of school districts in Vermont.

In addition, a decision not to merge into a single unified union means that individual districts of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield will have to address the ongoing challenge of maintaining strong educational programs in the face of uncertain enrollments and rising costs without the resources and/or educational support of neighboring communities.

Finally, it is worth noting that local school districts throughout Vermont that elect not to merge or that are unable to craft a suitable plan for their districts' unification are required under the law to submit a proposal for an **Alternative Plan/Structure** detailing how they intend to meet the goals of Act 46 under current law by November 2017. *(Note the legislature is considering amending the law to move that date back.)*

In addition to addressing the goals of Act 46, **Alternative Plans** must address the following requirements:

A supervisory union composed of multiple member districts, each with its separate school board, can meet the State's [education] goals, *particularly* if:

1. The member districts **consider themselves to be collectively responsible** for the education of all PreK-12 students residing in the supervisory union;
2. The S.U. operates in a manner that maximizes efficiencies through economies of scale and the flexible management, transfer, and **sharing of nonfinancial resources** among the member districts;
3. The S.U. has the **smallest number of member school districts** practicable, and
4. The combined average daily membership of all member districts is not less than 1,100.
5. A Preferred Structure is **not possible/practicable or not the best model**; The alternative proposal is the best means.

By 2019, the Agency of Education is required to evaluate these proposals against the requirements of the law and the matrix of unmerged districts existing at that time and recommend to the State Board, for its approval, a state-wide plan for school governance.

As the Committee sees it, the opportunity to secure our future is now – not to wait for the creation of a “state-wide plan” that may or may not reflect our best interests by potentially requiring our districts to merge without incentives with neighboring districts outside the frame of this study, that may or may not share our educational priorities or aspirations, under Articles of Agreement that may or may not reflect our best interests.

**SECTION 5: PROMOTING OPERATIONAL TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
(ACT 46, GOAL 4)**

The Committee identified the following operational and governance recommendations that a unified board should undertake to more effectively promote operational transparency and accountability.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a. Establish a clear, unified system of governance.
- b. Attract the very best educators to our district, by offering competitive salary packages and supporting their personal growth and development with engaging and meaningful professional development opportunities and to achieve this goal in a manner that is fiscally responsible and attentive to the values of community members.
- c. Support class sizes that foster effective learning environments.
- d. Create communication and marketing strategies that ensure that our district's educational opportunities and programs are recognized throughout Vermont as nurturing, rigorous, and competitive - a place to which families will want to move, live and raise their children.
- e. Develop long-term, school development strategies that respond to the needs and aspirations of our students, teachers, and staff and ensure the quality and fiscal sustainability of our schools.
- f. Consolidate the management of operations including building maintenance, custodial, technical, health services and food services to allow administrators to focus more on the educational needs of their schools.
- g. Streamline administrative services to eliminate redundancy in state and federal reports, audits, budget development, and data collection.
- h. Offer programs that provide value to the community at a cost that communities are willing to support.

GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a. Develop a unified educational mission (PreK-12).
- b. Establish standards for educational performance and Board practices.
- c. Responsibly enhance educational opportunities within the context of current, available resources.
- d. Preserve and strengthen policies that put children first and to do so at a cost that is both sustainable and affordable.

SECTION 6: PROVIDING A QUALITY EDUCATION AT A COST THAT PARENTS, VOTERS, AND TAXPAYERS VALUE (ACT 46 GOAL 5)

The Committee believes that achieving this goal depends upon creating within the new unified district a real sense of community ownership, identity and culture. To this end, the Committee recommends that the new Board work to:

- a. Create a sense of identity and culture across the new school district.
- b. Support strategies across the district that will foster new levels of parental and community involvement in our schools including meaningful opportunities to contribute to student learning (community volunteers; school/community partnerships).
- c. Provide extensive opportunities for community involvement in all matters that come before the board including: educational vision and goals, district policy, and budget.
- d. Support parents in becoming active, meaningful, and responsible partners in their children's education.

PART B: MAXIMIZING FINANCIAL/OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES
ACT 46 GOAL 3

During its study, the Committee identified the following opportunities for achieving and sustaining financial and operational efficiencies through unification.

- I. State Tax Incentives over 4 years; Merger Implementation Grants**
- II. Large Scale Purchasing/Contract Negotiation with Private Vendors**
 - a. Technology
 - b. Books & supplies
 - c. Maintenance needs
- III. Shared Administrative, Staffing, and Service Delivery Models**
 - a. Coordinate teaching/staffing assignments (responding to changing school demographics, program, and building needs)
 - b. Eliminate administrative redundancy
 - c. Streamline existing service models (transportation, maintenance)
 - d. Coordinate financial administration/reduce bureaucracy
 - i. One audit instead of five.
 - ii. Board services/support (stenographer, legal, dues, etc)
 - iii. Purchasing process
 - e. Increase efficiency in state and federal data collection and reporting
 - f. Coordinate use of facilities
- IV. Further Collaboration of Special Education and Behavioral Management Services**
 - a. Review of out-of-house vs in-house delivery models and opportunities
 - b. Alternative program delivery
- V. Asset Coordination**
 - a. Transportation
 - b. Buildings and grounds
 - c. Deferred maintenance
 - d. Long-term capital planning
 - e. Food-service

**PART C: FINANCIAL COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS:
SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL COST SAVINGS; OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES,
REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS (STATE INCENTIVES); AND ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES
DUE TO UNIFICATION:**

PROJECTED COST SAVINGS DUE TO UNIFICATION OVER 5 YEARS:

1. Unification of Central Office Services: \$360,000/year (ongoing)

The creation of a Side-by-Side Supervisory Union between Washington Northeast and Caledonia Central with the merging of two central offices into one, is estimated to save about ~\$633,000 union-wide. If the funds were attributed to each of the new unified districts that make up the new Supervisory union based on a comparison of their relative Average Daily Membership (number of students served) then the savings for Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield in year one (ongoing) would be approximately **\$360,000?** (57% of ADM) and the savings for Barnet, Walden, and Waterford would be approximately **\$273,000** (43% of ADM)

Potential Savings - Central Office Unification:	~\$633,000
Cabot, Danville, Twinfield:	~\$360,000
Barnet, Walden, Waterford:	~\$273,000

Potential Central Office Savings over five years = ~\$1,800,000 (See Appendix 11)

2. Restructuring Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield High Schools – Option 4: Close Cabot High School; maintain schools at Danville and Twinfield : \$174,597 per year (ongoing)

Reductions in Instructional Staff at Cabot High School:	\$321,523*
Elimination of High School Sports Programs	\$46,871
Reduction in Professional Development Costs	\$10,000
Close Two Satellite Buildings	\$35,660
Total Projected Savings for Option 4:	\$414,054

****Note: Saving in staff reductions adjusted to account for salary adjustments needed to create a unified bargaining agreement for the teachers in Cabot. (See Appendix 13)***

Additional Transportation Costs	\$70,000
Loss of Tuition Revenues	\$54,000
Cost of creating unified bargaining agreement for Danville teachers	\$115,457**
Total Projected expenses of Option 4:	\$239,457

Net Operational Saving – Option 4

\$174,597

**Note: Projected cost increase salary needed to create a unified bargaining agreement for the teachers in Danville. (See Appendix 13)*

Potential Savings Due to High School Restructuring over 5 years = ~\$872,985 (See Appendix 12)

3. Additional Savings through Maximizing Efficiencies:

.05% Operation cut in the growth rate of Educational Spending = ~13,000/year (ongoing)
1% Operation cut in the growth rate of Educational Spending = ~25,000/year (ongoing)

The financial model outlined in the next section was used to approximate these savings and to project the impact on future tax rates of realizing a modest reduction in the annual growth of budget and educational spending over the next 5 years of .5% due to maximizing the operational efficiencies outlined in this section of report for a new unified district.

Potential Operational Savings over five years = \$65,000 - \$125,000

TOTAL OPERATIONAL SAVINGS OVER 5 YEARS DUE TO UNIFICATION PLAN = ~2,737,985 - \$2,797,985

PROJECTED SAVINGS AND REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS DUE TO MERGER INCENTIVES:

1. Unified Tax Rate and Merger Financial Incentives:

The Committee estimated the impact the incentives embedded in Act 46 would provide for the communities that would make up the new district. The law provides for a set of incentives for those districts adopting consolidation. Using two different financial models (The MD Model and Town Share Model) the Committee found that over a five-year period, the committee found that the impact of a new unified tax rate the application of incentives (8 cents, 6 cents, 4 cents, and two cents) due to merging in FY19 along with the retention of small schools grants could result in an estimated reduction in total property taxes in Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield in the range of \$2,414,972 to \$3,847,597.

Note: See, "Part D – Financial/Tax Rate Projections" beginning on page 42.

2. Maintaining Existing Small School Grants:

Embedded within each financial model, is the projected impact of the Cabot School losing its small school's grant. Districts that receive small schools grants that fail to participate in an incentivized merger risk losing their small schools grants beginning in FY 2020. The criteria for maintaining these grants as an unmerged district are noted in *(Appendix 15)*.

Currently the Cabot School District receives a yearly grant of \$147,836 (FY'17);

Over the next five years, failing to participate in an incentivized merger (in this case a side-by side) could result in a total loss of this revenue for the Cabot School District of ~\$591,344 beginning in 2020.

<p>Total Cost Savings and Projected Revenues Due to Merger with Incentives over 5 years: \$2,414,972 - \$3,847,597</p>

<p>TOTAL PROJECTED SAVINGS/REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS OVER 5 YEARS DUE TO UNIFICATION PLAN: \$5,152,957 - \$6,645,582</p>
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(INCLUDES BOTH OPERATIONAL SAVINGS, UNIFIED RATE, AND MERGER INCENTIVES)

The Committee believes that these operational cost savings and the projected tax savings due to a new unified rate and incentives could be used to invest in the transition, improve school infrastructure, or reduce tax rates at the discretion of the new board. In addition, maintaining the districts' small schools grants, while providing no new revenue to the new unified district, is absolutely essential to the financial wellbeing of the Cabot School. Without these funds, Cabot would have to cut spending or raise revenues to maintain current programming.

Final Note: Only the merger incentives have been incorporated into the go forward financial model discussed in the next section of this report. The model does not utilize the projected operational savings outlined above since it is unknown how the new unified union district school board would choose to apply though savings.

FINAL FINANCIAL NOTES:**REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS DUE TO INCENTIVIZED MERGER:****1. Merger Implementation Grant: \$150,000**

To assist merging districts establishing a new supervisory union, the state has established a grant of \$150,000 to be used in support of setting up both new unified districts (Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield and Barnet, Walden, Waterford) within the new proposed supervisory union. To date \$40,000 of this grant has been used to complete the merger studies for each side of the proposed side-by-side. The utilization of the remaining funds (\$110,000) would be decided by the new supervisory union board.

FUTURE FACILITIES NEEDS AND CURRENT DEBT IN A UNIFIED DISTRICT:

During the course of its study, the Committee identified the following short (5 year) and long (5+ years) term capital/facility needs (buildings and technology) that would be facing the new unified district:

Cabot:

Air handler controls: \$45,000

Cafeteria roof: \$43,000

Gym building renovation \$ 2.6 M (est.)

Satellite renovation (ADA, roofing, siding, drainage, plumbing and mechanical) \$520,000+ per building (est) or replacement space as needed with new configuration \$3.8 - \$4.2M (est, including paving, grounds, etc.) **

** Under the current proposal which includes the closing of Cabot's high school program, the renovation of all the satellite buildings would no longer be needed to serve the remaining elementary and middle school students at the Cabot school.

(Note: Black River Design building and grounds assessment and draft plans available)

Danville: 5+ years - replace roof and 10 air exchange units

For IT Danville will need to replace: Hardware, Switches, Firewalls, Server, Computers for both staff and students, Some wiring upgrades to parts of the buildings

Twinfield:

Replace panel boxes: \$100,000 (over 4 years)

Paving project: \$90,000 (2018)

Boiler replacement: \$ 535,000 (approved- payments over 10 years)

Locker and bathroom renovations: \$50,000

Finally, each district in the proposed merger brings with it the following reserve funds and short/long term debt:

Short and Long Term Reserve Funds

Cabot: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$79,394 Reserve Fund, \$63,667 Capital Projects

Danville: **As of FY16 Audit:** -\$89,100 deficit (Covered with FY18 budget), Capital Reserve \$11,859

Twinfield: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$65,283 Reserve Fund, \$25,000 Capital Projects

Short and Long Term Debt

Cabot: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$235,298

Danville: \$0

Twinfield: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$696,201

PART D: FINANCIAL/TAX RATE PROJECTIONS:

Introduction:

The Homestead Tax Rate for a given school district (used to calculate local tax rates) is not based on the budgeted spending of an individual school district but on a spending figure identified in annual reports as the “education spending per equalized pupil” – this is the amount a district spends to educate a given student equalized across the entire state. While other factors come in to play, particularly the size of the property yield set each year by the State, changes in the rate of education spending per equalized student in each district is what drives changes in local tax rates.

Introduction - Current Spending Data:

1. FY’18 Education Spending per Equalized Pupil

In reviewing these projections, it is useful to remember that in any merger the starting point for understanding the tax consequences is to remember one key figure – the educational cost per equalized pupil for each district. That is the figure that determines the homestead tax rate (before the common level of appraisal is factored in to arrive at each community’s local tax rate). Generally speaking, in any merger the community with the higher educational cost per equalized pupil will see a reduction in their taxes and the community with the lower educational cost will see an increase in their taxes since the averaged cost per equalized pupil due to the merger will be somewhere in the middle – unless the unified district takes steps to cut spending moving forward. That is why the incentives are important, because they lower the tax rate over four years (8,6,4, and 2 cents) reducing the tax impact on the district with the lowest education cost per equalized pupil, smoothing out the transition.

In the case of a merger between Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield the key financial figures for FY’18, prior to any merger are:

Cabot:	\$17,636 (\$17,886 with penalty)
Twinfield:	\$16,752.46533
Danville:	\$16,133.98953

In such a merger, Cabot will see a reduction in its property taxes even without the incentives. Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield would see a marginal increase in tax rates due a unification without incentives. That said the incentives are large enough to address this situation with financial benefits accruing to all three communities.

Financial Model Projections

Important Caveats on Model Use:

- 1. These models were created for purposes of comparative illustrations, and under no circumstances should be relied upon to forecast future actual tax rates resulting, if and when, a merger occurs or does not occur.***
- 2. These models do not account for, nor are intended to account for policy decisions, management decisions and/or changes in any factor reflected in the model, now or over time.***

Model #1: The MD Model:

This financial model utilized in this study is designed to predict trend lines in future homestead tax rates through FY23 for the communities of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield and Plainfield using two distinct scenarios: (1) as a merged district; or (2) remaining three separate PreK-12 districts within their existing supervisory unions (the existing governance structures). The model projects:

- I. The trend lines in Educational Spending and Local Tax rates for a merged district beginning in **FY19** (Merged Scenario), and
- II. The trend lines in Educational Spending and Local Tax rates for these same districts should they remain as they are (No Change Scenario), and,
- III. The differences in tax rates between a Merged Scenario and a No Change Scenario by computing and comparing the total increases/decreases in tax liabilities through FY23.

Assumptions:

- A. The Model assumes that the new unified district would come into existence in FY19.
- B. The Model uses existing financial data from FY16 and FY17 from each individual district involved in this study for determining the baseline for educational spending, equalized pupils, education spending per equalized pupil, etc. for the new merged district.
- C. It considers the previous five-year average for the determining the change rates for education spending and equalized pupils, though individual districts can adjust these rates at their own discretion should they believe past trends to be an inaccurate predictor of future trends.
- D. The Model builds in the tax incentives associated with a Phase II merger over the first four years of the new district's existence. It also takes into account the 5% rate limit on

increases or decreases on the homestead property tax rate during that same time frame.

- E. The Merged Model leaves in place the hold-harmless provision on equalized pupil calculations (e.g. equalized pupil counts do not drop more than 3.5% per year) for every eligible district in the new merged district as well as the continuation of small schools grants to eligible districts.
- F. For, the No Change Scenario, hold-harmless and small school grants are phased out in accordance with the terms of Act 46. (Hold-Harmless FY21 and Small Schools Grants FY20)
- G. The Model's default setting projects the taxes on a **\$150,000 house**. That setting can be changed to project the potential tax impact on properties assessed at different values.
- H. The projected results in the current model assumes **no operational savings in year one due to unification** in the first year of operation; In addition, the projected growth in education spending used in the model for the new district is 3.76% - the aggregate total of the growth rates used for projecting the stand alone tax rates.. Therefore, the tax savings projected in the model come from the new unified rate and the tax incentives over the first four years of the new unified unions existence (8,6,4,2 cents off the homestead tax rate) built into the law.

