

To Members of the Vermont State Board of Education

15 May 2018

I write to you as a citizen of Vermont.

Small towns of New England and especially Vermont are vital for the continuity of our state history and our state culture.

A new generation is hard at work finding a way to keep land open by working small plots of land as CSA's and the like - replicating the hard scrabble farm of the 40's and 50's.

Small country stores are trying to reinvent themselves to be there for the townspeople.

Small town citizens maintain the work ethic, the value of really caring for your neighbors – next door or across town - and the importance of being truly involved in one's community.

Small schools are why people settle in small towns. Small schools are what folks want for their children, and grandchildren and great grandchildren. They want those children to be held close, supported, loved and yes, coddled as well as educated at school. Most think a small place is the very best place for their children to grow, become strong, self-assured, and prepared to out-grow childish things.

Small School Grants have traditionally supported small schools in the small towns. But now it appears those grants will disappear for some small schools – threatening their existence.

If small schools in small towns are closed it will cut the heart out of small towns.

Dorothy Naylor  
Calais Vermont