

# **Listen and Learn: Public Engagement**

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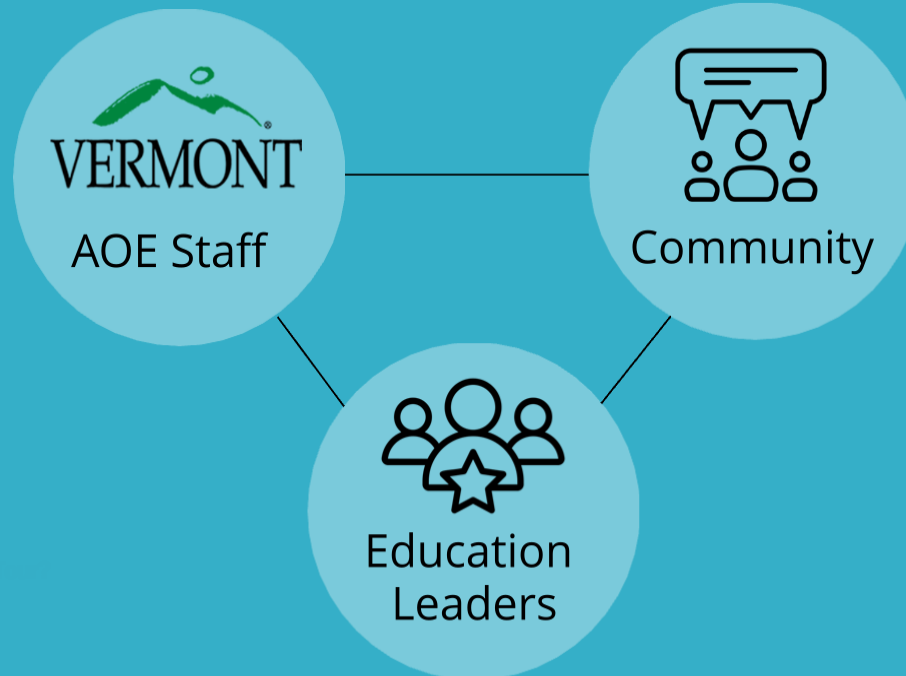
**October 28, 2024**

# What is the Agency of Education (AOE) ?

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- The AOE does not set policy or make laws. That is the job of the General Assembly.
- However, the AOE is responsible for implementing policy and is the only statewide entity responsible for ensuring the delivery of equitable education across Vermont.
- Important to remember that **education** is the only government service included in the state's constitution.
- AOE roles include:
  - Taking a statewide view of education performance
  - Overseeing the implementation of state and federal education laws
  - Being the repository for all data which is used to support continuous improvement
  - Facilitating planning to share lessons learned and to promote innovation across the state
  - Managing over \$2 billion annually in state and federal funds that districts receive.

# What is the Listen & Learn Tour?





### **GOAL 1**

Align AOE's work to regional and local priorities



### **GOAL 2**

Identify shared understanding of how AOE can support high quality teaching and learning



### **GOAL 3**

Expand access to high-quality educational opportunities



### **GOAL 4**

Identify key strategies for improving student achievement



## GOAL 5

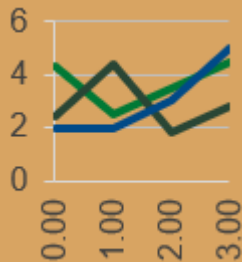
Develop strategic plan to support immediate needs and long-term vision

### Immediate Priorities

- Supporting key legislation
- Helping struggling districts
- Budget assistance & training

# AOE Listen and Learn

## Phase I: Data



## Phase II: Regional Planning



## Phase III: Public Engagement



# Regional Themes

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- Desire for stronger and more accessible community partnerships with schools
- More state resources for community members to learn about the budget
- Need for reliable, transparent, and easy to understand data
- Need to address student mental health and overall well-being
- Focus on expanding access to college and career learning
- Need for balance between local autonomy and desire for more AOE direction

