

Dear VT Board of Education members:

I am Lucas Barrett, Chairman Orange East Supervisory Union (OESU) Board. I have been asked to share some thoughts in advance of your meeting. on the impact the assignment of Blue Mountain Union School to the OESU. I plan to attend the meeting if you have any questions. These are my thoughts based on discussion we have had at the board but do not represent any official action approved by the board.

Increased efficiency

Merging the SUs of Orange East and Blue Mountain will increase efficiency by reducing the number of Superintendents by .75 FTE, and the number of Business Managers by 1.0 FTE. Both offices use the same accounting software, and contract with the same transportation service. More important than these tangible efficiencies, Orange East is interested in hiring leadership that is devoted to the area, has a clear vision, and energy to move that vision forward. The largest inefficiency Orange East faces is turnover in leadership. The current Superintendent of Blue Mountain Union Supervisory Union, Emilie Knisley has accepted our offer to become our interim Superintendent for the year ending 6/30/2019. A great one-time efficiency can be achieved by assigning Blue Mountain to Orange East in lieu of hiring a new Superintendent at Blue Mountain. Likewise, the Business Manager at Blue Mountain has accepted our offer to be our business manager starting July 2018.

Convenience/Economy

Additional convenience and economy comes from specialized service providers at both districts. Special Education services, especially speech/language pathologists and occupational therapists are hard for our small districts to employ efficiently. Combining SUs and employing Special Education Staff under the larger SU will allow for more coordinated services and more convenient Special Education Administration.

Facilitation of PreK-12 curriculum planning and coordination:

Both SUs provide in district education that starts at Pre-K. Orange East has personnel dedicated to the coordination of these services. Blue Mountain can likely benefit from sharing this resource if the responsibilities of grant writing, STARS certification, and child find are given to teaching staff. Other curriculum coordination opportunities include community supporting project based learning projects, advanced placement, and college readiness classes.

Thank you,

Lucas Barrett

OESU Chairman