*Note: The model was also used to project the impact on future tax rates of realizing a modest reduction in the annual growth of budget and educational spending over the next 5 years of .5% due to maximizing the operational efficiencies noted earlier in the report for a new unified district – that potential savings was estimated to be \$65,000; a 1% cut in the annual growth of education spending would result in an estimated savings of \$125,000. **Those savings are not reflected in the current trend lines shown by the Model in the results section that follows***

Commercial Tax Rates and Income Sensitive Tax Payers:

Note 1: *The Non-homestead rates (commercial and second-home owners) do not benefit from Act 46 incentives*

Note 2: *Tax Rate Projections/Trend Lines and Income Sensitivity Tax Payers:*

*These financial projections **do not specifically model for individuals who qualify for income sensitivity on their property taxes**, the specific tax savings due to the tax incentives on the homestead tax rate over 4 years (8,6,4,2 cents) granted to communities/districts that elect to merge. However, both Act 153 and Act 46 state that: **“The household income percentage shall be calculated accordingly”** in connection with both the tax rate decreases and the 5% protection available for each type of incentivized merger.*

*In short, those taxpayers whose education taxes are income sensitized **will receive** tax benefits from merger incentives. According to the AOE, homestead income sensitized taxpayers **will see the same proportional reduction in their education taxes that taxpayers, whose tax rates are based on property value, will see as a result of a merger that qualifies for tax incentives.***

Rates of Change:

The model allows the user to manipulate the rates of change in:

- a) Educational Spending for each district and the Middle/High School Union budget and for the new district as a whole.
- b) Equalized Pupils for each town and for the new district as a whole.
- c) Educational Grand List for each town. (In the current iteration of this model, the model left the GL unchanged (0%).

To determine a **starting place** for assessing projected rates of change in Educational Spending and Equalized Pupils, this Model **uses the previous five-year average change rate in Educational Spending and Equalized Pupil Counts based on the specific data from FY12 and FY17.**

The rates of change applied to the model were:

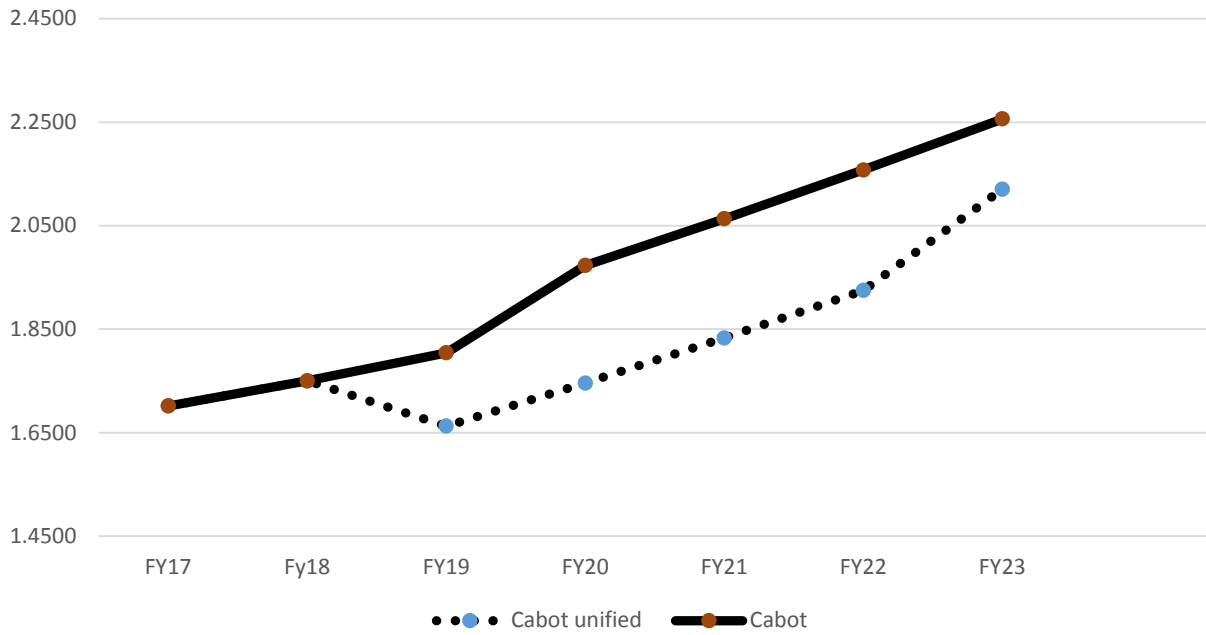
Changes:				
		Ed Spending Inc.	EqPupil Inc	GL Inc
	Cabot	2.46%	-2.02%	0%
	Twinfield	4.43%	-1.25%	0%
	Danville	4.91%	-1.18%	0%
	CTD	3.76%		

Results:

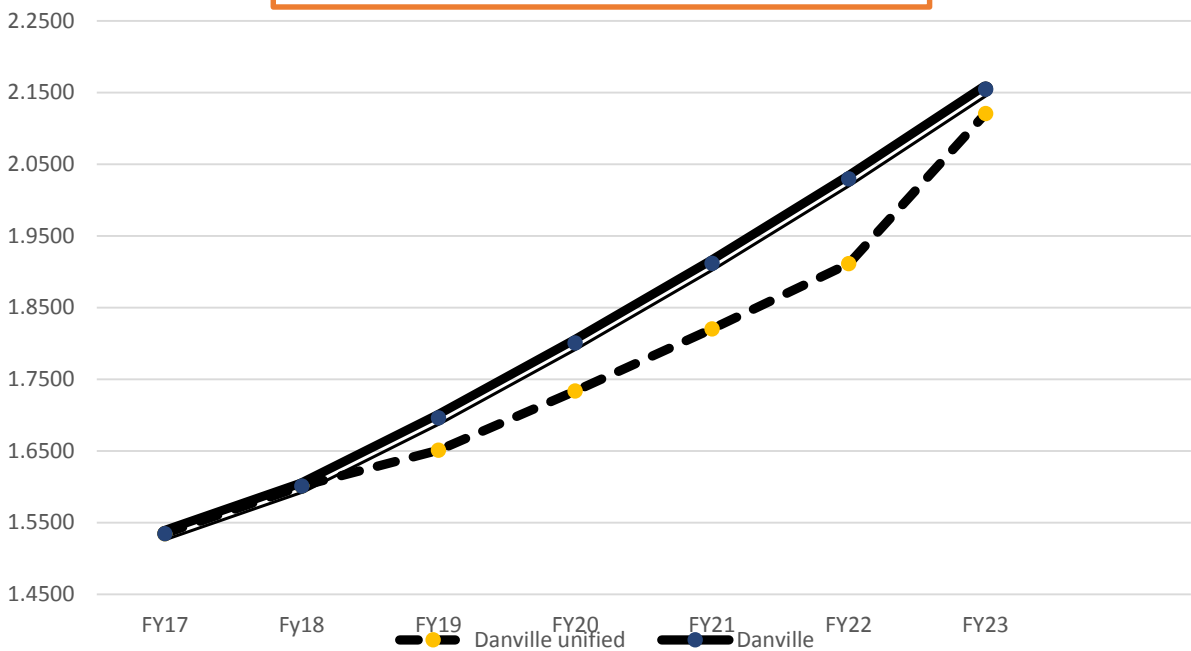
Unified Union; Model 1		FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	Total
Cabot									
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.7018	\$1.7503	\$1.6628	\$1.7459	\$1.8332	\$1.9249	\$2.1207	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$2,638,416	\$2,788,011	\$2,648,634	\$2,781,002	\$2,920,060	\$3,066,127	\$3,378,012	
	Tax savings due to unification	\$0	\$0	\$225,711	\$362,061	\$366,680	\$370,822	\$216,153	\$1,541,426
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,553	\$2,625	\$2,494	\$2,619	\$2,750	\$2,887	\$3,181	
	Tax savings on \$150K home	\$0	\$0	\$213	\$341	\$345	\$349	\$204	\$1,452
Marshfield									
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.6442	\$1.6626	\$1.6510	\$1.7336	\$1.8203	\$1.9113	\$2.1207	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$1,947,958	\$1,988,142	\$1,974,271	\$2,073,044	\$2,176,720	\$2,285,538	\$2,535,939	
	Tax savings due to unification	\$0	\$0	\$108,698	\$129,745	\$152,824	\$178,055	\$69,357	\$638,678
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,466	\$2,494	\$2,477	\$2,600	\$2,730	\$2,867	\$3,181	
	Tax savings on \$150K home	\$0	\$0	\$136	\$163	\$192	\$223	\$87	\$801
Plainfield									
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.6442	\$1.6626	\$1.6510	\$1.7336	\$1.8203	\$1.9113	\$2.1207	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$1,890,593	\$1,934,831	\$1,921,331	\$2,017,456	\$2,118,352	\$2,224,252	\$2,467,939	
	Tax savings due to unification	\$0	\$0	\$105,784	\$126,266	\$148,726	\$173,281	\$67,497	\$621,552
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,466	\$2,494	\$2,477	\$2,600	\$2,730	\$2,867	\$3,181	
	Tax savings on \$150K home	\$0	\$0	\$136	\$163	\$192	\$223	\$87	\$801
Danville									
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.5754	\$1.6012	\$1.6510	\$1.7336	\$1.8203	\$1.9113	\$2.1207	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$4,595,305	\$4,695,149	\$4,841,176	\$5,083,382	\$5,337,609	\$5,604,446	\$6,218,463	
	Tax savings due to unification	\$0	\$0	\$132,832	\$197,342	\$268,596	\$347,181	\$99,990	\$1,045,940
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,363	\$2,402	\$2,477	\$2,600	\$2,730	\$2,867	\$3,181	
	Tax savings on \$150K home	\$0	\$0	\$68	\$101	\$137	\$178	\$51	\$535
CTD TOTALS									
	Tax \$ Raised in Town	\$11,072,272	\$11,406,133	\$11,385,413	\$11,954,884	\$12,552,742	\$13,180,363	\$14,600,354	\$0
	Tax savings due to unification	\$0	\$0	\$573,025	\$815,413	\$936,825	\$1,069,338	\$452,997	\$3,847,597

No Change		FY17	Fy18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	Total
	Cabot								
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.7018	\$1.7503	\$1.8045	\$1.9732	\$2.0634	\$2.1577	\$2.2564	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$2,638,416	\$2,788,011	\$2,874,345	\$3,143,063	\$3,286,740	\$3,436,949	\$3,594,165	
	Tax savings due to unification								
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,553	\$2,625	\$2,707	\$2,960	\$3,095	\$3,237	\$3,385	
	Tax savings on \$150K home								
	Marshfield								
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.6442	\$1.6626	\$1.7419	\$1.8421	\$1.9481	\$2.0602	\$2.1787	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$1,947,958	\$1,988,142	\$2,082,969	\$2,202,789	\$2,329,544	\$2,463,593	\$2,605,296	
	Tax savings due to unification								
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,446	\$2,494	\$2,613	\$2,763	\$2,922	\$3,090	\$3,268	
	Tax savings on \$150K home								
	Plainfield								
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.5976	\$1.6626	\$1.7419	\$1.8421	\$1.9481	\$2.0602	\$2.1787	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$1,890,593	\$1,934,831	\$2,027,115	\$2,143,722	\$2,267,078	\$2,397,533	\$2,535,436	
	Tax savings due to unification								
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,446	\$2,494	\$2,613	\$2,763	\$2,922	\$3,090	\$3,268	
	Tax savings on \$150K home								
	Danville								
	Homestead Tax Rate	\$1.5349	\$1.6012	\$1.6963	\$1.8009	\$1.9119	\$2.0297	\$2.1548	
	Tax \$ (homestead)	\$4,4595,305	\$4,695,149	\$4,974,008	\$5,280,723	\$5,606,205	\$5,951,626	\$6,318,453	
	Tax savings due to unification								
	Tax \$ on \$150K home	\$2,363	\$2,402	\$2,544	\$2,701	\$2,868	\$3,045	\$3,232	
	Tax savings on \$150K home								

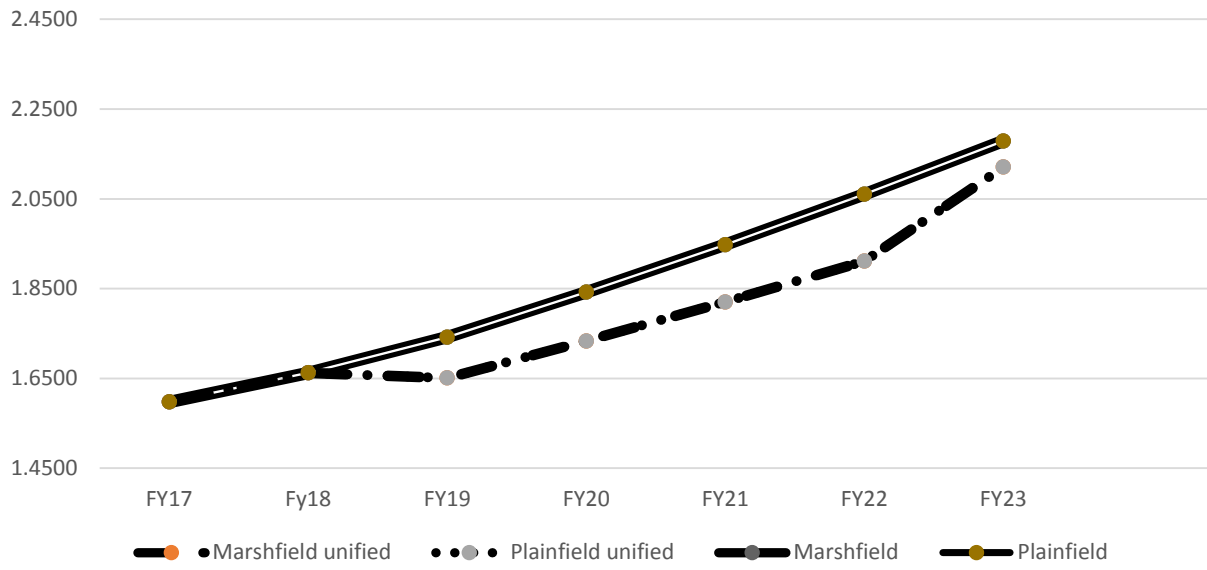
Projected Homestead Tax Rates - Cabot Unified vs. No Change



Projected Homestead Tax Rates - Danville Unified vs No Change



**Projected Homestead Tax Rates -Plainfield/Marshfield
Unified vs. No Change**



Summary Financial Observations for Model 1:

In reviewing the data from the financial model, the Committee noted that:

1. The numbers (equalized pupil counts, educational spending, yield figures, etc.) used in the model are not set in stone and a lot can happen with them. **The model was designed to predict trend lines not future tax rates.**
2. Becoming a unified district would result in tax incentives (8,6,4,2 cents over four years off the homestead tax rate).
3. All education spending and all equalized pupils throughout the Supervisory Union are combined to arrive at a unified homestead tax rate. The difference between the two trend lines (“no change” vs. merger) represent the tax savings in the homestead tax rate due to the incentives and the collective impact of a unified tax rate.
4. The property yield is the amount a district would be spending per pupil if its homestead tax rate was \$1.00. This year, the yield is \$10,076. The model is not designed to account for future variations in the yield so it is constant at \$10,076 throughout the modeling years. Using a constant value potentially creates a conservative estimate in future tax savings.
5. Local tax rates will be different depending on the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) in each community. The model is set for no change in the CLA over the next five years.
6. The current grand list information was used for each town. If the list changes the numbers will change. The model uses the same grand list totals throughout.
7. The growth in education spending rate used in the model for the new district is the aggregate of the individual districts growth rates: 3.76%. FY2019 is the assumed date that the new district comes into existence. The estimated educational spending per equalized pupil in year one is \$17,545.
8. Under Act 46, the homestead tax rate can only go up or down 5% from the current homestead rate. In the model, Cabot does not see the full benefit of the tax incentives because the homestead tax for Cabot with the incentives drops more than 5% during the first three years of unification. Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield get the full benefit and their homestead tax rate is prevented from annually rising more than 5% during the entire 4-year incentive period.
9. By FY2023, all the incentives are gone, and the homestead tax rate in the new unified district is the same for all communities. **The projected total tax savings for a unified district, due to the incentives and a unified tax rate, is approximately \$3,847,597 of the total taxes paid during the life of the model.**

Model #2: The Town Share Model

Introduction:

The Town Share Model, seeks to project the education tax paid by a Town under two scenarios – if the districts in this study elect to unify or if they choose to remain unmerged. The education tax or “share” is the total dollars contributed by the taxpayers in a given town in support of its schools after netting out the tax credits for income sensitive property taxpayers. It reflects the total education taxes the citizens of a town a town contribute based on their district’s homestead tax rate, adjusted for that town’s CLA, minus the tax incentives paid to individuals who file for income sensitivity concerning their property tax payments. As a result, it provides a different snapshot of the financial impact on a town’s education taxes. This model uses the same projected growth rates in education spending, equalized pupil counts, and impact of the state tax incentives as the MD Model.

