

Report of the
Act 46 Study
Committee on
the Proposed
Lamoille North
Unified Union
School District

Standing at the Threshold



Guiding Principles Aligned with Culture and Belief

1. A unified union school district must lead to greater equity, increased learning opportunities, better outcomes, and an enhanced experience for all our students.
2. A unified union school district must make education more affordable today and into the future.
3. All of our towns must have equitable representation, participation, and voice.

The Study Process

- All 6 town school boards voted unanimously on August 24, 2015, to form a Study Committee
- Committee charge was to explore Act 46 governance structure aligned with principles
- The 14-member committee has met eight times from September through January.
- Meetings were **open to the public.**
 - Generated Opportunities & Challenges
 - Explored Cost Savings
 - Engaged in Community Outreach – six Public Forums
- Drafted Articles of Agreement
- A website was developed **housing all of the information considered by the committee** in its deliberations (<http://www.insu.org>).
- During the month of November 2015, all six towns held public forums

Benefits of a Unified Union could include:

- Creating a PreK-12 Single Education Community with Shared Services
 - Teaching and Learning Efficiencies
 - Common, seamless curriculum
 - Shared professionals and resources
 - Leverage the talents and expertise of our teachers & staff
 - Exchange best practices from each and all schools
 - Greater consistency in the preparation of PreK-6 students
 - More seamless 6th-7th grade transition for students
 - Consistency of opportunity, quality, and equity
 - Opportunities for implementing Vermont's Education Quality Standards for teaching, learning, and accountability

Benefits Could Include: (continued)

- Governance and Operational Efficiencies
 - 1 budget, not 9
 - 1 board, not 8
 - Centralized services
 - Greater understanding and management of resources across PreK-12
 - Less complexity, one governance structure.
 - Time and resource savings to deploy resources back to schools
 - Board member service and retention (recruitment, meeting quorums)
 - Reduced duplication of effort by boards
 - Tax Incentives for 5 years

Benefits: (Continued)

- Cost Saving Opportunities
 - Greater predictability
 - Economies and efficiencies of scale in operations
 - Better ability to absorb fluctuations in costs
 - Reduces the number of State, Federal, and IRS reports and eliminates intergovernmental accounting transactions
 - Reduces the number and Expense of independent audits
 - Lowers the possibility of exceeding the excess spending tax penalty threshold
 - Maintains equalized pupil "hold harmless" protection

Accelerated Transition Incentives

Vote of Electorate by 7/1/16 Single District by 7/1/17

Homestead Tax Rate Reduction

- First 5 Years: \$.10/\$.08/\$.06/\$.04/\$.02

Small School Grant Retention

- Waterville \$77,764 & Eden \$27,259 (Changes Yearly Based on Student Population)

3.5% Hold Harmless...Held Harmless!

- Protection on Declining Enrollment (Sunsets in 2021 without protection)

Exempts District's from Construction Aid Repayment

- Law otherwise requires repayment based on the original 30% (more or less...it depends)

\$150,000 Transition Grant or 5% of Base Ed Amount x New ADM (Whichever is Less)

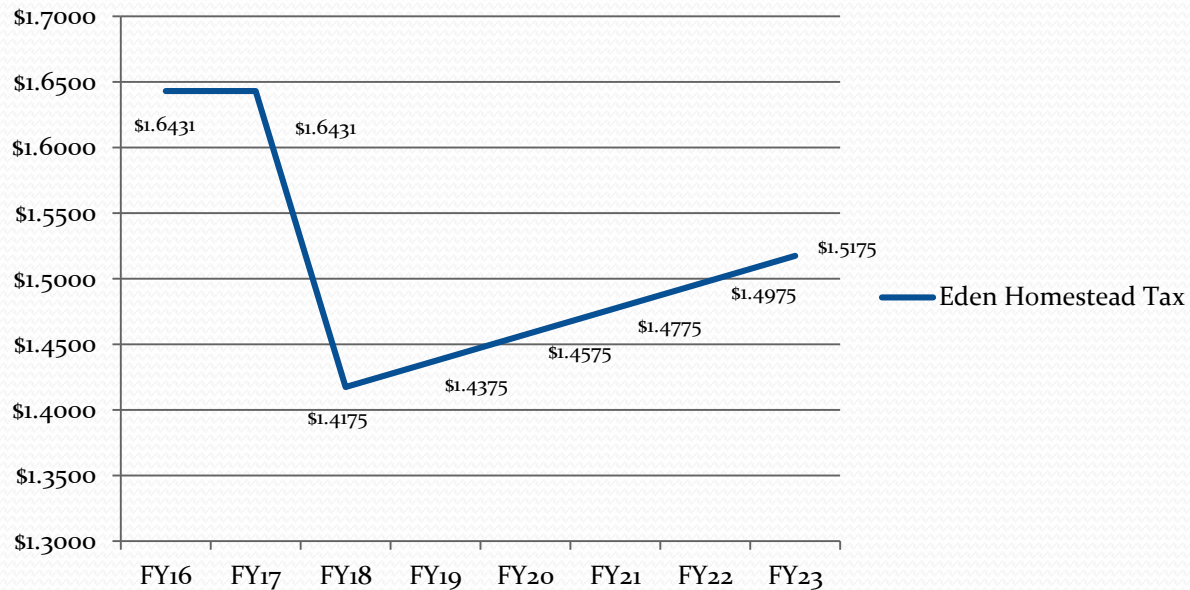
- Minus the initial grant already received

If only 4 towns vote to unify, Tax Reduction is less for the 4, zero for the other 2

What Would Accelerated Adoption Mean For Eden's Tax Rate and Taxes?

