

AGENCY OF EDUCATION
Barre, Vermont

TEAM: AOE School Governance Team

ACTION ITEM: Will the State Board of Education vote to approve the temporary assignment of the Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District (Essex Westford Unified District) to the Chittenden Central Supervisory Union for the purpose of receiving administrative and other transitional assistance from the supervisory union? The temporary assignment would in no way modify the governing structure of the existing systems. Assignment would be for the interim period beginning on the date on which the Essex Westford Unified District became a legal entity pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 706g and ending on July 1, 2017, when it becomes fully operational as a supervisory district pursuant to the terms of its voter-approved Articles of Agreement.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the State Board of Education votes to approve the temporary assignment of the Essex Westford Unified District to the Chittenden Central Supervisory Union for the purpose of receiving administrative and other transitional assistance from the supervisory union. The temporary assignment would in no way modify the governing structure of the existing systems. Assignment would be for the interim period beginning on the date on which the Essex Westford Unified District became a legal entity pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 706g and ending on July 1, 2017, when it becomes fully operational as a supervisory district pursuant to the terms of its voter-approved Articles of Agreement.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 16 V.S.A. §§ 261, 706h

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: On November 5, 2015, the voters of all districts within the Chittenden Central Supervisory Union and the Essex Town Supervisory District approved formation of the Essex Westford Unified District. The Essex Westford Unified District became a legal entity pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. § 706g in December 2015 and its statutorily-required organization meeting occurred on January 26, 2016. The Essex Westford Unified District will become a fully operational supervisory district on July 1, 2017 as provided in its voter-approved Articles of Agreement

Current law provides that a unified union school district becomes a legal entity on the day on which the Secretary of Education records a certification of voter approval with the Secretary of State. 16 V.S.A. § 706g. Several weeks later, the new board members of

the unified union school district are sworn in at an organizational meeting and assume office. 16 V.S.A. § 706j. The new unified union school district becomes operational, however, on a date established in the voter-approved articles of agreement. The operational date could be a few months or even more than a year after the day on which the new district becomes a legal entity (the Interim Period). The merging districts and the supervisory union dissolve on the date on which the unified union school district becomes operational, or on some slightly later date specified in the articles of agreement.

During the Interim Period, the board of the unified union school district “may conduct business for the limited purpose of preparing for the transition to unified union district administration while [the merging districts] continue to operate schools.” 16 V.S.A. § 722. 16 V.S.A. § 706h requires the State Board to “assign a union school district to a supervisory union” for administrative and other services. In this case, the new unified union school district, while in its transition phase, needs administrative and supervisory services. The State Board would direct the Chittenden Central Supervisory Union, per 16 V.S.A. §706h, to support and supervise all transitional needs prior to the effective operational date of the Essex Westford Unified District.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS: The Chittenden Central Supervisory Union will provide administrative services to the Essex Westford Unified District until July 1, 2017 to assist transition to the new governance model.

COST IMPLICATIONS: There are no cost implications.

STAFF AVAILABLE: Donna Russo-Savage, Principal Assistant to the Secretary