

From: Eric Lopez <elopez@wrvsu.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:04 AM
To: Samuelson, Jennifer <Jennifer.Samuelson@vermont.gov>; French, Daniel <Daniel.French@vermont.gov>
Cc: Sarah Root <sroot@wrvsu.org>; Kathy Galluzzo <kgalluzzo@wrvsu.org>; jkinnarney <jkinnarney@wrvsu.org>
Subject: Inclusion of Town of Lincoln within the White River Valley Supervisor Union

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Dear Secretary French and Secretary Samuelson:

I write to you as a member of the Strafford Board of School Directors in opposition to inclusion of the Town of Lincoln within the White River Valley Supervisory Union. I can certainly appreciate the history and why the Town of Lincoln would want to join our supervisory union. It is, I think, recognition of the good work being done here by our Superintendent, Jamie Kinnarney, as well as our WRVSU Board Chairperson Kathy Galluzzo. We are thankful for this recognition.

However, and even though we might feel flattered, the inclusion of Lincoln within our supervisory union just simply does not make sense. Including Lincoln in the White River Valley Supervisory Union would over extend our already stretched resources. It would create one of the largest supervisory unions in the state and likely the one with the hardest geography. The economies of scale and the ability to provide services in a meaningful way to our students will be compromised as we ask providers of those services, which may be providing the services on a part time basis, to travel the distance between Strafford and Lincoln, or Chelsea and Lincoln. It is not just that the territory is large, but that the thoroughfares within the territory do not allow for simple commutes between the towns. This is something that is already a challenge and would be made worse by the addition of Lincoln.

The White River Supervisory Union is already responsible for the creation of 7 budgets as it tries to plan for six elementary schools, three middle schools and a high school. These are already complex budgets which would be compounded by the addition of yet another small school with a small student base onto our union. We are at a point within our Supervisor Union and our schools where we are starting to realize the benefits of continuity of staff and lessening of turmoil within our district. The good process we have made would be disrupted with the addition of yet another town. The complexities of education in the town of Lincoln would likely be better served with partnerships at a more local level, not by matching them up with a supervisor union that has no basis of knowledge of local needs and resources. It also places a significant burden on our towns as our taxpayers bear the brunt of subsuming Lincoln into the mix. This type of burden shifting is unfair and inequitable, especially as there are more meaningful, closer partnerships to be forged.

There are myriad other reasons why inclusion of Lincoln into our supervisory union does not make sense, what I have mentioned so far is just the tip of the iceberg and what is obvious. The

unintended consequences of this type of a move would be plentiful and ill advised. I urge you to not put forth or endorse a plan incorporating Lincoln onto the White River Supervisory Union.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for your work.

Sincerely,
Eric Lopez, Member
Strafford School Board of Directors