Assumptions:

- A. The Model assumes that the new unified district would come into existence in FY19.
- B. The Model uses existing financial data from FY16 and FY17 from each individual Town involved in this study for determining the baseline for educational spending, equalized pupils, education spending per equalized pupil, education taxes, and tax credits for comparing the impact of unification versus remaining unmerged.
- C. It considers the previous five-year average for the determining the change rates for education spending and equalized pupils, though individual districts can adjust these rates at their own discretion should they believe past trends to be an inaccurate predictor of future trends.
- D. The Model builds in the tax incentives associated with a Phase II merger over the first four years of the new district’s existence. It also takes into account the 5% rate limit on increases or decreases on the homestead property tax rate during that same time frame.
- E. The Merged Model leaves in place the hold-harmless provision on equalized pupil calculations (e.g. equalized pupil counts do not drop more than 3.5% per year) for every eligible district in the new merged district as well as the continuation of small schools grants to eligible districts.
- F. For, the No Change Scenario, hold-harmless and small school grants are phased out in accordance with the terms of Act 46. (Hold-Harmless FY21 and Small Schools Grants FY20)

- G. The projected results in the current model assumes **no operational savings in year one due to unification** in the first year of operation; In addition, the projected growth in education spending used in the model for the new district is 3.76% - the aggregate total of the growth rates used for projecting the stand alone tax rates. Therefore, the tax savings projected in the model come from the new unified tax rate and the tax incentives over the first four years of the new unified unions existence (8,6,4,2 cents off the homestead tax rate) built into the law.

Commercial Tax Rates and Income Sensitive Tax Payers:

Note 1: *The Non-homestead rates (commercial and second-home owners) do not benefit from Act 46 incentives in this model either.*

Note 2: *Tax Rate Projections/Trend Lines and Income Sensitivity Tax Payers:*

*These financial projections **do not specifically model for individuals who qualify for income sensitivity on their property taxes**, the specific tax savings due to the tax incentives on the homestead tax rate over 4 years (8,6,4,2 cents) granted to communities/districts that elect to merge. However, both Act 153 and Act 46 state that: **“The household income percentage shall be calculated accordingly”** in connection with both the tax rate decreases and the 5% protection available for each type of incentivized merger.*

Results:

**Cabot Financial Projections
Cabot Share Model – No Merger**

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax Rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Cabot Share Over 2016 (\$11,961/cent)	Resulting Cabot Share
2016	\$1.6797			\$2,006,641
2017	\$1.7485	6.88 cents	\$82,292	\$2,088,933
2018	\$1.8781*	19.84 cents	\$237,306	\$2,243,947
2019 (projected)	\$1.8045	12.48 cents	\$149,273	\$2,155,914
2020 (projected)	\$1.9732	29.35 cents	\$351,055	\$2,347,696
2021 (projected)	\$2.0634	38.37 cents	\$458,944	\$2,465,585
2022 (projected)	\$2.1577	47.80 cents	\$571,736	\$2,578,377
2023 (projected)	\$2.2564	57.67 cents	\$689,791	\$2,696,432

No Merger - Total Projected Cabot Share 2019-2023:

\$12,244,004

Cabot Share Model – CDT Merger

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Cabot Share over 2016 (\$11,961/cent)	Resulting Cabot Share
2016	\$1.6797			\$2,006,641
2017	\$1.7485	6.88 cents	\$82,292	\$2,088,933
2018	\$1.8781*	19.84 cents	\$237,306	\$2,243,947
2019 (projected)	\$1.6628	(- 0.02) cents	(-\$239)	\$2,006,402
2020 (projected)	\$1.7459	6.62 cents	\$79,182	\$2,085,823
2021 (projected)	\$1.8332	15.35 cents	\$183,601	\$2,190,242
2022 (projected)	\$1.9249	24.52 cents	\$293,284	\$2,299,925
2023 (Projected)	\$2.1207	44.10 cents	\$527,480	\$2,534,121

* With penalty

CDT Merger - Total Projected Cabot Share 2019-2023:	\$11,116,513
No Merger - Total Projected Cabot Share 2019-2023:	\$12,244,004
CDT Merger – Total Projected Cabot Share 2019-2023:	\$11,116,513

Cabot Total Projected Savings Due to Unified Rate and Incentives: \$1,127,491
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Danville Share Model – No Merger

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax Rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Danville Share Over 2016 (\$21,015/cent)	Resulting Danville Share
2016	\$1.4821			\$3,583,858
2017	\$1.5754	9.33 cents	\$196,069	\$3,779,927
2018	\$1.6012	11.91 cents	\$250,289	\$3,834,147
2019 (projected)	\$1.6963	21.42 cents	\$450,141	\$4,033,999
2020 (projected)	\$1.8009	31.88 cents	\$669,958	\$4,253,816
2021 (projected)	\$1.9119	42.98 cents	\$903,225	\$4,487,083
2022 (projected)	\$2.0297	54.76 cents	\$1,150,781	\$4,734,639
2023 (projected)	\$2.1548	67.27 cents	\$1,413,679	\$5,267,537

No Merger - Total Projected Danville Share 2019 - 2023:

\$22,777,074

Danville Share Model – CDT Merger

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax Rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Danville Share Over 2016 (\$21,015/cent)	Resulting Danville Share
2016	\$1.4821			\$3,583,858
2017	\$1.5754	9.33 cents	\$196,069	\$3,779,927
2018	\$1.6012	11.91 cents	\$250,289	\$3,834,147
2019 (projected)	\$1.6510	16.89 cents	\$354,943	\$3,938,801
2020 (projected)	\$1.7336	25.15 cents	\$528,527	\$4,112,385
2021 (projected)	\$1.8203	33.82 cents	\$710,727	\$4,294,585
2022 (projected)	\$1.9113	42.92 cents	\$901,964	\$4,485,822
2023 (projected)	\$2.1207	63.86 cents	\$1,342,018	\$4,925,876

CDT Merger - Total Projected Increase in Danville Share 2019-2023: \$21,757,469

No Merger - Total Projected Danville Share 2019-2023: \$22,777,074

CDT Merger – Total Projected Danville Share 2019-2023: \$21,757,469

Danville Total Projected Savings Due to Unified Rate and Incentives: \$1,019,605

Marshfield Share Model – No Merger

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax Rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Marshfield Share Over 2016 (\$884/cent)	Resulting Marshfield Share
2016	\$1.5576			\$1,591,138
2017	\$1.6442	8.66 cents	\$7,653	\$1,598,791
2018	\$1.6626	10.50 cents	\$9,282	\$1,600,420
2019 (projected)	\$1.7419	18.43 cents	\$16,292	\$1,607,430
2020 (projected)	\$1.8421	28.45 cents	\$25,150	\$1,616,288
2021 (projected)	\$1.9481	39.05 cents	\$34,520	1,625,658
2022 (projected)	\$2.0602	50.26 cents	\$44,430	\$1,635,568
2023 (projected)	\$2.1787	62.11 cents	\$54,905	\$1,646,043

No Merger - Total Projected Marshfield Share 2019 - 2023:

\$8,130,987

Marshfield Share Model – CDT Merger

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax Rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Marshfield Share Over 2016 (\$884/cent)	Resulting Marshfield Share
2016	\$1.5576			\$1,591,138
2017	\$1.6442	8.66 cents	\$7,653	\$1,598,791
2018	\$1.6626	10.50 cents	\$9,282	\$1,600,420
2019 (projected)	\$1.6510	9.34 cents	\$8,257	\$1,599,395
2020 (projected)	\$1.7336	17.60 cents	\$15,558	\$1,606,696
2021 (projected)	\$1.8203	26.27 cents	\$23,223	\$1,614,361
2022 (projected)	\$1.9113	35.37 cents	\$31,267	\$1,622,405
2023 (projected)	\$2.1207	56.31 cents	\$49,778	\$1,640,916

CDT Merger - Total Projected Increase in Marshfield Share 2019-2023: \$8,083,773

No Merger - Total Projected Marshfield Share 2019-2023: \$8,130,987

CDT Merger – Total Projected Marshfield Share 2019-2023: \$8,083,773

\$21,757,469

Marshfield Total Projected Savings due to Unified Rate and Incentives: \$47,214
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Plainfield Share Model – No Merger

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax Rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Plainfield Share Over 2016 (\$4,132/cent)	Resulting Plainfield Share
2016	\$1.5576			\$1,498,355
2017	\$1.6442	8.66 cents	\$35,779	\$1,534,134
2018	\$1.6626	10.50 cents	\$43,386	\$1,541,741
2019 (projected)	\$1.7419	18.43 cents	\$76,153	\$1,574,508
2020 (projected)	\$1.8421	28.45 cents	\$117,555	\$1,615,910
2021 (projected)	\$1.9481	39.05 cents	\$161,355	\$1,659,710
2022 (projected)	\$2.0602	50.26 cents	\$207,674	\$1,706,029
2023 (projected)	2.1787	62.11 cents	\$256,639	\$1,754,994

No Merger - Total Projected Plainfield Share 2019 - 2023:

\$8,311,151

Plainfield Share Model – CDT Merger

Fiscal Year	Homestead Tax Rate	Increase over 2016 rate (cents)	Projected increase in Plainfield Share Over 2016 (\$4,132/cent)	Resulting Plainfield Share
2016	\$1.5576			\$1,498,355
2017	\$1.6442	8.66 cents	\$35,779	\$1,534,134
2018	\$1.6626	10.50 cents	\$43,386	\$1,541,741
2019 (projected)	\$1.6510	9.34 cents	\$38,621	\$1,536,976
2020 (projected)	\$1.7336	17.60 cents	\$72,723	\$1,571,078
2021 (projected)	\$1.8203	26.27 cents	\$108,548	\$1,606,903
2022 (projected)	\$1.9113	35.37 cents	\$146,149	\$1,644,504
2023 (projected)	\$2.1207	56.31 cents	\$232,673	\$1,731,028

CDT Merger - Total Projected Increase in Plainfield Share 2019-2023: \$8,090,489

No Merger - Total Projected Plainfield Share 2019-2023: \$8,311,151

CDT Merger – Total Projected Plainfield Share 2019-2023: \$8,090,489

Plainfield Total Projected Savings Due to Unified Rate and Incentives = \$220,662
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**Summary Observations on Projected Tax Rates due to Unification
and the Impact of State Tax Incentives Using Both Models**

Projected Total Education Taxes by Town 2019-2023

	MD Model	Town Share Model	Difference
Cabot	\$1,541,426	\$1,127,491	\$413,935
Danville	\$1,045,940	\$1,019,605	\$26,335
Marshfield	\$638,678	\$47,214	\$591,464
Plainfield	\$621,552	\$220,662	\$400,890
Total	\$3,847,597	\$2,414,597	\$1,432,999

**Projected Range of Unified District Savings Due to Unified Rate and Tax Incentives
\$2,414,972 - \$3,847,597**

Summary Observations:

The MD Model projects the impact of a new unified homestead rate and the application of state tax incentives over the next five years, but projects the total taxes paid in a Town based on the equalized value of homestead properties in that community. It assumes that every taxpayer's property taxes are based on the assessed value of their property/home. As noted in the description of the model, it cannot assess the tax savings for individuals whose property taxes are income sensitive, though it makes clear that they too will see their share of the property tax responsibility reduced by the same percentage as that afforded individuals whose taxes are solely based on the value of their homestead property. As a result, The MD Model **overestimates** the total tax savings by town.

That said, the model is able to estimate the tax/incentive benefit for an individual homeowner whose property taxes are based on the value of their home, due to unification.

Total Projected Tax Savings on a \$150,000 home over 5 years:

Cabot:	\$1,452.00
Danville:	\$535.00
Marshfield:	\$801.00
Plainfield:	\$801.00

The Town Share Model is designed to predict a Town's education taxes netting out the tax credits for income sensitive individuals in that community. It also predicts the potential savings (or difference between a merged and non-merged scenario) to a town's overall education tax due to a unified tax rate and the application of state incentives. However, this model is unable to predict the increased tax benefits afforded to income sensitive taxpayers due to unification and therefore underestimates the total tax benefits of a merger to a town's overall education taxes. Nor is it able to project the impact of a potential merger on the tax rates of an individual homeowner whose taxes are based sole on the value of their property.

The difference in the projected education taxes between the two models used in this over the next five years, appears to vary based on the percentage of taxpayers in each town that are income sensitive and eligible for tax credits. If every taxpayer's property taxes were based solely on the value of their home and property, the MD Model would be the most accurate. But that is not the case, and every town has a different percentage of taxpayers receiving tax credits. In this regard, the Town Share Model gives an import glimpse into what unification might or might not mean in terms of a town's total education tax moving forward.

Taken together, they provide two important snapshots of the tax trends that could result from choosing to merge or not merge the Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield School districts. In the interest of creating as clear a picture as possible on the potential tax implications of merging, the Committee has included both models in their report. Both provide a unique window into understanding the tax implications for citizens as they reflect on the financial implications of choosing to unify their school district's or remain unmerged.

PART E: TRANSITION PLANNING

Upon an affirmative vote of the electorates of the forming districts and upon compliance with 16 VSA – 706g, the CDT Unified Union School District shall exercise all of the authority which is necessary for it to prepare for full educational operations beginning on July 1, 2018.

The CDT Unified Union School District would, between the date of its first organizational meeting under 16 VSA – 706j and June 30, 2018, undertake all of the planning and related duties necessary to begin operations of the new unified union school district on July 1, 2018, including:

- a. Preparing for and negotiating contractual agreements;
- b. Preparing and presenting a budget to the voters for fiscal year 2019;
- c. Preparing for the CDT Unified Union School District annual meeting, March 6, 2018;
- d. Transacting any other lawful business that comes before the Board.

The authority exercised by the new CDT Unified Union School District shall not limit or alter the ongoing authority and/or responsibilities of the school boards that make up the current Supervisory Union which will remain in existence during the transition period for the purpose of completing any and all business not given under law to the new unified union district board. In essence, each individual district board would maintain its current authority until the new district becomes operational on July 1, 2018. The existing districts and supervisory union will remain in operation after July 1, 2018 only to conclude any business.

In summary, an affirmative vote of the electorate would also result in, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Employees throughout the current Supervisory Union offered continuing employment following the 2017-2018 school year, consistent with all legal requirements, would become employees of the new CDT Unified Union School District.
- b. All assets of the pre-existing districts would be transferred to the new unified union district for the sum of \$1.00 as of July 1, 2018.
- c. Debts and liabilities of the pre-existing districts and supervisory union would be transferred to the new unified union district as of July 1, 2018.
- d. Following the certification of the election results by the Agency of Education to the Secretary of State (30-45 days after the vote), an organizational meeting of the new

unified district would be convened by the Secretary of the Agency of Education or designee in accordance with Title 16, 706j.

- e. The newly elected members of the CDT Unified Union School District, consistent with statute, would begin the work of preparing for the district's first day of operations - hiring a superintendent, defining administrative and operational roles and responsibilities, establishing policy, negotiating contracts, developing budgets, providing transportation, and establishing new structures for community engagement.
- f. Through June 30, 2018, the three pre-existing boards would continue to govern their respective districts and/or schools. The existing districts and supervisory union will remain in operation after July 1, 2018 only to conclude any business.

**PART F: ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT
CDT UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Articles of Agreement
Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Unified Union School District**

The joint Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Act 46 Study Committee recommends the following Articles of Agreement by each necessary school district for the creation of a Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 unified union school district to be named provisionally the CDT Unified Union School District. *(See Article 18)*

Article 1. Necessary Forming School Districts

The School Districts of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield are all named necessary for the establishment of the CDT Unified Union School District. The above referenced school districts, if they vote to approve the proposal, are hereinafter referred to as the “forming districts”.

Article 2. Effect of Vote/Creation of New District

Conditional Approval:

The CDT Unified Union School District shall not be formed and the terms hereby voted shall not become effective unless one of the following additional conditions occurs:

The Unified District shall be formed and the terms hereby voted shall become effective on the date this article is approved by a majority vote of the electorate of each necessary district voting in a meeting for adoption of this article and said votes become final per 16 V.S.A. 706g, provided that votes approving this article shall not become effective unless and until the voters of Barnet and Waterford, and/or Barnet, Waterford and Walden vote to approve formation of the “Caledonia Cooperative Unified Union District” and said vote becomes final, then both new unified union school districts would be members of a new supervisory union and would meet the criteria of “Side-by-Side” mergers pursuant to 2012 Acts and Resolves No. 156.