# What Comes Next?

- **Release of updated State Profile Report**
- **Public engagement sessions**
- **Teacher/educator planning sessions**
- **Regional planning session summaries**
- **Topical reports**
- **Regional and SU/SD data reports**
- **Development of AOE strategic plan**
- **Informational videos and guides on school budgeting and education funding system**



# Framing the Conversation

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- As we engage in today's session, we want to recognize that everyone who is here has chosen to make this time because you care about your school, your community, and your state.
- The people of Vermont have a deep commitment to their education system, how we ensure that every student has opportunities and experiences that set them (and us) up for future success, and that we provide these opportunities in a way that communities can sustain.
- We recognize that education is an area that can raise strong feelings and opinions and that these are challenging conversations.
- Our conversation this evening will focus on defining success for our students and how the Agency of Education can support schools to ensure that every student has access to high quality educational opportunities.

# Framing the Conversation

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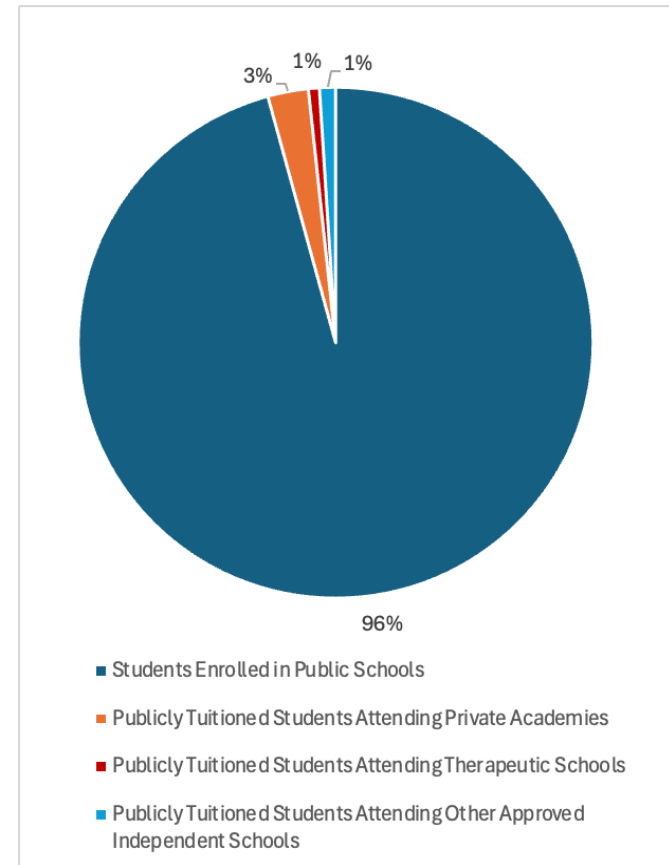
- There may be a few of you who came here today hoping to express your concerns about the cost of education in Vermont. We hope to provide you with information on how the system works and to begin to think about a path forward that provides a high-quality education for all Vermont students that is affordable for Vermont communities.
- Knowing that tonight's conversation will focus on a specific set of topics, all attendees will have the opportunity to provide more feedback through an exit ticket.
- We ask that those present today be respectful of each other's differences of opinions and acknowledge that everyone here this evening has come because they are looking to support positive change.

# Phase I: Data

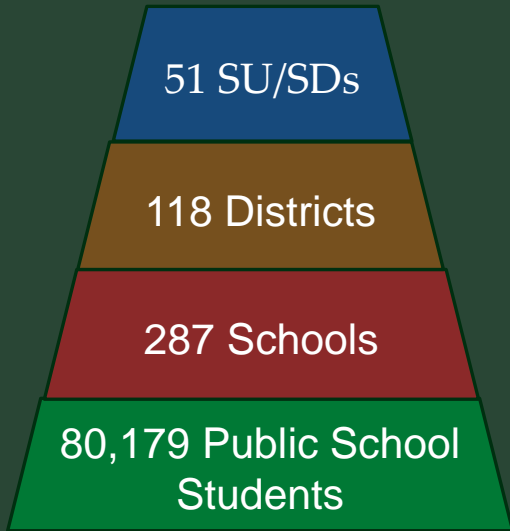
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# Publicly Funded Students in Vermont: 2022-23 School Year

