

AGENCY OF EDUCATION  
Barre, Vermont

**TEAM:** Legal

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education approve the request of the **WINDSOR / WEST WINDSOR UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT** to change its name officially to the **MOUNT ASCUTNEY SCHOOL DISTRICT** and will it certify the name change to the Secretary of State?

**SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

- 1. That the State Board of Education approve the request of the Windsor / West Windsor Unified Union School District to change its name officially to the Mount Ascutney School District; and**
- 2. That the State Board of Education authorize its Chair to certify the name change 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 January 17, 2018, the State Board of Education approved a study committee proposal to create a new unified union school districts by unifying the Windsor and West Windsor School Districts pursuant to 16 V.S.A. Ch. 11.

The voters of both districts approved the proposal on March 6, 2018.

Before the new unified union school district was authorized to conduct its organizational meetings and swear in its new board members, 16 V.S.A. § 706g required the Secretary of Education to record a certificate with the Secretary of State that designated the 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 district under the name “Windsor / West Windsor Unified Union School District” (“New Unified District”).

Shortly thereafter, the New Unified Districts held its organizational meeting during which the members of the new unified board were sworn in and assumed office. Subsequently, the board of the New Unified District voted at a duly warned meeting to change the district’s name to the “Mount Ascutney School District.” A copy of the minutes is attached.

The Agency supports the requests of the New Unified District for the State Board to approve a formal name change to “Mount Ascutney School District.” and to certify the change to the Secretary of State.

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

**STAFF AVAILABLE:** Donna Russo-Savage, Staff Attorney