The CDT Unified Union School District shall be formed and the terms hereby voted shall become effective if, under legislation enacted by the General Assembly during its 2017 Session, the Unified District would be eligible for the same tax rate reductions and other transitional assistance it would have received as one member of “Side-by-Side” merger pursuant to 2012 Acts and Resolves No. 156.

Article 3. Grades to Operate

The CDT Unified Union School District will continue to operate grades Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12.

In the event that the voters in all three districts elect to join the new unified school district, it is understood that the formal operations of Cabot High School (grades 9-12) will cease on July 1, 2018, and Cabot students along with all high school students throughout the new unified district will be eligible to attend the high school of their choice among the remaining two high schools in the new unified district (Danville High School or Twinfield High School) in accordance with the intra-district school choice policies established by the new unified district.

Article 4. Proposed New School Construction

No new schools or renovations are proposed at this time.

Article 5. Plan for First Year of Operation

The CDT Unified Union School District will provide for the transportation of students, assignment of staff, and curriculum that is consistent with the *practices/contracts*, collective bargaining agreements, and provisions of law that are in effect during the first year that the new Unified Union District is providing full educational services and operations.

The board will comply with the 16 VSA Chapter 53, subchapter 3, regarding recognition of the representatives of employees of the respective forming districts as the representatives of the employees of the union school district and will commence negotiations pursuant to 16 VSA Chapter 57 for teachers and 21 VSA Chapter 22 for other employees. In the absence of new collective bargaining agreements on the July 1, 2018, the Board will comply with the pre-existing master agreements pursuant to 16 VSA Chapter 53, subchapter 3. The Board shall honor all individual employment contracts that are in place in the forming districts on June 30, 2018 until their respective termination dates.

Article 6. Indebtedness of Member Districts

A. Capital Debt

The CDT Unified Union School District shall assume all capital debt as may exist on June 30, 2018, including both principal and interest, of the forming school districts that joined the new union district.

B. Operating Fund Surpluses, Deficits and Reserve Funds

The CDT Unified Union School District shall assume any and all operating deficits, surpluses, and fund balances of the forming districts that may exist on the close of business on June 30, 2018. In addition, reserve funds identified for specific purposes will be transferred to the CDT Unified Union School District and will be utilized by the new unified district in accordance with their original established purposes unless otherwise determined through appropriate legal procedures.

C. Restricted Funds:

The forming school districts will transfer to the CDT Unified Union School District any preexisting specific endowments, scholarships, or other restricted accounts, including student activity and related accounts, held by school districts that may exist on June 30, 2018. Scholarship accounts or similar accounts, held by the forming districts prior to June 30, 2018, that have specified conditions of use will be used in accordance with said provisions.

Article 7. Real and Personal Property

A. Transfer of Property to the Unified Union District:

No later than June 30, 2018, the forming districts will convey to the CDT Unified Union School District for the sum of one dollar, and subject to the encumbrances of record, all their school-related real and personal property, including all land, buildings, and content.

B. Subsequent Sale of Real Property to Towns:

1. Cabot and Danville

In the event that, and at such subsequent time as, the CDT Unified Union School District Board of Directors determines, in its discretion, that continued possession of the real property, including land and buildings, conveyed to it by either the Cabot School District or the Danville School District will not be used in direct delivery of student educational programs, the CDT Unified Union School District shall offer for sale such real property to the town in which such real property is located, for the sum of one dollar, subject to all encumbrances of record, the assumption or payment of all outstanding bonds and notes, and the repayment of any school construction aid or grants required by Vermont law, in addition to costs of capital improvements subsequent to July 1, 2018.

The conveyance of any of the above school properties shall be conditioned upon the town owning and using the real property for community and public purposes for minimum of five years. In the event the town elects to sell the real property prior to five years of ownership, the town shall compensate the Unified Union District for all capital improvements and

renovations completed after the formation of the Unified Union District prior to the sale to the town.

In the event a town elects not to acquire ownership of such real property, the Unified Union District shall, pursuant to Vermont statutes, sell the property upon such terms and conditions as established by the CDT Unified Union School District Board of School Directors

2. Twinfield Union – Marshfield and Plainfield

a. Joint Conveyance

In the event that, and at such subsequent time as, the CDT Unified Union School District Board of Directors determines, in its discretion, that continued possession of the real property, including land and buildings, conveyed to it by the Twinfield Union School District will not be used in direct delivery of student educational programs, the CDT Unified Union School District shall offer for sale such real property jointly to the towns of Marshfield and Plainfield, for the sum of one dollar, to be split equally between the two towns, subject to all encumbrances of record, the assumption or payment of all outstanding bonds and notes, and the repayment of any school construction aid or grants required by Vermont law, in addition to costs of capital improvements subsequent to July 1, 2018.

The conveyance of any of the above school properties shall be conditioned upon the towns jointly owning and using the real property for community and public purposes for minimum of five years. In the event the towns jointly elect to sell the real property prior to five years of ownership, the towns shall compensate the Unified Union District for all capital improvements and renovations completed after the formation of the Unified Union District prior to the sale to the towns.

In the event either one of the towns elect not to acquire ownership of such real property, the Unified Union District shall, pursuant to Vermont statutes, show offer sale to the remaining town as outlined in “2b” below:

b. Single Town Conveyance

In the event that, either Marshfield or Plainfield elects not to acquire the property offered in “2a” above, the CDT Unified Union School District shall offer for sale such real property to the remaining interested town, for the sum of one dollar, subject to all encumbrances of record, the assumption or payment of all outstanding bonds and notes, and the repayment of any school construction aid or grants required by Vermont law, in addition to costs of capital improvements subsequent to July 1, 2018.

The conveyance of any of the above school properties shall be conditioned upon the town owning and using the real property for community and public purposes for

minimum of five years. In the event the town elects to sell the real property prior to five years of ownership, the town shall compensate the Unified Union District for all capital improvements and renovations completed after the formation of the Unified Union District prior to the sale to the town.

c. No Town Conveyance

In the event neither town elects to acquire ownership of such real property offered under either “2a” or “2b”, the Unified Union District shall, pursuant to Vermont statutes, sell the property upon such terms and conditions as established by the CDT Unified Union School District Board of School Directors.

Article 8. Board of School Directors Representation

The Unified District Board of Directors shall be composed of nine (9) individuals elected by Australian ballot by the voters of the municipalities in which they reside. Each municipality within the Unified District shall be guaranteed at least two resident representatives.

Based on the 2010 census, the new unified union board will consist of two (2) representatives residing in and representing Cabot; three (3) residing in and representing Danville; two (2) residing in and representing Marshfield; two (2) residing in and representing Plainfield.

The Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield specific numbers of directors are consistent with current census figures. Each time there is a new decennial census, the proportionality of representation reflected in the specific numbers of directors allocated to each municipality shall be aligned to the new counts if necessary.

2010 Census Information:

Cabot:	1,433	22%
Danville:	2,196	34%
Marshfield:	1,588	25%
Plainfield:	1,243	19%
Total:	6,460	

Town	Representation	% Representation
Cabot:	2	22%
Danville:	3	33%
Marshfield:	2	22%
Plainfield:	2	22%

Article 9: Initial Directors Terms of Office

School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot for three year terms, except for those initially elected at the time of the formation of the new Unified District CDT Unified Union District). In the initial election of School Directors, the terms of office will be as follows:

	Term Ending March 2019	Term Ending March 2020	Term ending March 2021
Cabot	1		1
Danville	1	1	1
Marshfield		1	1
Plainfield	1	1	

The terms of the initial school directors indicated above will include the months in between the organizational meeting and the first annual meeting in 2018.

Nominations for the office of CDT Unified Union School Director representing a specific town shall be made by filing, with the clerk of that district/town proposed as a member of the Unified District, a statement of nomination signed by at least 30 voters in that district/town or one percent of the legal voters in the district/town, whichever is less, and accepted in writing by the nominee. A statement shall be filed not fewer than 30, nor more than 40 days prior to the date of the vote.

Pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. – 706j(b), directors initially elected to the new district shall be sworn in and assume the duties of their office.

Thereafter, members of the Board of School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot at the unified school district’s Annual Meeting, and nominations shall follow the procedures established in 17 VSA § 2681. Terms of office shall begin and expire on the date of the school district’s annual meeting. In the event the district’s annual meeting precedes Town Meeting Day, the Director’s terms shall expire on Town Meeting Day.

Article 10. Submission to Voters

The proposal forming the CDT Unified Union School District will be duly warned and presented to the voters of each town school district on June 20, 2017. The vote shall take place in each of the school districts by Australian ballot.

Article 11. Commencement of Operations

Upon an affirmative vote of the electorates of the forming districts and upon compliance with 16 VSA – 706g, the CDT Unified Union School District shall have and exercise all the authority which is necessary in for it to prepare for full educational operations beginning on July 1, 2018. The CDT Unified Union School District shall, between the date of its organizational meeting under 16 VSA – 706j and June 30, 2018, undertake planning and related duties necessary to begin operations of the new unified union school district on July 1, 2018, including preparing for and negotiating contractual agreements, preparing and presenting the budget for fiscal year 2019, preparing for the CDT Unified Union School District annual meeting, and transacting any other lawful business that comes before the Board, provided however, that the exercise of such authority by the CDT Unified Union School District shall not be construed to limit or alter the authority and/or responsibilities of the school districts that will form the new unified union school district and that will remain in existence during the transition period for the purpose of completing any business not given to the CDT Unified Union School District.

On July 1, 2018, when the CDT Unified Union School District becomes fully operational and begins to provide educational services to students, the school districts of the forming towns shall cease all educational operations and shall remain in existence for the sole purpose of completing any outstanding business not given to the CDT Unified Union School District under these articles and state law. Such business shall be completed as soon as practicable, but in no event, any later than December 31, 2018. Upon the completion of outstanding business or December 31, 2018, whichever date is earlier, the forming school districts shall cease to exist pursuant to 16 VSA §722.

Article 12. Australian Ballot Voting

The CDT Unified Union School District shall elect its school board members, vote the annual school district budget, and decide public questions by Australian ballot. Votes will be commingled as required by state law.

Article 13. Provision for Closure of a School

The New Unified Union District Board may not close any school conveyed to the New Unified Union District by a Forming District within the first four (4) years of operation of the New Unified Union District unless approved by voters in the town in which the building is located. After four (4) years of operation, the New Unified Union District may close a school conveyed to the New Unified Union District by a Forming District under the following conditions:

1. The Board shall hold at least three public hearings regarding the proposed school closure. At least one of the public hearings shall be held in the community in which the school is located; and

2. If after conducting public hearings, the Board of Directors intends to vote on whether to close a school, it shall give public notice of its intent to hold a vote on whether to close a school, stating the reason for the closure, at least ten days prior to the vote; and
3. Upon an affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the New Unified Union Board of Directors, including at least one representative from each of the towns that make up the new unified union school board; and
4. The closure shall be effective only if approved by a majority vote of each of the member towns voting at a special vote warned for this purpose. The votes shall be counted and reported by town, voting by Australian ballot.

Article 14. Intra-District Choice

Before July 1, 2018, the Board of School Directors shall develop policies for offering intra-district choice (PreK-12) to the families or guardians of students matriculating in grades for which the Unified District operates multiple buildings as soon as practicable.

Policies respecting choice shall consider issues including, but not limited to, transportation, socio-economic equity, proximity to the selected building, unity of siblings, and the capacities of receiving schools and sending schools.

Article 15. Community Input Policies

The New Unified Union Board shall provide timely and sufficient opportunity for local input on policy and budget development. Structures to support and encourage public participation within the New Unified Union District will be established by the New Unified Union Board of School Directors on or before July 1, 2018. These structures shall include but not be limited to local school councils that have an advisory responsibility in key areas, including but not limited to New Unified Union District's budget development and hiring of principals and operate in an advisory capacity.

Article 16. Instructional Planning/PBL Strategies

The new unified board shall initiate a district-wide curriculum and instructional planning process prior to the opening of school in August 2018 to explore the most effective way to

- d. Coordinate instructional programs at the high school level,
- e. Offer project-based learning activities and programs for students across the district.
- f. Create, before the first year of operation, a plan to provide a smooth transition for high school students moving to a new campus.

Article 17. Changing the Operating Structure of a School – Grades Offered

Permanently changing the operating structure of a school in the new unified union district for more than a single school year to address temporary fluctuations in enrollments may only occur under the following conditions:

1. Board shall hold at least three public hearings regarding the proposed changes. At least one of the public hearings shall be held in the community in which the school is located; and
2. If after conducting public hearings, the Board of Directors intends to vote on whether to change the operating structure of that school, it shall give public notice of its intent to hold such a vote, stating the reason for the change in operational structure, at least ten days prior to the vote; and
3. An affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the New Unified Union Board of Directors approving the change in the operational structure; and
4. The new operating structure shall be effective only if approved by a majority vote of each of the member towns voting at a special vote warned for this purpose. The votes shall be counted and reported by town, voting by Australian ballot.

It is understood that this article does not apply to the closing of Cabot's high school program effective July 1, 2018 or the creation of intra-district school choice policies.

Article 18. Renaming the New District

It is understood that the current name for the new unified union district, the "CDT Unified Union School District," is provisional for the purposes of legal identification in these articles and may be changed by a majority vote of school directors of the new unified union school district.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SCHOOL PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Cabot School, David Schilling, Principal

Cabot School is a small, rural PK-12 school, located at the edge of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. We use our size to our advantage, placing strong value on family and community relationships, connections to deeper learning opportunities, and academic studies that are grounded in real-world relevance. Our school community currently consists of 175 students, taught by a strongly committed faculty with an impressive range of experiences and educational backgrounds.

Cabot's learners start their experience in our preschool program, which has earned Vermont's Child Development Division's highest rating of 5 stars. Our preschool places a strong emphasis on inquiry, play and nature-based learning, and it's not uncommon to find our students outside in their forest classroom, a space which the students had a major role in crafting, and maintain with great respect and reverence for their natural environment. Preschool classes meet for two half-day sessions, with three year olds attending in the morning and four year olds in the afternoon. Recently, a strong community volunteer effort led to the creation of a new, natural "playscape" for our youngest students. Over 15 community members came out on a cold, rainy day, and when they finished, our youngest learners were greeted with a sandbox big enough for all, a mound-slide outfitted with a 10' tunnel, and a straw bale structure to climb.

Our elementary school has moved toward an engaging project-based learning model in grades 3-6, combined with a renewed focus on phonemic awareness and reading fluency in the primary grades. Over the last two years, students have designed ski resorts, explored our oceans, studied Native American culture, written and presented their own mysteries and developed marketing materials for National Parks, all in a high stakes, public exhibition format. Along the way, we've seen students make huge leaps in developing research skills, public speaking prowess, teamwork and the habits of heart and mind necessary for a firm educational foundation in today's world.

Cabot's elementary and middle school programs "loop" over two years, allowing students to develop strong and lasting relationships with teachers. The two-year experience has shown tangible social and academic benefits, leading to positive home/school partnerships, teacher accountability for student growth, fewer classroom management problems, and increased academic productivity. Looping also promotes differentiation, a practice that creates learning opportunities that are tailored to the individual abilities of each student.

The Middle School curriculum is built around best practices in middle level education. Hands-on projects promote learning as a rich process that emphasizes students becoming experts on a particular topic. The skills required to successfully complete a project span multiple disciplines:

math, language arts, literature, social studies, music, etc. Students may engage in a “learning expedition” for many weeks, building connections in each subject area. A learning expedition culminates with an “exhibition” in which students demonstrate their learning, showcasing their work and achievement to an authentic audience.

Promoting youth leadership, team building, and environmental stewardship, Cabot’s program with Siskin Ecological Adventures fosters invaluable growth opportunities for young people. 7th and 8th graders participate in a series of adventure-based workshops that promote individual responsibility, build confidence, teach local environmental ecology, and provide students with technical outdoor skills. Students participate in outdoor orienteering activities and service learning projects, and investigate the health and sustainability of local ecosystems. The canoeing portion of our program helps young people learn to manage risks in a safe, exciting, and supportive environment. The Cabot/Siskin leadership curriculum culminates with a two-day paddle and overnight camping trip in the spring.

At the high school level, our focus is creating competent and responsible citizens via rigorous learning opportunities that require student commitment to deep learning. While our transcripts show most students taking the same courses, teachers guide individual student paths within each course topic. Again, a focus on public, high-stakes exhibition and interdisciplinary learning is front and center, with a recent example being an entirely student-produced TEDx event on the world’s water issues. This event was highlighted by the Tarrant Institute for Innovative Education here: <http://tiie.w3.uvm.edu/blog/student-ted-talks>. AP science and math options are offered annually.