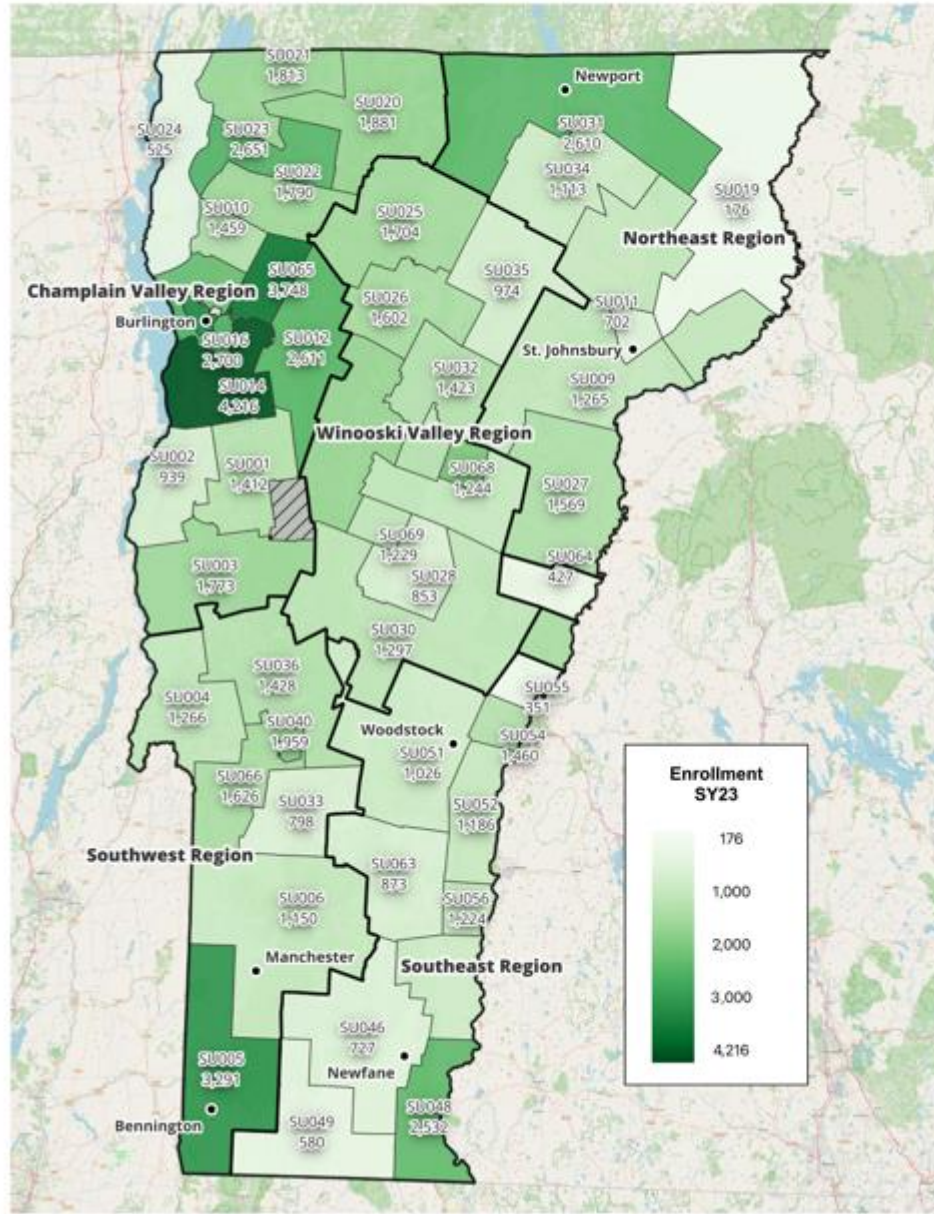
Students Enrolled in Public Schools	80,179
Publicly Tuitioned Students Attending Private Academies	2,134
Publicly Tuitioned Students Attending Therapeutic Schools	578
Publicly Tuitioned Students Attending Other Approved Independent Schools	842
<b>Total Publicly Funded Students</b>	<b>83,733</b>



