

**Position on the State Board of Education's  
deliberations and their impact on Mount  
Abraham Unified School District (MAUSD)  
regarding supervisory union assignment**

**June 15, 2022**

Creating a New SU to Provide  
Services to MAUSD and Any Other  
Newly Formed District in the Area  
Would Negatively Impact the Students,  
Staff and Taxpayers in MAUSD

## Impact on Students

- Reduced Equity
  - Separate governing bodies and separate budgets make it harder to build equitable systems leading to:
    - Varying levels of support and opportunity for students
      - access to intervention
      - instructor access to PD
      - access to nurse
      - access to after school programming
      - access to food service
      - access to the arts
      - access to core instruction
      - access to mental health support
    - Variability in implementation of MTSS and other systems to support Act 173

## Impact on Students Cont.

- Reduced Continuity Across Schools
  - Leads to variability in preparedness of students entering middle school
  - Hard to move SU in a single direction on common initiatives
    - Strategic Plan
    - MTSS
    - PBIS
    - First Step
    - Cost Effective Mindset
- Reduced Flexibility to Meet Student Need
  - different districts = different employers - makes sharing staff more difficult
  - when sharing staff is more difficult so too is assigning staff to meet changing needs
  - complexities associated with SUs make hiring more difficult which could increase the number of unfilled positions which could reduce support for students

# Impact on Staff

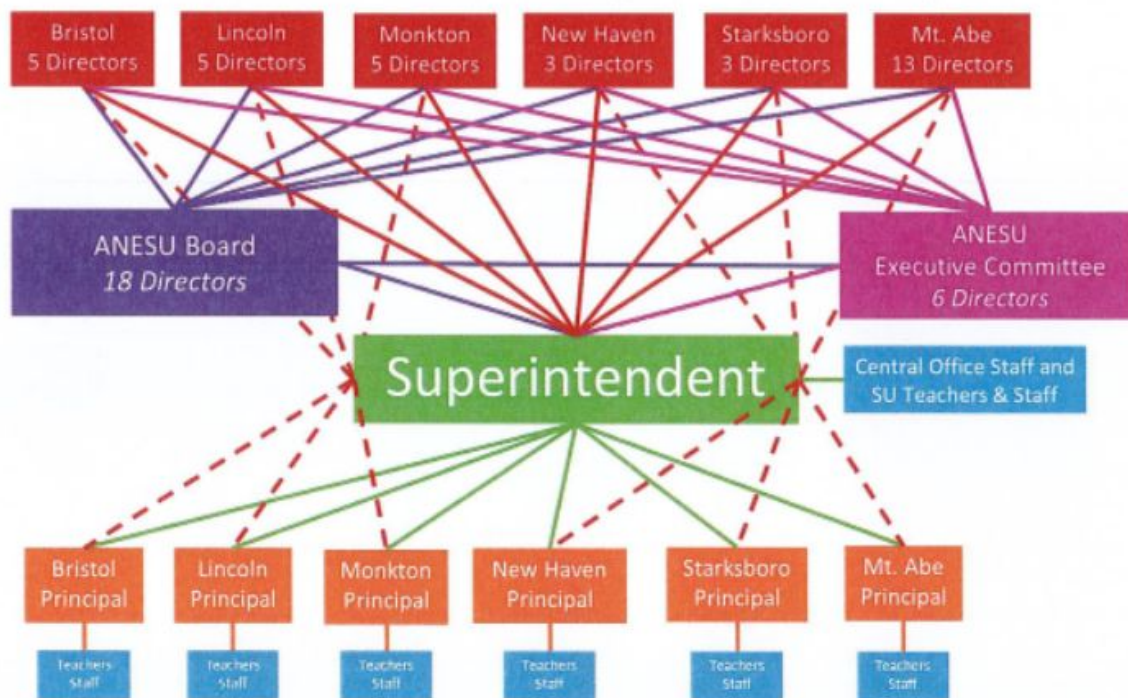
- Reduced Job Security
  - In SU when one district (school) reduces positions employees don't have rights to positions in other districts in the SU
  - Shared staff across districts in a SU receive reduced benefits
- Staff feel the results from lack of cohesion in SU
  - Reduced sense of direction (Strategic Plan)
  - Disjointed PD
  - Different Bargaining Agreements
  - Resources become more strained due to inefficiency
- Harder to fill faculty and staff positions
- Harder to fill leadership positions