UU Rate	\$1.5175	\$1.5175	\$1.5175	\$1.5175	\$1.5175	\$1.5175	\$1.5175	\$1.5175
Incentive			\$0.1000	\$0.0800	\$0.0600	\$0.0400	\$0.0200	\$0.0000
Incentive Rate			\$1.4175	\$1.4375	\$1.4575	\$1.4775	\$1.4975	\$1.5175
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Eden Homestead Tax	\$1.6431	\$1.6431	\$1.4175	\$1.4375	\$1.4575	\$1.4775	\$1.4975	\$1.5175

Eden Homestead Tax



Challenges

- While the Committee believes the “pros” outweigh the “cons” when it comes to bringing this decision to the voters, potential challenges include loss of local control and fear of the unknown
- Teaching and Learning:
 - Reluctance in switching to unfamiliar curriculum
 - Teacher mobility may cause anxiety
 - Student movement difficult (5-year protection from closing any school)
 - Equity could decrease quality
- Operational Challenges:
 - Loss of local boards identity
 - Greater control to the SU and to the state
 - Real estate ownership and indebtedness

Bonded Indebtedness

School	Last Yr of bonded debt	FY17 Debt	Payments due 2021	Balance of bond principal in 2021	
Hyde Park Elementary	N/A		BEGIN PRINCIPAL PAYMENTS IN 2021 or 2022		
Eden Central	January 2032 - FY '32	\$ 17,491.00	\$645	\$25,000.00	(pending forgiveness DWGPD)
Eden Central	December 2035 - FY '36		\$45,151	\$461,250.00	
Waterville Elementary	December 2016 - FY '17	Interest Only if new HPES Bond will be offset by retirement of Waterville and	\$0	N/A	
Belvidere	December 2017 - FY '18		\$0	N/A	
LUSD 18	December 2020- FY '21	\$ 41,070.00	\$472,981	\$0.00	
LUSD 18	December 2026 - FY '27	\$ 600,700.00	\$510,838	\$2,325,000.00	
LUSD 18					\$40,000 paid off in Dec. 2016
LUSD 18	October 2021 - FY '22	\$ 597,797.00			
Johnson Elementary		\$ 31,536.00			\$190,000 paid off in June 2016
Johnson Elementary	November 2029 - FY '30	\$ 207,346.00	\$112,039	\$771,923.00	
Cambridge Elementary	December 2025 - FY '26	\$ 444,980.00	\$380,213	\$1,525,000.00	
Total		\$ 1,940,920.00	\$1,521,867		

Strategy to delay principal payment for 5 years to absorb new debt as old debt retires to even-out expense

Challenges: (Continued)

- Miscellaneous:
 - What will Montpelier do? Will Act 46 be changed?
 - The new school board would have to “make good” on many of the potential benefits identified by the Committee
 - Once approved, the transition to a unified union district could be complicated

School Directors

Town/District	1 Year Term	2 Year Term	3 Year Term
Belvidere		1	
Cambridge	2	1	2
Eden	1		1
Hyde Park	1	2	1
Johnson	2	1	2
Waterville		1	

Petitions Required: 30 signatures or 1% of the registered voters

Registered Voters can only sign same number of petitions as open seats

Submit to Town Clerk no earlier than March 3, 2016, and no later than March 14, 2016.

● Public Information Hearing Dates:

- Belvidere – April 5, 2016, 6:00 p.m., Belvidere Central School Multipurpose Room
- Cambridge – April 6, 2016, 6:00 p.m., Cambridge Elementary School Gymnasium
- Hyde Park – April 4, 2016, 6:00 p.m., Hyde Park Elementary School Library
- Eden – April 7, 2016, 6:00 p.m., Eden Central School Gymnasium
- Johnson – April 11, 2016, 6:00 p.m., Johnson Elementary School Library
- Waterville – April 7, 2016, 7:00 p.m., Waterville Elementary School Gymnasium

Vote!

- Recommendation from the VT Agency of Education to the Vermont State Board of Education-**Completed**
- Approval by the VSBE-**Completed**
- Community votes on the proposal for a unified union school district and election of members to the new board on Tuesday, April 12, 2016! **TBD**
- For more information, visit <http://www.Insu.org>

Thank You!