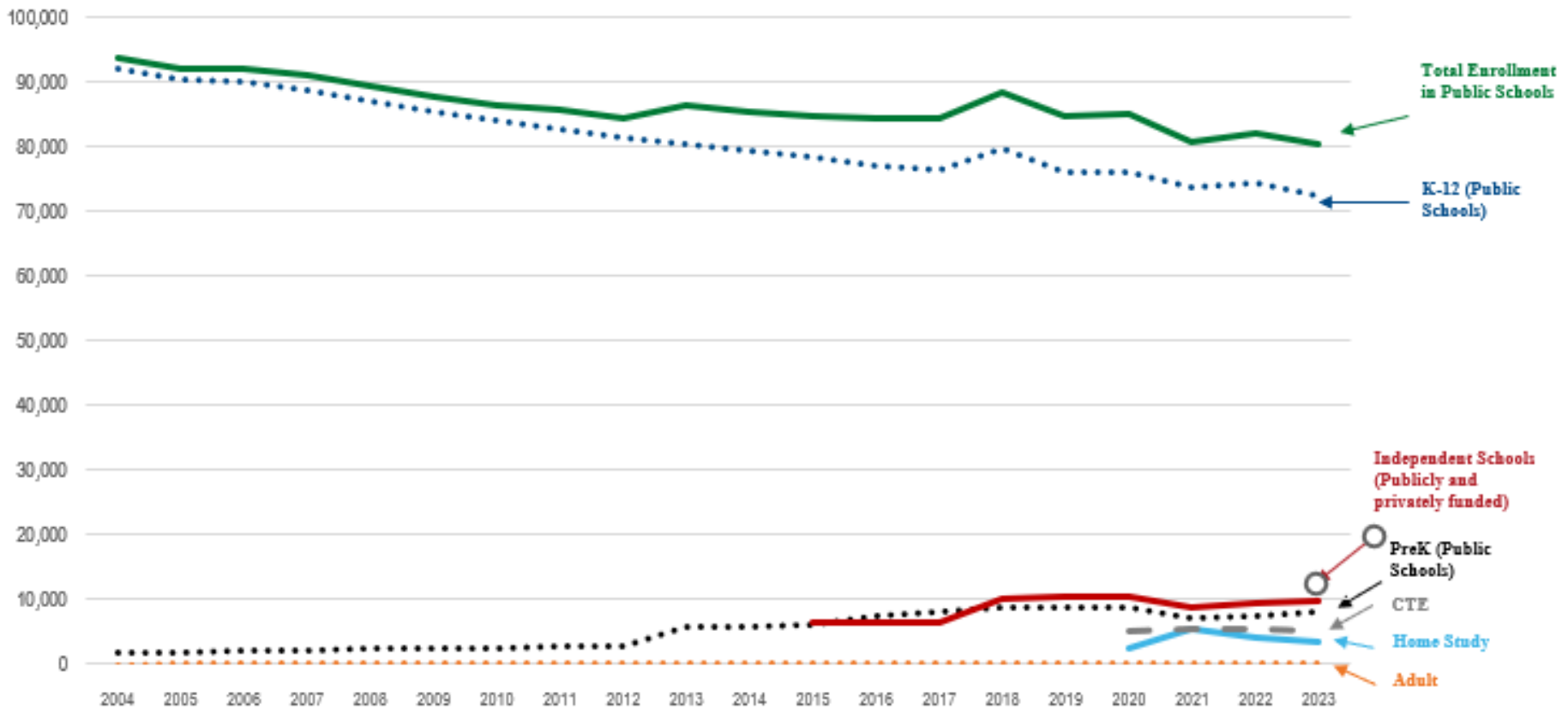
# 2022-23 SY Public Schools Landscape



SU/SD Public School Enrollment 2022-23



SUNION	SU_name
SU001	Mt.Abraham
SU002	Addison NW
SU003	Addison Central
SU004	Slate Valley
SU005	SW Vermont
SU006	Bennington-Rutland
SU007	Colchester
SU009	Caledonia Central
SU010	Milton Town
SU011	St.Johnsbury
SU012	Mt.Mansfield
SU014	Champlain Valley
SU015	Burlington
SU016	S Burlington
SU017	Winooski
SU019	Essex N
SU020	Franklin NE
SU021	Missisquoi Valley
SU022	Franklin W
SU023	Maple Run
SU024	Grand Isle
SU025	Lamoille N
SU026	Lamoille S
SU027	Orange E
SU028	Orange SW
SU030	White River Valley
SU031	North Country
SU032	Washington Central
SU033	Mill River
SU034	Orleans Central
SU035	Orleans SW
SU036	Rutland NE
SU040	Rutland City
SU042	Harwood
SU046	Windham Central
SU047	Windham NE
SU048	Windham SE
SU049	Windham SW
SU051	Mountain Views
SU052	Windsor SE
SU054	Hartford
SU055	SAU #70
SU056	Springfield SD
SU061	Barre
SU063	Two Rivers
SU064	Rivendell Interstate
SU065	Essex Westford
SU066	Greater Rutland County
SU067	Kingdom East
SU068	Central Vermont
SU069	Montpelier Roxbury
SU070	Lincoln



