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**Subject: Re: Documents Related to SBE Status Report**

**Date:** August 3, 2022 at 11:37:58 AM GMT-4

**To:** "Kolbe, Tammy" <[Tammy.Kolbe@vermont.gov](mailto:Tammy.Kolbe@vermont.gov)>

Good Morning, Tammy

I am looking at the timeline for the State Board of Education consideration and review of the Ripton - Lincoln request to become their own district. While I am not able to attend a meeting with the Board due to scheduling conflicts, I am writing to share my initial thoughts after reviewing the status report. My concerns are mostly questions rather than concerns. To put it succinctly, the concern I have relates to the provision of FAPE and how special education will be funded and provided. Below, I have bulleted some questions that may be helpful for the board and RSD to consider:

- Is it possible to hire a superintendent who is also qualified/certified as a director of special education? If it is possible, is that a job that is going to be able to be sustained by one person? Without knowing the population or special education counts for each school, it is difficult for an outside reviewer to make a judgement about this.
- A part time special educator may not be adequate. I am not sure what the model is - A part time director and one special education teacher in each building? The report did not indicate enough information to look at whether the staffing will be adequate to provide general education support as well as fulfill required IEP services.
- Is the superintendent /special education director also going to be responsible for curriculum oversight and reporting? On page 35 a reference is made to the special education director and their responsibilities. However, in the model it seemed that this would be a shared position superintendent/director.
- who will provide coordination between curriculum, instruction and MTSS systems of supports?
- How will excess special education costs be handled in this new district? If a student requires an alternative outside educational placement or a student moves to the district who has intensive levels of special education needs, how will this be handled under the block grant?
- Is a part time Business manager enough for the new district? Again, without know the census, I can't evaluate this. Has the Board of Education received adequate information regarding the oversight of food service, transportation, facilities management and budget development? It sounds as though there is a collaborative relationship with the ACSD. Is there a plan for how they will work together for students transitioning from the elementary, middle and high school ?
- EQS and state reporting is extremely time consuming as are special education reporting to the state. What is the plan for who will complete these reports now that the two schools would be separate from ACSD.? The reporting requirements will now be needed from both ACSD and RSD which means extra staff at RSD will be needed to complete these reports. Reading the report, it isn't clear to me who would be responsible for what, but maybe this has been identified.
- Combined classrooms presents challenges for small schools, always. My questions would be regarding numbers and the potential that the typical classroom configurations won't work due to small numbers. For example, if there is only one 2nd grade girl and you have a 1-2 combined classroom. What would happen to that 2nd grade student? Would she be transported to the other school so there are more age peers for her? Would you create a 1-2-3 grade classroom for a year ? Part of the advantage to merged school districts is that administration does not

have to worry about small class groupings and have constantly changing class combinations. This is something that would need to be considered in terms of creating smaller districts.

- Bulk purchasing- will SCSD and RSD do any bulk ordering? This is another advantage and cost savings that was provided by the merger. Will Instructional materials and curriculum assessments/programs, computers, etc. How will this be handled? How will the districts create ways to maintain some of the advantages of merged school districts while remaining separate school districts? Or will they be duplicating efforts?
- Lunch services. It sounds like ACSD will continue to procure meals and deliver lunches to the two schools? How will costs be divided and will students get hot meals?
- Transportation of meals and the purchasing of one vehicle? a van? How would one vehicle be scheduled to transport students and also potentially lunches?

I am happy to meet or conduct further review if needed. At this point I have more questions than recommendations. Let me know if I can be of more assistance.

Sincerely,

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