## Impact on Taxpayers

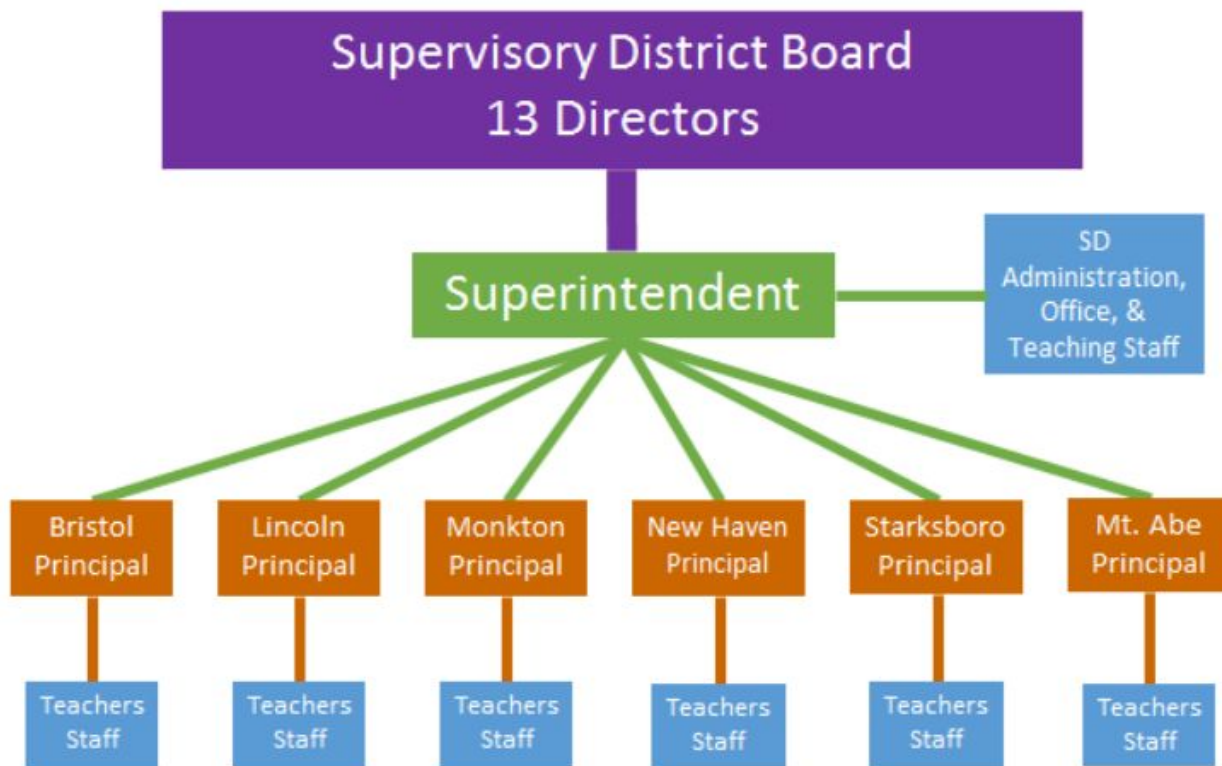
- Unequal representation on SU Board (3 per district)
  - MAUSD & Lincoln - MAUSD 87% of students 50% of representation
  - MAUSD & Lincoln & Starksboro - MAUSD 70% of students 33% representation
  - MAUSD & Lincoln & Ripton - MAUSD 82% of students 33% representation
  - MAUSD & Lincoln & Ripton & Starksboro - MAUSD 65% of students 25% representation
- Steeper Tax Rate Increase
  - Increased overhead costs from adding positions to manage multiple budgets, multiple payrolls, multiple grants, etc.
  - Decreased flexibility in staffing likely to lead to increased staffing costs
    - Staffing flexibility has helped MAUSD take advantage of attrition saving millions of dollars over the past 4 years
- Supporting withdrawing towns by forcing unified districts to return to SUs could incentivize other towns to withdraw exacerbating these impacts
- Since withdrawing towns become secondary school choice districts this could leave Mt. Abe without a school district to call home

## APPENDIX E – GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### E1 – ANESU Current Governance Structure (~34 School Directors)



## E2 – ANESD Possible Unified Supervisory District Structure





## Impact on Merger

- Could eliminate option to merge ANWSD & MAUSD
  - Eliminates option to reduce costs by 5 million dollars annually while sustaining or increasing programs for students
  - This means either taxes increase or program offerings decrease to make up for lost savings
  - Savings from merger might be the best chance to keep small schools viable
- Without a merger students in MAUSD, especially secondary students, will experience reduced programming, support and opportunity unless taxpayers support more significant increases in taxes
- A merged future for secondary students offers significantly more programming, support and opportunity than an unmerged future without requiring much greater increases in taxes
- A merged future offers taxpayers more programming and support for their dollar than an unmerged future

## Impact of Lincoln & Starksboro Withdrawing

- Steep Enrollment Decline Gets Steeper
  - MAUSD has seen enrollment decline rapidly at the elementary level in recent years. Lincoln has lost nearly 40% since FY19. Robinson has lost over 30% since FY18. This decline is now beginning to work its way through middle and high school.
  - Fewer students can lead to fewer academic offerings, fewer athletic teams and other co-curricular offerings, and higher costs per pupil
  - Even fewer students going to Mt. Abe from Starksboro and Lincoln due to becoming secondary choice districts will add to this already significant concern
  - Lincoln & Starksboro together have about 220 students grades 7-12. Even if 80% attend Mt. Abe rather than choose another school that's an additional loss of over 40 students at Mt. Abe. This will impact programs and support for students or the tax rate for taxpayers.