# Changes in Enrollment

Overall enrollment in K-12 public education has declined 21.5% between the 2003-04 and 2022-23 school years. The biggest changes in enrollment occurred prior to the pandemic.



Vermont has small schools (46<sup>th</sup> largest in the country)

Highest number of staff per student in the country

Highest number of teachers per student in the country

5th highest expenditures per pupil in the country

# National Rankings

School size, staffing and expenditures

# National Assessment of Educational Performance

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According to the National Assessment for Education Progress, Vermont performs high in reading compared to other states, though that trend has been declining, and performs similar to the national average in math.

**5<sup>th</sup> in 8<sup>th</sup>  
Grade  
Reading**

**11<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup>  
Grade  
Reading**

**21<sup>st</sup> in 8<sup>th</sup>  
Grade  
Math**

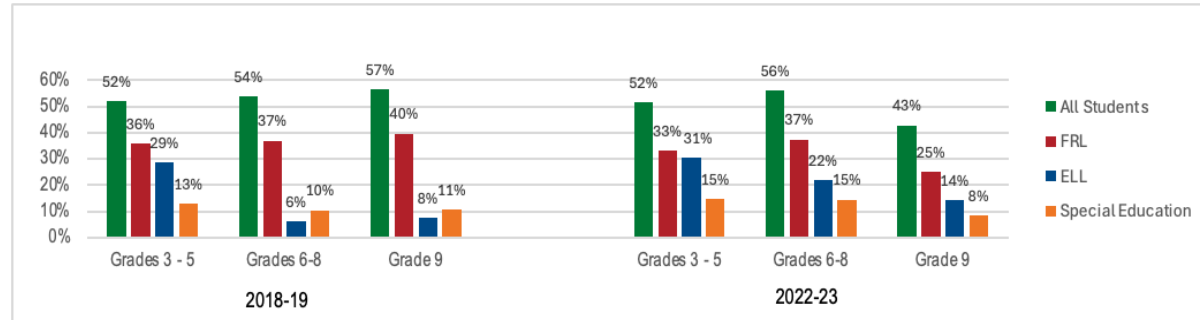
**28<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup>  
Grade  
Math**



