

AGENCY OF EDUCATION
Barre, Vermont

TEAM: School Governance

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education approve (1) the request of the **CENTRAL VERMONT UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT** to change its name officially to the **PAINE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT** and (2) the request of the **ORANGE WASHINGTON UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT** to change its name officially to the **ECHO VALLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT** and will it certify both name changes to the Secretary of State?

SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- 1. That the State Board of Education approve**
 - a. the request of the Central Vermont Unified Union School District to change its name officially to the Paine Mountain School District; and**
 - b. the request of the Orange Washington Unified Union School District to change its name officially to the Echo Valley Community School District; and**
- 2. That the State Board of Education authorize its Chair to certify these name changes to the Secretary of State.**

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 16 V.S.A. § 706c and § 164

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Title 16, chapter 11 does not provide a process by which a unified union school district can formally change its officially recorded name. Similarly, the Secretary of State's Office has not identified a statutory procedure in Title 17 or elsewhere that would be appropriate to this particular situation.

Review of the Agency's files of union school districts created in the 1960s revealed at least one instance in which, at the request of an existing union high school district, the State Board approved an official name change from "UHSD #____" to an unrelated name ("the ____ UHSD") and certified the name change to the Secretary of State.

In 2016, the Secretary of State's Office agreed to use this same approval-certification process to change the officially recorded name of unified union school districts.

On March 21, 2017, the State Board of Education approved study committee proposals to create two new unified union school districts by unifying the Northfield and Williamstown School Districts and the Orange and Washington School Districts under 16 V.S.A. Ch. 11.

The voters of all four districts approved the proposal on May 2, 2017.

Before the new unified union school districts were authorized to conduct their organizational meetings and swear in their new board members, 16 V.S.A. § 706g required the Secretary of Education to record a certificate with the Secretary of State that designated each new entity as a unified union school district and identified the new district by name. The Secretary of State recorded the existence of the new districts under the names "Central Vermont Unified Union School District" and "Orange Washington Unified Union School District."

Shortly thereafter, both of the new unified union school districts ("New Unified Districts") held their organizational meetings during which the members of the new unified board were sworn in and assumed office. Subsequently, the boards of both New Unified Districts voted at duly warned meetings to change the districts' names to "the Paine Mountain School District" and "the Echo Valley Community School District," respectively

The Agency supports the requests of both New Unified Districts for the State Board to approve a formal name change to "the Paine Mountain School District" and "the Echo Valley Community School District" and to certify the changes to the Secretary of State.

POLICY, EDUCATION, AND FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: This request raises no policy, education, or fiscal implications.

STAFF AVAILABLE: Donna Russo-Savage,
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