Physical resources core to Cabot’s educational experience include the CSPAC (Cabot School Performing Arts Center) building, and a robust technology infrastructure, allowing 1:1 computers for grades 3-12. High School students have access to their computers 24:7, which reduces equity barriers and allows for collaborative work via the Google suite of educational apps. The CSPAC building is a community-rooted resource, providing a flexible black-box theater and performance space. While the building is home to Cabot’s music program, it has seen a variety of uses, allowing our students to present their work to authentic audiences, sometimes in the company of regionally-recognized performing artists. The building was completed in 2008, and is the product of an incredible amount of community volunteer labor and support.

Danville School, Kerin Graham Hoffman, Principal

Danville School is a PK-12 community of 370 learners that strives to provide each student with a personalized and rigorous learning experience, supported by a nurturing and highly qualified staff and the community at large; and to ensure every student graduates with the skills and knowledge necessary to attend and be successful in college and career; we emphasize inquiry, informed citizenship, and giving back to enhance our vibrant and unique Vermont small towns for the future.

Academics

Elementary students spend 90 minutes a day in both math and reading instruction, as well as 45 minutes of MTSS small group instruction in reading, math, writing, or an academic extension. Middle school students in grades 6-8 have 42 or 84 minutes per day of the four core classes, plus 1-2 periods of arts (language, art, family and consumer sciences, tech arts, health, PE, library science). We have a number of 8th grade students who are enrolled in high school courses as part of a personalized acceleration program. This program will expand next year to include opportunities for 7th and 8th graders to have flexible schedules based on their strengths.

Danville High School offers a variety of supported online learning courses, work based internships, Advanced Placement, dual enrollment (both through vouchers and via in-house course offerings through Community College of Vermont and SNHU in 17-18), hands-on technical education that takes advantage of everything our surrounding area has to offer and small class sizes.

We added two exciting curriculum additions for the 2016-17 school year. First, piloted a Place-Based Education program titled Engineering Sustainable Systems, a partnership between the science and technical education departments. In this program students will work to design sustainable solutions for complex environmental issues. They have opportunities to engage in authentic learning experiences and project design including engineering and design, data collection and analysis, and partnering with local entrepreneurs, businesses and community resources.

Second, we now offer the International Baccalaureate Program's Theory of Knowledge course. Taught by a licensed English teacher, this is a course that asks, "how do I know what I know?" within discussions of philosophy, history, and language. Theory of Knowledge embodies Danville's emphasis on student self-knowledge and self-direction.

Grading

The elementary school is on a trimester system, the middle and high school are on a semester system. Both utilize standards-based grading. Each course in the middle and high school is graded on a number of selected standards appropriate for the content. Students are graded on a proficiency scale of 1 through 4. For each assignment or assessment, a proficiency grade is given for each standard relevant to that assignment, and the assignment receives an overall grade that reflects both proficiency standards and Habits of Work expectations. Students and parents can view their progress towards proficiency throughout a course through the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

Graduation Requirements

High school students must fill their academic day for all four years. This may mean a combination of in house courses, online classes, internships, technical education courses at St. Johnsbury Academy or Lyndon Institute, or other flexible pathways.

Senior Service Learning Project

The goal of the SSLP is to have students design, perform, and present a personally meaningful, academically challenging, hands-on independent experience that will demonstrate their acquisition of new knowledge and 21st century college and career readiness skills. This experience is intended to instill the importance of clear and effective communication, self-direction, problem solving, integrative and collaborative thinking, and responsible and involved citizenship. Students develop and collect evidence of these skills throughout their educational experience which culminate through the development, execution, and final presentation of this service learning experience to the Danville community. Successful completion of the project, presentation, and paper are required for graduation.

Advisory and Academic Support

Elementary students receive Guidance weekly as part of their Essential Arts curriculum. Our student support system includes individual and group counseling, as well as a mentoring program with middle and high school students.

Our middle and high school advisory program connects each student with an adult and a small community of students. This group stays together throughout high school as a team and support system. Advisory supports the development of Personalized Learning Plans, offers guidance with college and career goals, supports social and emotional needs and advocates for students. Advisory meets twice per week.

Danville School believes every student can achieve rigorous academic success with appropriate support. Our Tutorial system is built on the MTSS (multi-tiered system of support) model of utilizing student formative assessment data to determine needs for intervention or enrichment. Two to three times a week, students can receive intervention in a needed area.

Additionally, Office Hours are built into our schedule to provide students with the option of additional teacher support for skills and coursework.

Athletics

Danville currently has a no-cut policy on all athletic teams. We are a Division IV school in girls' and boys' basketball and soccer, baseball and softball, as well as co-ed club Lacrosse. Students may participate in other sports through member-to-member agreements with local high schools. Many of our students ski, swim, and play hockey locally as well.

Danville takes pride in the character and academic focus of its athletes. Students are eligible for sports by demonstrating timely completion of work, punctuality, and respectful behavior towards classmates and staff.

Elementary students take part in Danville Peacham Little League, AAU Basketball and Girls on the Run.

Clubs, Activities and Partnerships

Danville runs most of our clubs and non-athletic activities during the school day. Groups range from film studies to blogging, from rollercoaster construction and greenhouse engineering to book clubs, from chess to online gaming.

We also host Girl Scouts and many small classes through the after-school ELO (Extended Learning Opportunities) program.

Danville School has partnerships with the Fairbanks Museum and Montshire Museum of Science. Students travel to both museums multiple times per year to participate in classes and workshops.

Our Student Council hosts monthly assemblies for students 6-12 that include academic and athletic awards, teacher and staff recognition and game competitions by grade (staff competes too!) The Student Council also hosts athletic pep rallies by season attended by students PreK-12.

The elementary students host Community Meeting once per month, organized by the guidance counselor and 5th grade students.

Twinfield Union School, Mark Mooney, Principal

Twinfield Union School is a small unique PK through grade 12 school. We see our small size as an advantage. It has allowed us to build strong relationships with our students and families that help us to meet diverse student needs. We have been able to establish strong school/community partnerships. Community members serve as mentors to our elementary students while others serve as academic advisors in our Renaissance program. In a time when Vermont is looking to redefine how schools operate, our small dedicated staff has been at the cutting edge of the move toward creating multiple and flexible pathways for students. Starting with the 2017-18 school year, all of our students will be earning a proficiency-based diploma.

Twinfield's 80-acre campus provides our students with a variety of outdoor learning opportunities throughout their school career. Elementary students participate in the ECO Program (Educating Children Outdoors) in conjunction with the North Branch Science Center. At the secondary level, many classes use our grounds to enhance instruction. We have a growing farm-to-school program which produces food for our salad bar. Our science program

makes consistent use of our varied topography. There is a variety of trails in our wooded areas, we have a pond, streams and yes, a river runs through it. We have the capacity and the interest in developing an environmental studies program in the future.

In the elementary school the *WIN (What I Need) Block* provides all elementary students with an opportunity for individual or small group instruction in the areas of language arts and math based on student personal needs. We no longer pull students from classrooms to provide supplemental instruction as all students get focused instruction based on their ability whether they are above, below or on grade level.

Our current middle school design continues to effectively meet the needs of our students. The flexible middle school schedule and strong middle school team concept has proven to be very beneficial to all types of learners. Middle school teachers have worked to incorporate the latest in brain research into their instruction and continue to develop meaningful integrated units of study for our middle school students.

Our most popular themed unit is our Survival Unit, which takes place in the spring of students' 8th grade year. The unit provides challenges that build student's skills and confidence in preparation for a 4-day wilderness canoe trip. Students craft individual paddles, collectively build a wood-strip canoe, learn canoe/camping skills, write daily reflections, study local ecology, survey an island, practice wilderness first aid and develop leadership skills along the way.

At the high school level Twinfield has a long history of personalizing student learning experiences using multiple and flexible pathways. Students have personalized and broadened their educational options through the *Renaissance* program. Hundreds of students have designed rigorous studies with community volunteers, interned with experts, shadowed at job sites and audited college courses. The New England Secondary School Consortium and League of Innovative Schools have recognized Twinfield's capacity to personalize and bring relevance to every student's educational experience.

The League of Innovative Schools has also recognized Twinfield's forward-thinking *Synapse* program with its underlying brain-based principle that students learn best when subjects are not taught in isolation, but rather when they are integrated so that students can see and make their own connections between academic disciplines. Freshmen and sophomores are receiving their English, science and social studies curriculum through an integrated approach with teachers from these three content areas working collaboratively. Working with themed units of study, teachers have created opportunities for their students to better understand the world around them.

Twinfield is a 1-to-1 school. All of our high school students receive a MacBook computer for their use 24/7 during the school year. We believe this move to becoming a 1-to-1 school has helped us to level the playing field for all of our students.

APPENDIX 2: ENROLLMENT DATA

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield: High School Enrollment/Tuition numbers – FY17

Current Enrollment (as of 10/1/16)

	Cabot	Danville	Twinfield	Totals
Resident Students	50	70	121	241
Tuition Students	2	27	2	31
Total Students	52	97	123	272

Projected Enrollment of a Unified High School = 304 students

Analysis – Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Enrollment Trends

	K-12 Enrollment from FY04 to FY17 (September 6, 2016) (13 Years)		
	2003-2004	2016-2017	% Change
Cabot	222	166	-25.2%
Danville	457	336	-26.5%
Twinfield	491	342	-30.3%

	K-12 Enrollment From FY13 to FY17 (September 6, 2016) (4 years)		
	2012-2013	2016-2017	% Change
Cabot	173	166	-4.0%
Danville	339	336	-0.89%
Twinfield	394	342	-13.2%

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Enrollment Trends– Past Five Years (Oct 1, 2016)

	C/D/T K-8 Enrollment from FY13 to FY17 (5 years)		
	2012-2013	2016-2017	% Change
Cabot	117	114	-2.6%
Danville	230	238	+3.5%
Twinfield	278	219	-21.2%

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Enrollment Trends – Past Five Years (Oct 1, 2016)

	C/D/T High School Enrollment From FY13 to FY17 (5 years)		
	2012-2013	2016-2017	% Change
Cabot	56	52	-7.1%
Danville	107	97	-9.3%
Twinfield	116	123	+6.0%

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Enrollment Figures K-12 2013-2017 (Oct 1, 2016)

	Cabot	Danville	Twinfield	Totals
2013	173	339	394	906
2014	171	328	379	878
2015	171	323	371	865
2016	168	346	358	872
2017	166	336	342	844

APPENDIX 3: EDUCATIONAL SPENDING AND EQUALIZED PUPIL DATA

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield - 5 Year Trends in Educational Spending

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	Total % Change	Ave % Change/yr.
Cabot	2,793,387	2,819,200	2,912,432	3,014,278	3,044,389	8.98%	1.79%
Danville	4,164,607	4,468,352	4,346,872	4,398,860	4,812,191	15%	3.75%
Twinfield	5,260,656	5,625,369	5,916,417	6,028,144	6,242,643	18.66%	3.73%

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield - FY18 Educational Spending

	FY18
Cabot	3,173,852
Danville	5,114,152
Twinfield	6,570,987

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield - Five Year Trend in Total Equalized Pupil Counts

	Equalized Pupil Counts 2012-2013	Equalized Pupil Counts 2016 - 2017	5 Year Average Rate of Yearly Change
Cabot	209.01	181.25	-2.6%
Danville	334.54	317.65	-1.0%
Twinfield	426.85	395.91	-1.5%

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield - 5 Year Trends in Education Spending/Equalized Pupil

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	Total % Change	Ave % Change/yr.
Cabot	13,365	13,978	14,964	16,049	16,797	25%	5%
Danville	12,449	13,771	13,775	14,161	15,084	21%	4.2%
Twinfield	12,326	13,251	14,198	14,882	15,768	27%	5.6%

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield - FY18 Education Spending/Equalized Pupil

	FY18
Cabot	17,636 (17,886 with penalty)
Danville	16,133
Twinfield	16,752

APPENDIX 4. CABOT/DANVILLE/TWINFIELD ENROLLMENT/TEACHER STAFFING PATTERNS FY'17

	K		Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4	
	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers
Cabot	12	1	10	1	13	1	14	1	8	1
Danville	27	2	18	1	30	2	16	1	31	2
Twinfield	22	2	20	2	23	2	28	3*	26	*

**TUS Grades 3 and 4 are taught by a team of 3 teachers.*

	Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8	
	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers
Cabot	14	1	16	1	15	2**	12	2**
Danville	17	1	36	2	33	3#	25	3#
Twinfield	27	2	22	1	26	4**	25	4**

***TUS Grade 7 and 8 are taught by a team of 4 teachers.*

Cabot Grade 7 and 8 are taught by a team of teachers

All DHS 7,8 teachers except 1 are shared 7-12

	Grade 9		Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12	
	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers	# Students	# Teachers
Cabot	9	4*	15	*	14	*	14	*
Danville	24	8*	33	*	21	*	22	*
Twinfield	36	10*	28	*	31	*	28	*

**HS Staff listed teach all 4 grade levels.*

Note: Current

All DHS 7,8 teachers except 1 are shared 7-12

Note: Current elementary/middle school enrollment (FY'17) – Cabot: 114 Danville: 238; Twinfield: 219

Note: Staffing data does not include paraprofessionals/teacher aides, allied arts teachers, or instructional/guidance specialists/SpEd working in each school

APPENDIX 5. CABOT/DANVILLE/TWINFIELD: STUDENT TEACHER RATIOS FY17

	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio
Cabot	12/1	10/1	13/1	14/1	8/1	14/1	16/1	15/1	12/1
Danville	13/1	18/1	15/2	16/1	15/1	17/1	18/1	11/1	8/1
Twinfield	11/1	10/1	12/1	18/1		14/1	22/1	13/1	

Note: Student/Teacher Ratios are not the same as class averages, particularly when looking at multi-age teams

	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	9-12
	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Student/ Teacher Ratio
Cabot	-	-	-	-	13/1
Danville	-	-	-	-	12/1
Twinfield	-	-	-	-	12/1

Total Teacher Staffing in FTE's (Full Time Equivalent) K- 12

	Total FTEs	FTEs/# of Students	Students per FTE	FTEs include core teachers and specials. Does not include nurses or guidance.
Cabot	23.32	166	7/1	
Danville	33.7	338	10/1	
Twinfield	44.8	342	8/1	

APPENDIX 6. ALLIED ARTS COMPARISON BY SCHOOL K-8

SCHOOL	ART	MUSIC	PHYS.ED.	PLP	FOREIGN LANGUAGE	Library/Media	DESIGN TECH ED
CABOT K-6	40 min. 1x/wk.	40 min. 1x/wk.	40 min. 2x/wk.	N/A	None		
7-8	45min. 2x/wk.	MS Band 40min3x/wk. Lessons: 30min1x/wk. After school Jazz Band 45min2x/wk.	40min.2x/wk		Gr 7: 45min4x/wk. Gr 8: 45min5x/wk.		
DANVILLE K-5	40 min. 1x/wk.	40 min. 1x/wk.	40 min. 1x/wk.			40 min. 1x/wk.	
6-7-8	42 min. 2x/wk. for 1 semester	42 min. 2x/wk. for 1 semester	42 min. 2x/wk.	(in Library)	42 min. 2x/wk. for 1 semester	42 min. 2x/wk. for 1 semester	42 min. 2x/wk. for 1 semester
TWINFIELD K-6	40 min. 1x/wk.	40 min. 1x/wk.	40 min. 2x/wk.	N/A	None	K:45 min. 1x/wk. 1-2 45 min. 2x/wk.* 3-4:45 min. 1x/wk. 5-6:45 min. 1x/wk.	None
7-8	40min 4x/wk. for 10 wks.	40min 4x/wk. for 10 wks.	40min 4x/wk. for 10 wks.		Gr 7: 40min4x/wk. ½ semester French; ½ semester Spanish Gr 8: 40min4x/wk. For 1 semester	Collaboratively planned - No schedule	

APPENDIX 7. SMARTER BALANCED TEST RESULTS

2016 Smarter Balanced Test Results – Cabot/Danville/Twinfield					
English - % Proficient and Above					
Grade		Cabot	Twinfield	Danville	Vermont
3	All	25%	74%	64%	54%
4	All	43%	48%	26%	54%
5	All	47%	64%	43%	58%
6	All	15%	48%	70%	56%
7	All	71%	65%	64%	57%
8	All	67%	66%	72%	58%
11	All	64%	50%	68%	57%

2016 Smarter Balanced Test Results – Cabot/Twinfield/Danville					
Math - % Proficient and Above					
Grade		Cabot	Twinfield	Danville	Vermont
3	All	13%	65%	72%	56%
4	All	43%	59%	47%	50%
5	All	27%	18%	34%	43%
6	All	15%	37%	47%	41%
7	All	71%	27%	56%	46%
8	All	33%	24%	48%	44%
11	All	36%	22%	47%	38%