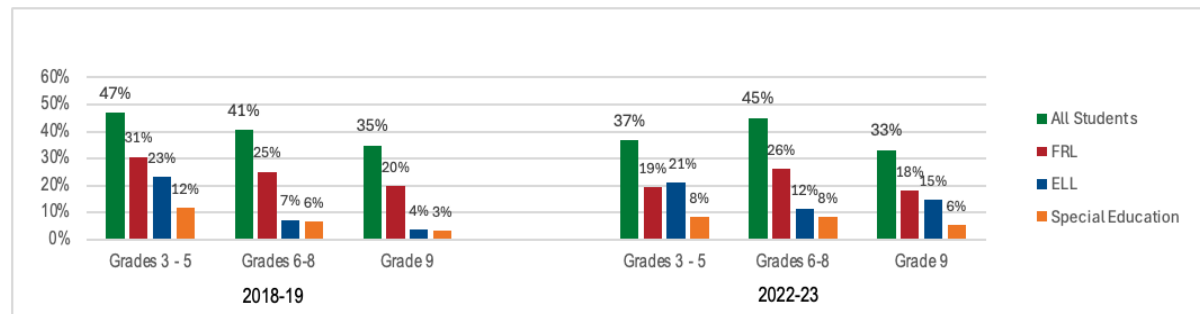
# Subgroup Performance on State Assessments

There are persistent achievement gaps seen between FRL, ELL, and special education students on state assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math