Percentage of Students in Each School who are categorized as receiving:

- **Free and Reduced Lunch**
Cabot – 60%; Twinfield – 51%; Danville 38 %;
- **Support Services**
Cabot –18%; Twinfield –12%; Danville 17 % pre-k - 12

Vermont Smarter Balanced Testing Scores: 2015/2016
Disaggregated Statewide Results
Percentage of Students Proficient or Above

Grade		2015 English Vermont	2016 English Vermont		2015 Math Vermont	2016 Math Vermont
3	All	51%	54%		51%	56%
	Not Free & R	64%	65%		64%	67%
	Free and R	45%	39%		35%	41%
	Special Ed	12%	14%		15%	18%
4	All	51%	54%		44%	50%
	Not Free & R	62%	66%		56%	62%
	Free and R	35%	37%		29%	32%
	Special Ed	11%	13%		10%	14%
5	All	56%	58%		41%	43%
	Not Free & R	69%	68%		52%	53%
	Free and R	39%	42%		25%	28%
	Special Ed	11%	14%		6%	10%
6	All	53%	56%		47%	41%
	Not Free & R	65%	67%		48%	51%
	Free and R	35%	39%		21%	25%

	Special Ed	7%	11%		3%	5%
7	All	55%	58%		43%	46%
	Not Free & R	66%	69%		53%	56%
	Free and R	36%	39%		26%	28%
	Special Ed	8%	9%		3%	6%
8	All	53%	59%		40%	44%
	Not Free & R	63%	68%		49%	54%
	Free and R	36%	41%		24%	26%
	Special Ed	8%	11%		3%	4%
11	All	57%	57%		37%	37%
	Not Free & R	65%	65%		44%	45%
	Free and R	39%	38%		20%	19%
	Special Ed	10%	10%		2%	1%

**Vermont Smarter Balanced Testing Results 2016
Top Ten/Twenty Schools Testing Results**

Grade	English ALL Top 10	English ALL Top 20	Math ALL Top 10	Math ALL Top 20
3	83-96%	77-96%	81-92%	79-92%
4	80-89%	75-89%	81-90%	75-90%
5	84-96%	78-96%	73-85%	64-85%
6	80-94%	75-94%	73-89%	63-89%
7	77-94%	73-94%	67-85%	62-85%
8	80-94%	77-94%	68-82%	63-82%
11	71-82%		48-67%	

Note:

Chart shows the percentage of students who scored proficient or above of the ten (and twenty) highest scoring public schools in Vermont for all students and for lower income students (FRL = Free or Reduced Lunch)

APPENDIX 8. VERMONT HIGH SCHOOL PROFILES - 2016

AVERAGE SAT TEST SCORES

2016 Average	Free and R	Reading	Math	Writing	Total
Cabot	60%	578	535	512	1625
Danville	38%	475	515	461	1451
Hanover High School	N/A	621	611	613	1845
Hartford High School	24%	509	517	483	1509
Montpelier High School	26%	587	555	559	1587
U-32 (2015)	30%	557	544	525	1626
Twinfield	51%	520	519	515	1554
Woodstock Union HS	28%	563	556	537	1656
Vermont	44%	522	525	507	1554
US (2013)	N/A	496	514	488	1498

COLLEGE MATRICULATION 2016

	Non Free/ R	4 Yr. College	2 Yr. College	Total College
Cabot	40%	63%	8%	71%
Danville	62%	68%	7%	75%
Hanover	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hartford	76%	58%	9%	67%
Montpelier	74%	72%	0 %	72%
Twinfield	49%	44%	4%	48%
U-32 (2015)	70%	56%	12%	68%
Windsor	60%	40%	12%	52%
Woodstock	72%	70%	8%	78%
Vermont	56%			52% (2013)

APPENDIX 9. PROFILE OF TEACHER CORPS

Professional Study:

	Cabot		Danville		Twinfield	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
BA	6	24%	10	27%	8	16%
BA +15	0	0	0	0	4	8%
BA+20			9	24%		
BA +30	2	8%	0	0	7	14%
BA + 45	5	20%	0	0	0	0
MA	7	28%	10	27%	16	32%
MA +15	2	8%	4	11%	7	14%
MA +30	3	12%	4	11%	8	16%
MA +45	0	0	0	0	0	0
PHD	0	0	0	0	0	0

Years of Service:

	Cabot		Danville		Twinfield	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-5	7	28%	9	24%	7	14%
6-15	7	28%	11	30%	16	32%
15+	11	44%	17	46%	27	54%

APPENDIX 10. DISTRICT ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Statement of Values (Property, Buildings, Etc.)

Cabot: \$6,688,190.00

Danville: Buildings \$14,429,800; total \$17,071,000

Twinfield: \$10,283,223.00

District	Name	Square Feet	Year Built	Building Value	Business Personal Property	Site Improvements	Computer Equipment	Vehicles	Total Value
Danville	Danville School	79,594	1900	14,417,800	1,095,400	84,100	200,000	334,000	16,131,300
Danville	Mechanical Building	150	1980	12,000	2,000	-	-		14,000
DANVILLE TOTALS				14,429,800	1,097,400	84,100	200,000	334,000	16,145,300

Name	Property Type	Address 1	Building Value	Business Personal Property	Site Improv. Insurable	BI/EE	Total Insured Value
School House	School	6328 US Rt 2	\$82,309	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000,000	\$1,082,309
Twinfield School	School	106 Nasmith Brook Rd	\$10,260,900	\$766,500	\$306,600	\$0.00	\$11,334,000
Twinfield High Storage	Storage	106 Nasmith Brook Rd	\$22,323	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$22,323
Cabot High School	School	25 Common Rd	\$2,360,700	\$121,500	\$40,000	\$0.00	\$2,522,200
Cabot Elem #1	School	49 Gym Rd	\$395,800	\$23,900	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$419,700
Cabot Elem #2 - Learning Center	School	50 Gym Rd	\$395,800	\$23,900	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$419,700
Cabot Elem #3 - Primary Unit	School	51 Gym Rd	\$534,900	\$31,800	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$566,700
Shop Bldg	Storage	Main St	\$228,790	\$54,129	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$282,919
Gym/Auditorium	Gym	26 Gym Rd	\$1,933,400	\$35,100	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,968,500
Cabot Woodchip Plant	Mechanical Building	Gym Road	\$148,600	\$5,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$153,600
Performing Arts Center	School	Gym Rd	\$365,700	\$23,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$388,700

Industrial Arts Building	School	52 Gym Road	\$324,500	\$54,100	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$378,600
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Short and Long Term Reserve Funds

Cabot: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$79,394 Reserve Fund, \$63,667 Capital Projects

Danville: **As of FY16 Audit:** -\$89,100 deficit (Covered with FY18 budget), Capital Reserve \$11,859

Twinfield: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$65,283 Reserve Fund, \$25,000 Capital Projects

Short and Long Term Debt

Cabot: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$235,298

Danville: \$0

Twinfield: **As of FY16 Audit:** \$696,201

Short (5 year) and Long (5+ years) Term Capital/Facility Needs (Buildings and Technology)

Cabot:

Air handler controls: \$45,000

cafeteria roof: \$43,000

gym building renovation \$ 2.6 M (est.)

Satellite renovation (ADA, roofing, siding, drainage, plumbing and mechanical) \$520,000+ per building (Est) or replacement space as needed with new configuration \$3.8 - \$4.2M (Est, including paving, grounds, etc.)

(Black River Design building and grounds assessment and draft plans available)

Danville: 5+ years - replace roof and 10 air exchange units

For IT we will need to replace: Hardware, Switches Firewalls, Server, Computers for both staff and students, and some wiring upgrades to parts of the buildings

Twinfield:

Replace panel boxes: \$100,000 (over 4 years)

Paving project: \$90,000 (2018)

Boiler replacement: \$ 535,000 (approved- payments over 10 years)

Locker and bathroom renovations: \$50,000

**APPENDIX 11: PROJECTED OPERATIONAL SAVINGS
CENTRALIZING TWO S.U. OFFICES**

Current configurations vs. possible configuration – Based on FY18 Salary and Benefit Packages								
		WNESU		CCSU		NEW		
	FTE		FTE		FTE			
Business Manager	1.00	\$111,849	1.00	\$102,480	1.00	\$112,000	Business Manager	
Payroll	1.00	\$63,519	1.00	\$53,700	1.00	\$64,000	Payroll	
AP/AR/Tuition	1.00	\$65,972	1.00	\$47,200	1.50	\$90,000	AP/AR/Tuition	
Superintendent	1.00	\$139,024	1.00	\$137,500	1.00	\$150,000	Superintendent	
Ex Asst/HR	1.00	\$54,386	1.00	\$61,300	1.00	\$65,000	HR	
					1.00	\$55,000	Ex Asst	
Special Ed Director	1.00	\$106,576	1.00	\$114,300	1.00	\$115,000	Special Ed Director	
Manager/Medicaid	0.50	\$40,855	0.75	\$31,200	1.00	\$70,000	Manager/Medicaid	
Early Ed			0.60	\$80,500	1.00	\$90,000	Early Ed	
Curriculum Director	1.00	\$94,380	1.00	\$107,600	1.00	\$108,000	Asst Super for Curriculum	
Food Service	1.00	\$53,795	0.81	\$59,500	1.00	\$70,000	Food Service Director	
	1.00	\$59,783			1.00	\$53,795	Manager	
Facilities/ Trans Director	1.00	\$77,518	0.00	\$-	1.00	\$88,000	Facilities/ Trans Director	
Tech Director			1.00	\$87,500	1.00	\$88,000		
Assistant			1.60	\$61,700	2.00	\$80,000		
Wildbranch		\$139,448						
21C			0.68	\$50,200	1.00	\$70,000	21C	
	10.50	\$1,007,105	12.43	\$994,680	17.50	\$1,368,795		
Totals both WNESU & CCSU			22.93	\$2,001,785				
Decrease as combined SU					(5.43)	\$(632,990)		

APPENDIX 12: HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING COST WORKSHEETS

C/D/T Merger Budget Notes 03-27-17

Anticipated Budget Changes with Cabot Project Based Learning Academy

Expense Savings		
○ Salary savings (with adjustment to TUS)	\$114,198	
○ Benefits savings	\$ 32,790	
○ Eliminate 1.0 FTE Paraeducator in Sped	\$ 16,632	
○ Eliminate High School Sports	\$ 46,871	
○ Keep High School Sports		\$46,871
○ Reduce Professional Development	\$ 5,000	
○ Close one satellite building (est. 5%)	<u>\$ 17,830</u>	<u> </u>
Cabot with PBL Savings	\$233,021	\$186,150
Minus costs for Danville teachers moving to Twinfield salary and benefits	<u>\$115,457</u>	<u>\$115,457</u>
Net change before transportation	\$117,564	\$ 70,693
Minus estimated transportation costs	<u>\$70,000</u>	<u>\$ 70,000</u>
Net savings	\$47,564	\$ 693

Anticipated Budget Changes with Cabot Closing the High School

Revenue Reductions:		
○ Eliminate Tuition Revenue	-\$ 54,000	
Expense Savings		
○ Salary (with adjustment to TUS)	\$233,841	
○ Benefits	\$ 71,050	
○ Reduce 1.0 FTE Sped Para	\$ 16,632	
○ Eliminate High School Sports	\$ 46,871	
○ Reduce Professional Development	\$ 10,000	
○ Close two satellite buildings(est.10% savings)	<u>\$ 35,660</u>	
Cabot High School closure savings	\$360,054	
Minus costs for Danville teachers moving to Twinfield salary and benefits	<u>\$115,457</u>	
Net change before transportation	\$244,597	
Minus estimated transportation costs	<u>\$70,000</u>	
Net savings	\$174,597	
Transportation estimate 2 busses x 20 miles x 2/day = 80 miles x 175 days x \$5/mile = \$70,000		
Central Office savings for C/D/T		\$360,000

APPENDIX 13: ANALYSIS – CURRENT MASTER AGREEMENTS

Danville Faculty placed on Twinfield salary schedule and benefits FY17
 Cabot Faculty placed on Twinfield salary schedule FY17

			PBL Staff levels:			FY17	
Cabot			Twinfield			Benefit Savings	
7	M	1	\$ 48,819	7	M	1	\$ 51,501
16	M	1	\$ 56,888	16	M	0.6	\$ 36,008
32	B+45	0.9	\$ 58,461	32	B+45	0.7	\$ 47,968
18	M+30	1	\$ 59,309	18	M+30	1	\$ 66,824
17	B+45	1	\$ 56,888	17	B+45	1	\$ 60,014
10	B+30	1	\$ 50,029	10	B+30	1	\$ 52,778
35	B+45	1	\$ 68,091	35	B+45	1	\$ 70,229
3	B	0.6	\$ 20,186	3	B	0.6	\$ 26,559
2	B	1	\$ 41,153	2	B	0.4	\$ 17,366
32	B+45	1	\$ 64,957	32	B+45	1	\$ 68,526
4	B	1	\$ 42,767	4	B	1	\$ 45,117
4	M	1	\$ 46,398	4	M	1	\$ 48,947
5	M	1	\$ 47,205	5	M	1	\$ 49,799
34	B+45	0.62	\$ 41,274	34	B+45	0	\$ -
8	B	1	\$ 45,994	8	B	1	\$ 48,522
2	M	1	\$ 44,784	2	M	1	\$ 47,245
4	M	1	\$ 46,398	4	M	0.6	\$ 29,368
5	M	0.2	\$ 7,910	5	M	0.1	\$ 4,980
7	B	0.2	\$ 9,038	7	B	0	\$ -
22	M+15	1	\$ 61,326	22	M+15	1	\$ 64,696
14	M+15	1	\$ 55,677	14	M+15	1	\$ 58,737
27	M+30	1	\$ 64,150	27	M+30	1	\$ 67,675
22	B+30	1	\$ 58,905	22	B+30	0	\$ -
16	M+30	1	\$ 59,309	16	M+30	0.2	\$ 12,428
28	M	1	\$ 63,343	28	M+30	1	\$ 62,568
12	M+15	1	\$ 54,064	12	M	1	\$ 66,824
22	M+15	1	\$ 61,326	22	M+15	1	\$ 57,034
			<u>\$ 1,334,649</u>	22	M+15	1	\$ 64,696
							<u>\$ 1,220,451</u>

Cabot to Twinfield Salary Savings: \$ 114,198

			FY17	
Close the high school			Benefit Savings	
7	M	1	\$ 51,501	
16	M	0.5	\$ 30,007	\$ 12,172
32	B+45	0.7	\$ 47,968	\$ 2,456
18	M+30	0.5	\$ 33,412	\$ 3,019
17	B+45	1	\$ 60,014	
10	B+30	1	\$ 52,778	
35	B+45	1	\$ 70,229	
3	B	0	\$ -	\$ 3,061
2	B	0.4	\$ 17,366	\$ 6,526
32	B+45	1	\$ 68,526	
4	B	1	\$ 45,117	
4	M	0.5	\$ 24,474	
5	M	1	\$ 49,799	
34	B+45	0	\$ -	\$ 4,983
8	B	1	\$ 48,522	
2	M	1	\$ 47,245	
4	M	0.4	\$ 19,579	\$ 11,109
5	M	0.1	\$ 4,980	\$ 98
7	B	0	\$ -	\$ 198
22	M+15	0.8	\$ 51,757	\$ 2,940
14	M+15	1	\$ 58,737	
27	M+30	1	\$ 67,675	
22	B+30	0	\$ -	\$ 24,488
16	M+30	1	\$ 62,568	
28	M	1	\$ 66,824	
12	M+15	1	\$ 57,034	
22	M+15	1	\$ 64,696	
			<u>\$ 1,100,808</u>	<u>\$ 71,050</u>

Cabot to Twinfield Salary Savings: \$ 233,841

Danville Faculty placed on Twinfield salary schedule and benefits FY
 Cabot Faculty placed on Twinfield salary schedule FY17

FY17 YOE		FTE	FY17 Danville	FY17 Twinfield
21	B+15	1	\$ 56,083	\$ 59,163
3	M	0.5	\$ 20,978	\$ 24,474
15	M	1	\$ 55,419	\$ 60,014
12	B	1	\$ 48,059	\$ 51,927
22	M15	0.5	\$ 31,376	\$ 32,348
20	B	1	\$ 48,868	\$ 51,927
30	B+15	1	\$ 58,583	\$ 59,163
7	B+15	1	\$ 44,997	\$ 49,799
18	M15	0.6	\$ 35,972	\$ 37,796
3	B	1	\$ 38,879	\$ 45,117
16	M15	1	\$ 57,665	\$ 61,291
5	B	1	\$ 40,905	\$ 46,819
15	B+15	1	\$ 54,421	\$ 57,460
31	B+15	1	\$ 58,861	\$ 59,163
21	M	1	\$ 61,029	\$ 63,419
3	M30	1	\$ 44,773	\$ 51,501
5	B+15	1	\$ 42,641	\$ 48,096
15	M	1	\$ 55,419	\$ 60,014
30	B	1	\$ 49,878	\$ 52,651
15	M15	1	\$ 58,549	\$ 61,291
11	B	1	\$ 47,031	\$ 51,927
4	M	1	\$ 39,891	\$ 49,799
8	B	1	\$ 43,959	\$ 49,373
26	M15	1	\$ 66,569	\$ 66,398
4	M	1	\$ 43,077	\$ 49,799
16	B	1	\$ 48,464	\$ 51,927
25	M30	1	\$ 66,190	\$ 67,675
9	M	1	\$ 48,687	\$ 54,055
13	B+15	1	\$ 56,639	\$ 59,163
9	M15	1	\$ 49,657	\$ 55,332
2	B	1	\$ 37,869	\$ 44,266
24	M	1	\$ 61,637	\$ 65,121
6	M	1	\$ 45,321	\$ 51,501
25	M	1	\$ 63,510	\$ 65,121
18	B	1	\$ 48,666	\$ 52,651
30	M	1	\$ 62,546	\$ 68,526
26	M30	0.8	\$ 53,255	\$ 54,140
20	M	1	\$ 61,029	\$ 61,716
10	B	1	\$ 46,005	\$ 51,927
2	B	0.8	\$ 30,295	\$ 35,412
15	B+15	1	\$ 54,421	\$ 57,460
		39.2	\$ 2,038,073	\$ 2,196,720

Health Ins

Single	7	\$ 55,618	\$ 52,458
Two Person	6	\$ 93,709	\$ 88,384
Family	18	\$ 376,864	\$ 355,450
		\$ 526,191	\$ 496,292

Dental

	Assumption		
Single	7	\$ 3,293	\$ 1,646
Two Person	6	\$ 4,322	\$ 1,411
Family	18	\$ 12,967	\$ 4,234
		\$ 20,582	\$ 7,291

Life Ins

	\$ 4,939	0
	\$ 2,589,785	\$ 2,705,242

ille to Twinfield Difference: \$ 115,457

APPENDIX 14: BOARD REPRESENTATION

2010 Census Information:

Cabot:	1,433	22%
Danville:	2,196	34%
Marshfield:	1,588	25%
Plainfield:	1,243	19%
Total:	6,460	

Town	Representation	% Representation
Cabot:	2	22%
Danville:	3	33%
Marshfield:	2	22%
Plainfield:	2	22%

APPENDIX 14: SMALL SCHOOLS GRANTS

Small Schools Grants and Merger Support Grants Information from AOE

Small School Support Grants prior to July 1, 2019:

Small School Support Grants as they have been provided under 16 V.S.A. § 4015 do not change in any way until Fiscal Year 2020 (the 2019–2020 academic year). Prior to July 1, 2015:

- The criteria that determine eligibility for Small School Support Grants do not change.
- The way in which a Small School Support Grant is calculated does not change.

Annual, Perpetual Merger Support Grants

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2016, Small School Support Grants have the potential to automatically convert into annual Merger Support Grants.

Overview of Merger Support Grants

Small School Support Grants are (and always have been) based on combined size of the schools operated by a district and the number of grades operated. As a result, a district that is currently eligible to receive a Small School Support Grant might become ineligible if it merges with one or more other districts. If a school district would become ineligible for this reason, however, then the Small School Support Grant is transformed automatically into an annual Merger Support Grant.

Eligibility for Merger Support Grants

Two categories of districts are eligible for an annual Merger Support Grant:

Merged District

A newly merged district where at least one of the merging districts was eligible for a Small School Support Grant in the fiscal year two years prior to the fiscal year of merger, if the newly merged district has met eligibility requirements for:

- enhanced incentives under Act 46, Sec. 6, including being operational by 7/1/17; or
- incentives available to a Regional Education District (RED) or one of its three alternatives (union elementary district; side-by-side mergers; MUUSD), including receipt of final local voter approval by 7/1/17; or
- incentives available to a later merging district under Act 46, Sec. 7, including being operational by 7/1/19.

Joint Contract School

Two districts that do not merge, but that enter into a contract to operate a school jointly, if:

- the districts enter into the contract between 6/2/15 and 7/1/17; and
- at least one of the contracting districts was eligible for a Small School Support Grant in the fiscal year two years prior to the fiscal year in which the contract begins (See Act 46, Sec. 7(d)).

Elements of a Merger Support Grant

Grant Amount

The amount of the Merger Support Grant is equal to the total combined Small School Support Grants received by the merging district(s) in the fiscal year two years prior to the fiscal year of merger.

Payment Term

The Merger Support Grant is paid yearly, in perpetuity – with the following exceptions:

- If the merged district closes the small school on which the Grant is based, then the Grant ceases.
- if the merged district closes the small school and consolidates it with another school in a new or renovated building, then the Grant continues annually for the life of the bond.

Small School Support Grants on and after July 1, 2019

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2020, if a district's Small School Support Grant has not been converted into an annual Merger Support Grant through voluntarily merger, then the district will be eligible to receive a Small School Support Grant if **both** of the following two factors are met:

- The district operates a school that has an average grade size of 20 or fewer students; and
- The State Board of Education determines annually (based on metrics it will adopt and publish by 7/1/18) that the district is eligible for the Grant because of either:
 - the lengthy driving times or inhospitable routes to the nearest school with excess capacity; or
 - the academic excellence and operational efficiency of the small school, which is based upon consideration of the following factors:
 - o the school's measurable success in providing a variety of high quality educational opportunities
 - o the percentage of students in the school from economically deprived backgrounds and the student's measurable success in achieving positive outcomes

o the school's high student-to-staff ratios; and o the district's participation in a merger study committee and submission of the committee's report to the State Board.

Note: This document is provided for guidance only and does not have the force of law. See the underlying statute and/or Acts for more detail.

APPENDIX 16: EXPLORATORY PHASE DOCUMENTS

Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield District Unification Act 46 Study Committee Exploratory Report – June 22, 2016

Exploring a Unified Vision for Delivering a Quality Education to All Our Children

Overview:

Act 46 is a far reaching piece of legislation designed to encourage the districts of Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield to explore the potential benefits of unifying their existing governance structures into a single, school board responsible for serving every student in these three school districts. It is a bill whose central goal is improving the educational quality of those schools and to achieve that goal at an affordable and sustainable cost that taxpayers will value.

At the heart of the law are five key goals which the committee saw as essential guides to their work:

- *To provide substantive equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities statewide.*
- *To lead students to achieve or exceed the State's Educational Quality Standards.*
- *To 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*
- *To promote transparency and accountability.*
- *To achieve these goals at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.*

Central to the committee's deliberations concerning any potential plan to unify our current school districts into a single district governed by a single school board representing the sending towns of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield was one central overriding question:

How would unification benefit our children? Specifically, how would a new, unified district governance structure provide better, more equitable instructional opportunities and better support students to achieve or exceed the State's Educational Quality Standards?

In examining this key question, the committee examined the educational, cultural, financial, and operational opportunities and challenges, that would attend any plan for district unification.

Reflected in this report are the specific issues the committee examined:

- The Opportunities and Challenges of Unification - Educational, Cultural, Financial, and Operational
- The Current Enrollment and Staffing Patterns of the Schools in Each District
- The Current Collective Bargaining Agreements in Caledonia Central and Washington Northeast
- Supervisory Unions
- Potential School Re-Configurations that Might Increase Educational Opportunity and Greater Operational Efficiency
- Financial and Tax implications of a merger Between the Three School Districts
- Representation on a 706b Study Committee
- 2010 Census Data for Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield

At this juncture, each district needs to decide if it wishes enter into a formal 706b study process with the other sending districts to explore these issues further and empower that committee to decide whether it is advisable to put before the voters of the sending towns of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield a formal set of Articles of Agreement concerning the creation of a new unified school district that would serve the children of their communities.

Central to that process is exploring and agreeing to:

A. A Vision/Model for Unification That Would Address the Specific Goals of Act 46 (Note: School Restructuring of any kind is not required by Act 46; only the unification of existing governance structures)

B. Articles of Agreement that would address the following Specific Issues:

R.E.D. Description:

- Names of School Districts considered Necessary and Advisable (if any) for forming new R.E.D.
- Cost and location of any new Schools or Proposed Renovations
- Grades to be Operated

Representation of New R.E.D School Board

- Method of Apportionment
- Number of Representatives
- Terms of Office
- Terms of initial Board Members – 1/3rd expiration per annual meeting

Financials:

- Financial Assessment: Assets and Liabilities

- List of Indebtedness of new R.E.D
- Accounting of Real Property Acquired by new R.E.D
 - Valuation
 - How the new R.E.D will pay for them
- Allocation of capital and operating expenses of R.E.D. among member districts.

Date on which the proposed R.E.D. will be submitted to voters

Date on which the R.E.D. will begin operation

Plan for First Year of R.E.D. Operation:

- Transportation Plan
- Assignment of Staff
- Curriculum

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter A. Clarke
Act 46 Coordinator

Act 46 Study Committee – Cabot and Danville Challenges and Opportunities

Cabot Challenges:

Cabot Facilities – major renovations needed including gym
Dropping Enrollments – Hard to maintain program opportunities
Long term program affordability and sustainability
Loss of Co-curricular opportunities

Danville Challenges:

Danville Facilities: Roof, some fire/safety, repointing brick, Auditorium
Dropping Enrollment – Challenge to attract more tuition students from neighboring towns
Capacity issue at HS
Increasing Tuition revenues through program enhancements and partnerships

Shared Challenges:

Special Education Costs – spikes in need; creating a greater economy of scale to serve students
Identity and Culture – enhancing program while maintaining traditions and cultural identity
Melding school cultures in any governance or student/program merger
Increasing student needs due to poverty
Greater academic demands – Act 77: PLP's, Individual Learning Paths
Professional development
Equity of opportunity for all students

Program Strengths:

Cabot:

Music program and facility
Instructional flexibility in addressing student needs
Integrated Co-teaching
Experiential/project learning
Athletics (but with fewer teams)
League of Innovative Schools Connection
Art/Innovation Lab
VSAC Cohorts
Staff expertise
AP Programs
Middle school collaborative programs
Math/Science Program
Intervention/Individualization
Cabot/Twinfield X'Days

Danville:

Staff Commitment

Administrative Capacity

In-house Dual enrollment courses (masters degrees)

Shared Teachers – Middle and High School; capacity to accelerate (e.g. math)

Pathways Coordinator – Internships, LIFT/Personalized Learning Plan Software

K-12 MTSS – Data Assessment

Semester Based Block (Increases Program Options)

Emerging IB Program

Science/Environmental Program

Personalized education – small but not too small

Act 46 Study Committee – Cabot/Twinfield Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges:

- Cabot Facilities
- Twinfield Facilities
- Declining enrollment
 - Extracurricular, class sizes, per pupil costs
 - Financial Challenges
- Breadth of offerings
- Collective Bargaining agreement /Salary scale different between the two buildings
- Distance between the schools: transportation for students going back and forth, time on buses, \$ and efficiency
- Different schedules
- Sharing staff
- Different student cultures, perceived/real/athletics
- Communities would have a hard time, feeling attached to their community school
- Maintaining opportunities at co-curricular level with existing team structure
- Communities come out for their own town teams
- Maintaining and expanding curricular opportunities
- Poverty and associated issues
- Act 77
 - Personalization with declining resources
- Professional Development Support – time
- Community culture/buy-in to shared responsibility
- Community participation change, new culture, develop identity/ownership
- Town meeting vs Australian ballot
- Debt and future facility liabilities
- Representation on the Board/Trust that each board member is looking out for both schools' interests

Decisions that we wish we wouldn't have had to make:

- 30 kids in 9/10 Humanities
- reducing high school staff to .6
- reduction of design tech
- reduction of foreign language options

Potential Act 46 Challenges:

- Loss of Hold Harmless Protections (Declining Enrollments)
- Loss of Small Schools Grants

Strengths:

TUS

Renaissance
80 acres/Brook
Eco Program
Intervention Block
Integrated curricula 7/8 9/10
Design Tech
Pre-K
Elementary looping (2 year teams)
WCMH Analyst
June Term

Cabot

Performing Arts
AP offerings
MS Leadership Program/canoe/DC
Integrated curricula 7/8
3/4 Project Based
Town based, community center
Pre-K
Health Center collaboration
Guidance program
June Term

**Introduction to Financial Model – Act 46 Study Team
Cabot/Danville/Twinfield
June 22, 2016**

Disclaimer:

This model is being made available by for use by superintendents and school business managers in supporting school district merger study committees.

The model relies on a set of inputs that are not adjustable by the user and a set of inputs that the user can manipulate. Any specific assumptions and judgments made by the user in their selection of inputs could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected.

The model was created for purposes of comparative illustrations, and under no circumstances should be utilized to forecast future actual tax rates resulting if and when a merger occurs or does not occur.

The model does not account for, nor is it intended to account for, policy decisions, management decisions and/or changes in any factor reflected in the model, now or over time.

There are no representations or warranties, express or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information presented and nothing herein shall be relied upon as a promise or representation.

The Act 46 Project disclaims all liability whatsoever for any direct, indirect, incidental, consequential, or special damages arising out of or in any way connected with access to or use of the financial model.

Model Projections:

This financial model projects trends in future homestead tax rates through FY23 for the districts (Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield) participating in this study. The model projects:

- The trend lines in Educational Spending and Local Tax rates for a merged district beginning in FY18, and
- The trend lines in Educational Spending and Local Tax rates for those same districts should they remain as they are (No Change Scenario), and,
- The differences in tax rates between a merged scenario and a No Change Scenario and computes the total increases/decreases in tax liabilities through FY23.

Assumptions:

- The model assumes that the new unified district would come into existence in FY18.
- The Model uses existing financial data from FY16 and FY17 from each individual district involved in this study for determining the baseline for educational spending, equalized pupils, equalized spending per equalized pupil, etc. for the new merged district.
- It considers the previous five-year average for the determining the change rates for education spending and equalized pupils, though individual districts can adjust these rates at their own discretion should they believe past trends to be an inaccurate predictor of future trends.
- The model builds in the tax incentives associated with a Phase II merger over the first four years of the new district's existence. It also takes into account the 5% rate limit on increases or decreases on the homestead property tax rate during that same time frame.
- The merged model leaves in place the hold-harmless provision on equalized pupil calculations (e.g. equalized pupil counts do not drop more than 3.5% per year) for every eligible district in the new merged district as well as the continuation of small schools grants to eligible districts
- For, the No Change Scenario, hold-harmless and small school grants are phased out in accordance with the terms of Act 46. (Hold-Harmless FY21 and Small Schools Grants FY20)
- The model's default setting projects the taxes on a \$150,000 house. That setting can be changed to project the potential tax impact on properties assessed at different values.

Rates of Change:

- The model allows the user to manipulate the rates of change in:
 - ✓ Educational Spending for each town and for the new district as a whole.
 - ✓ Equalized Pupils for each town and for the new district as a whole.
 - ✓ Educational Grand List for each town. (In the current iteration of this model, we left the GL unchanged (0%).

To determine a **starting place** for assessing projected rates of change in Educational Spending and Equalized Pupils, this model uses the previous five-year average change rate in Educational Spending and Equalized Pupil Counts based on the specific data from FY12 and FY17.

Finally, for those districts with phantom students, the rate was calculated using the actual change in actual students not the hold-harmless calculations used in arriving at Equalized

Pupil rates. This was done to reflect what is actually happening “on the ground” in each district involved.

Inputs: Five Year Averages – Rates of Change

	EdSpInc	EqPupInc	GL Inc
Cabot	2.46%	-2.02%	0%
Twinfield	4.43%	-1.25%	0%
Danville	4.91%	-1.18%	0%
CTD	3.00%		

Results:

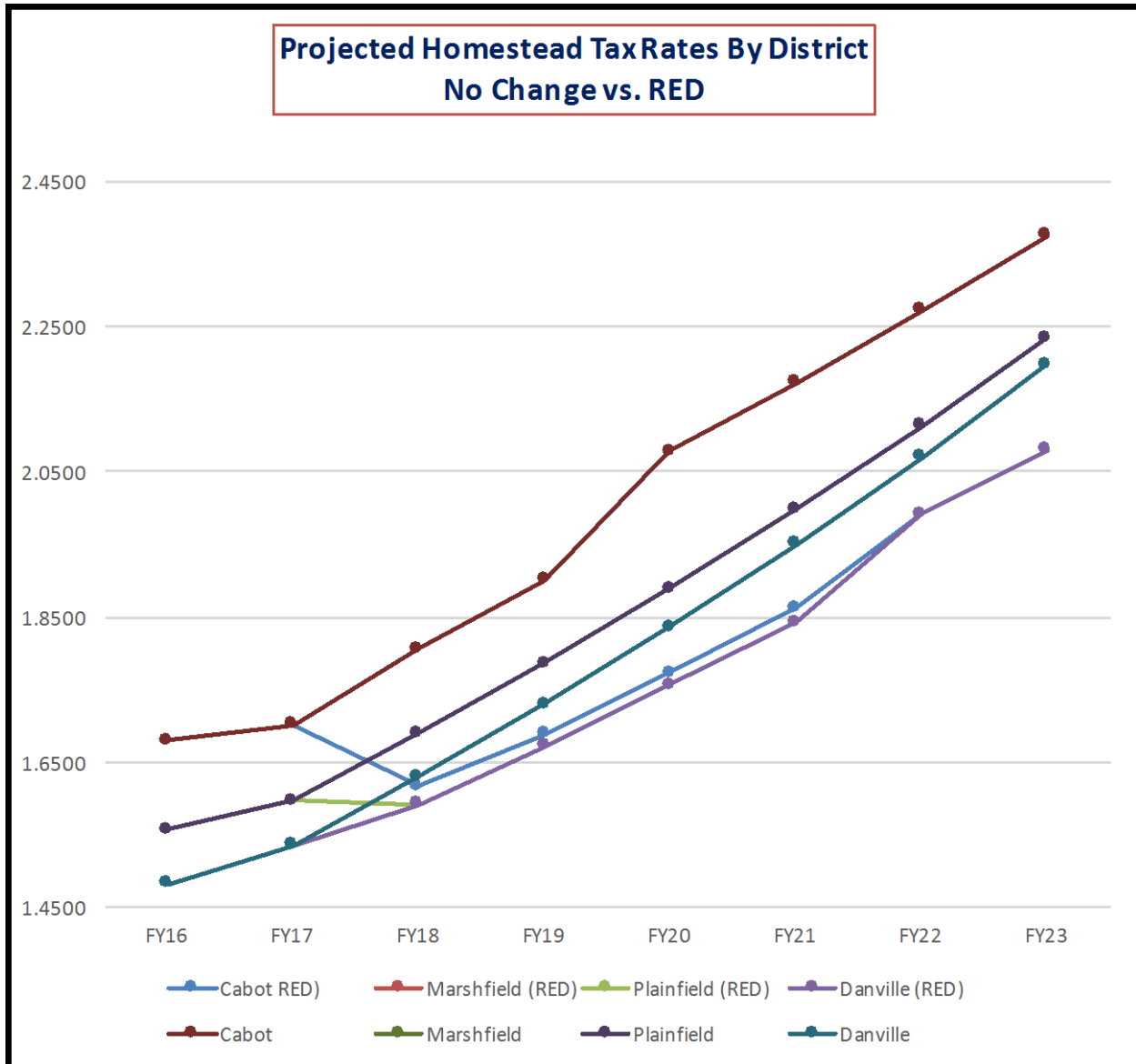
Three different runs of the model were undertaken, using three different spending assumptions in Year One of the new unified district:

Run #1 - District Operational Savings Year One: \$0.00

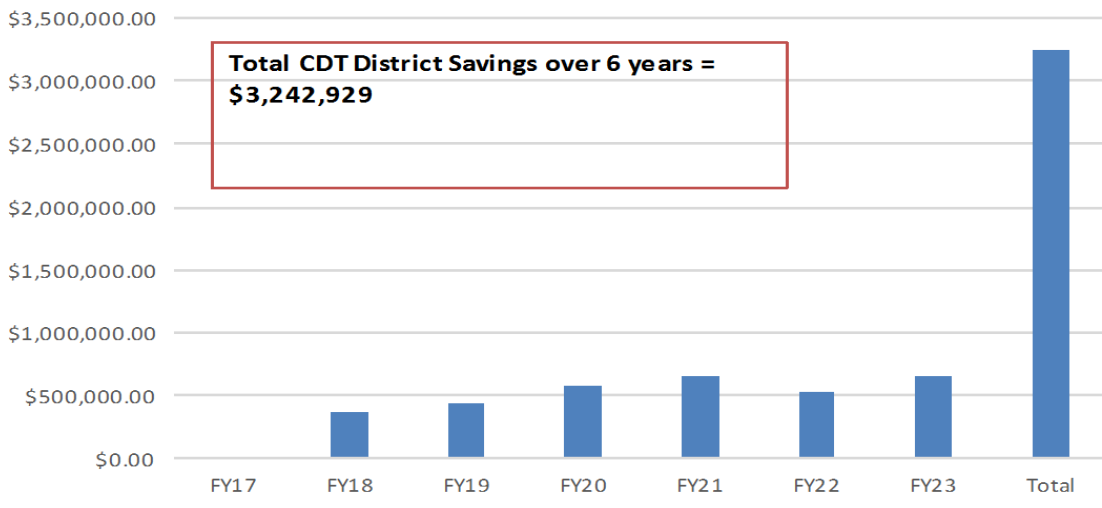
Run #2 – District Operational Savings Year One: \$500,000

Results:

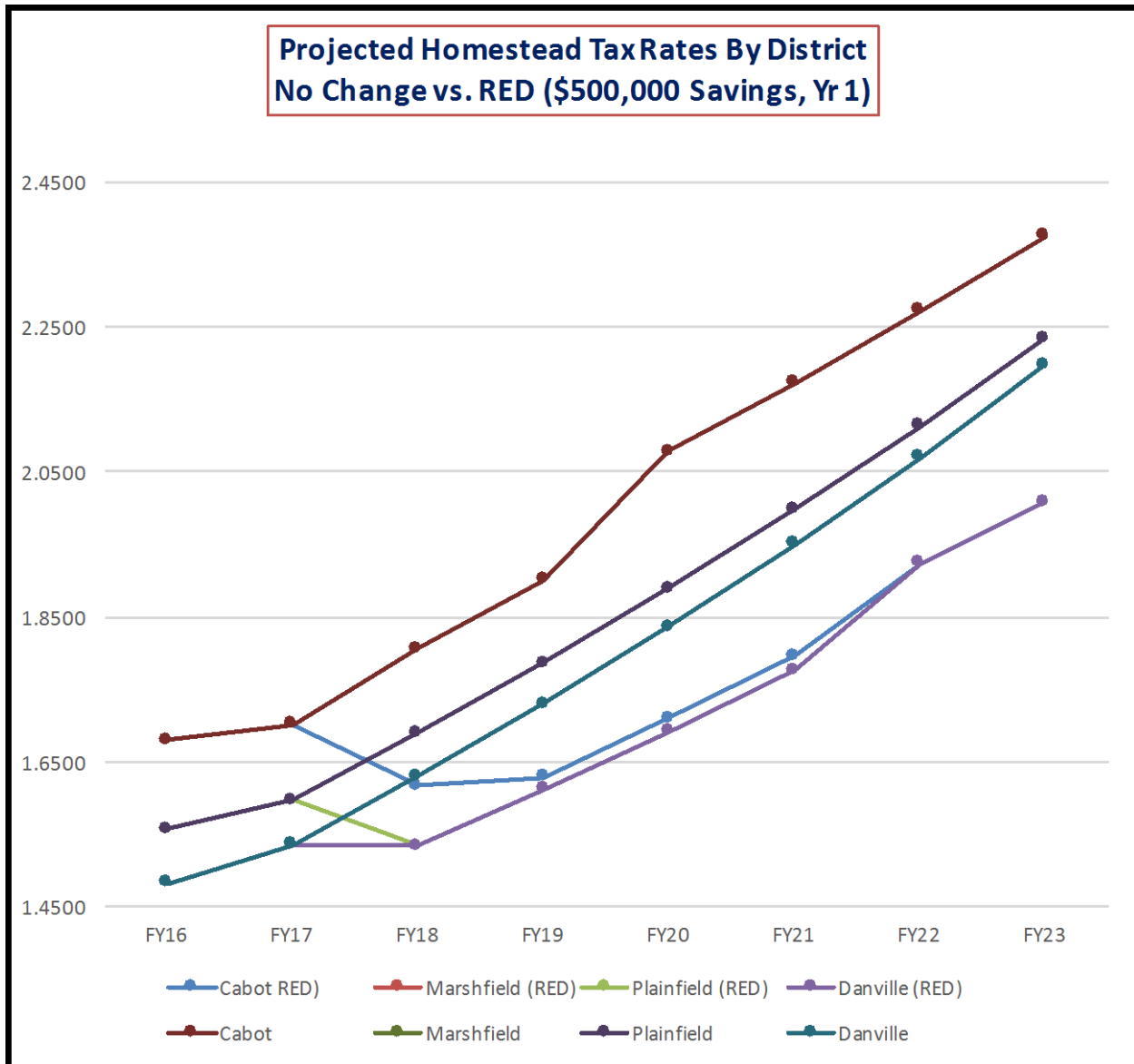
Run #1 - District Operational Savings Year One: \$0.00



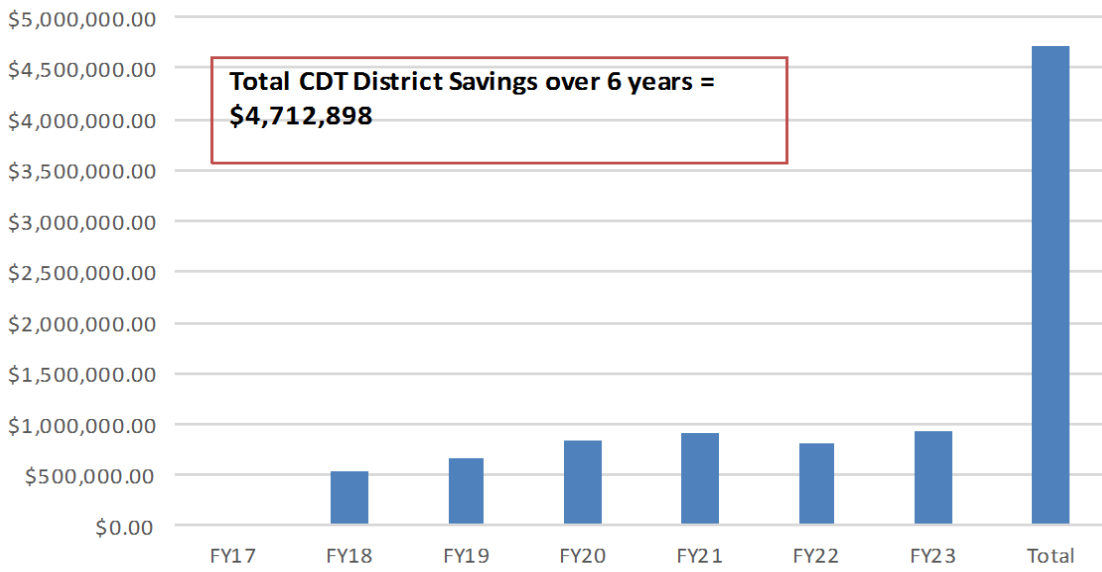
Tax Savings Due to Incentives; Maintaining Small Schools Grants Hold Harmless



Run #2 – District Operational Savings Year One: \$500,000



Tax Savings Due to Incentives; Maintaining Small Schools Grants Hold Harmless; \$500,000 Operational Savings in Year One



706b Study Proportional Representation: Cabot, Danville, Twinfield

In forming a 706 committee, sending boards', "shall ensure that each participating district share in the committee's budget and be represented on the committee in that proportion which the equalized pupils (as defined in section 4001 of this title) of the district bear to the total equalized pupils of all school districts intending to participate in the committee's study."

The FY 17 Data for Equalized Pupils in Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield is:

Cabot:	181.25
Danville:	317.65
Twinfield:	395.91
Total:	894.81

Therefore, in terms of representation on the committee:

Cabot:	20%;
Danville:	35%;
Twinfield:	44%

With Cabot wanting at least 2 reps, the size of the committee would be 11 members with make-up as:

Cabot:	2 members
Danville:	4 members
Twinfield:	5 members

Proportional Representation Data for Potential Merged District between the Sending Towns of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield

A proportionally-based Board of School Directors shall be roughly proportional to the populations of the forming towns, based on the 2010 decennial U.S. Census.

According to the 2010 Decennial U.S. Census, the populations of Cabot, Danville, Marshfield, and Plainfield are as follows:

Cabot:	1,433
Danville:	2,196
Marshfield:	1,588
Plainfield:	1,243
Total:	6,460

Rough Percentage Representation:

Cabot:	22%
Danville:	34%
Marshfield:	25%
Plainfield:	19%

Note: Proportional Representation is only one of three potential models of Board Representation – the other two being: At-Large Membership and a Hybrid Model.

APPENDIX 17: COMMITTEE MEETINGS/PUBLIC FORUMS

706B COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

9/14/16
9/21/16
10/12/16
10/26/16
11/16/16
12/5/16
12/12/16
1/5/17
1/31/17
3/9/17
3/16/17
3/22/17
3/27/17
4/5/17
4/18/17
4/24/17

PUBLIC FORUMS:

1/10/17 TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL
1/11/17 CABOT SCHOOL
1/12/17 DANVILLE SCHOOL

4/10/17 DANVILLE SCHOOL
4/11/17 TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL
4/12/17 CABOT SCHOOL

APPENDIX 18 : SAMPLE WARNING

WARNING

The voters of the town school district of _____ are hereby notified and warned to meet at _____ on June 20, 2017, to vote by Australian ballot between the hours of 8:00 a.m., at which time the polls will open, and 7:00 p.m., at which time the polls will close, upon the following articles of business:

Article I

Shall the town school district of _____, which the State Board of Education has found necessary to include in the proposed union school district, join with the school districts of _____ and Twinfield Union, which the State Board of Education has found necessary to include in the proposed union school district, for the purpose of forming a union school district to be named the CDT Unified Union School District, as provided in Title 16, Vermont Statutes Annotated, upon the following conditions and agreements:

- Grades. The CDT Unified Union School District shall operate and manage schools offering instruction in grades Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12.
- Board of School Directors. The CDT Board of School Directors shall have 9 members. A member town's representation on the School Board of the CDT Unified Union School District will be based on proportional representation based on the 2010 census with two members each from Cabot, Marshfield and Plainfield and three members from Danville. Each time there is a new decennial census, the proportionality of representation reflected in the specific numbers of directors allocated to each municipality shall be aligned to the new counts if necessary. At no time will a member town have less than two school directors on the District Board.
- Assumption of debts and ownership of school property. The CDT School District shall assume the indebtedness of member districts, acquire the school properties of member districts, and pay for them, all as specified in the final report.
- Final Report. The provisions of the final report proposed to the State Board of Education for approval on the 16th day of May, which is on file in the town clerk's office, shall govern the CDT Unified Union School District. Amendments to the Articles of Agreement outlined above in this voted article and Articles 13 (Provisions for Closure of a School) and Article 17 (Changing the Operating Structure of a School – Grades Offered) may only be amended at a properly warned special or annual meeting of the district. Voting shall be by Australian ballot. Results shall be reported to the public by member district and will be effective if approved by a majority of the voters of the union district voting at that meeting. All other provisions of the Articles of Agreement may be amended by a simple majority vote of the union board of school directors.
- Conditional Approval. The CDT Unified Union School District shall not be formed and the terms hereby voted shall not become effective unless one of the following additional conditions occurs:
 - The CDT Unified Union School District shall be formed and the terms hereby voted shall become effective if, the voters of the PK-12 districts of Barnet and Waterford,

and/or Barnet, Waterford and Walden vote to approve the formation of the Caledonia Cooperative Unified Union School District and that district becomes operational on July 1, 2018, and both new unified union school districts become members of a new supervisory union meeting the criteria of “Side-by-Side” mergers pursuant to 2012 Acts and Resolves No. 156; or

- The CDT Unified Union School District shall be formed and the terms hereby voted shall become effective if, under legislation enacted by the General Assembly during its 2017 Session, the Unified District would be eligible for the same tax rate reductions and other transitional assistance it would have received as one member of “Side-by-Side” merger pursuant to 2012 Acts and Resolves No. 156.

Article II

To elect two school directors to serve on the proposed CDT Unified Union School District from the date of the organizational meeting for the following terms and seats:

- One (1) school director from _____ from the date of the organizational meeting through the date of the annual meeting in March 2019 from the following nominees: _____,
- One (1) school director from _____ from the date of the organizational meeting through the date of the annual meeting in March 2021 from the following nominees: _____,