## Statewide Student Proficiency by Subgroup in ELA, 2018-19, and 2022-23

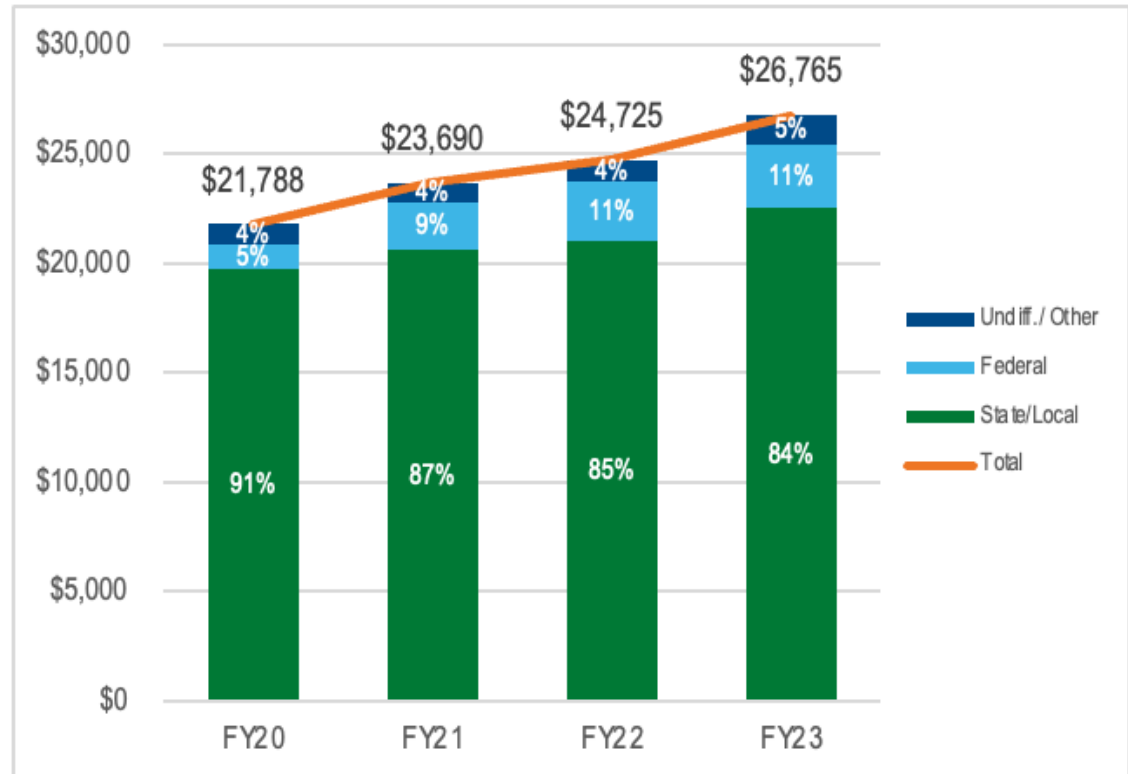


## Statewide Student Proficiency by Subgroup in Math, 2018-19, and 2022-23



# Total Expenditures per ADM

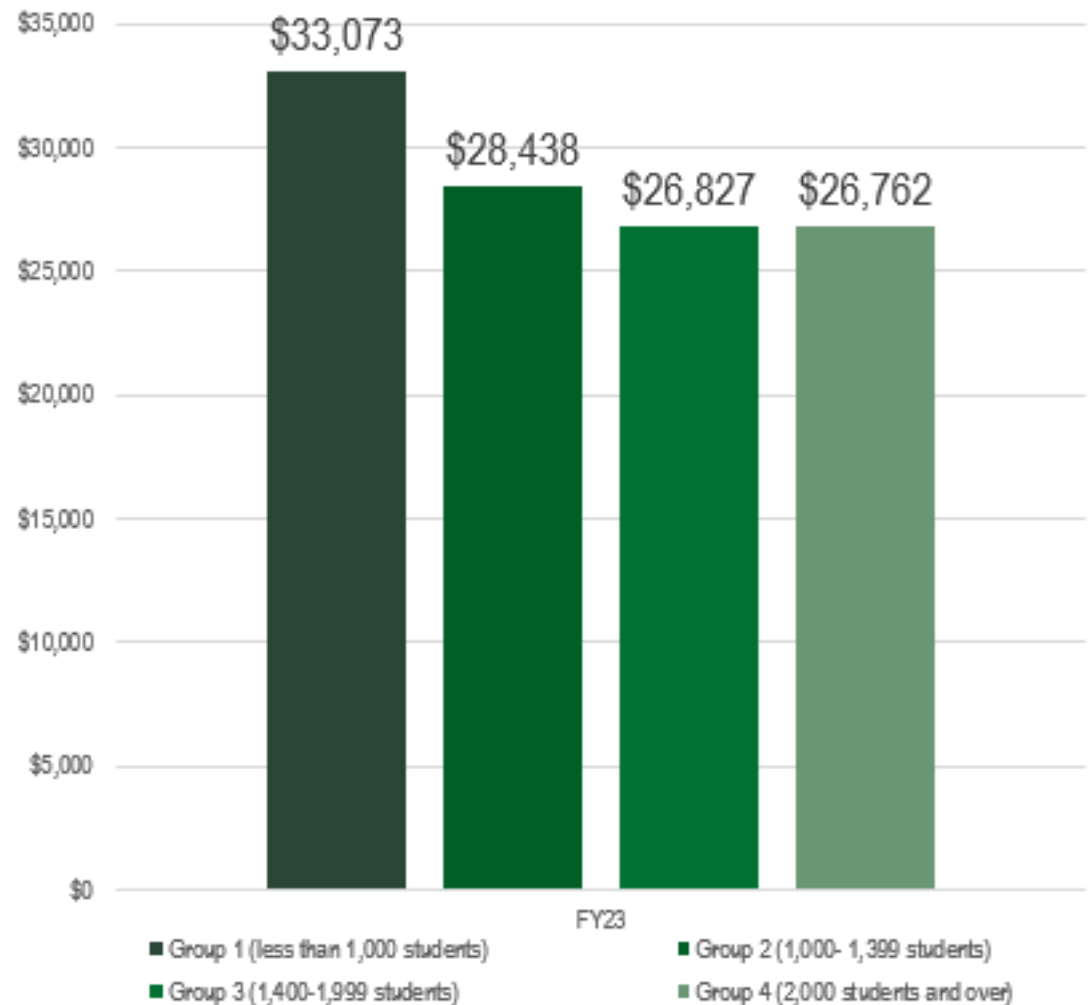
Since FY20, statewide total expenditures per ADM have increased from \$21,788 to \$26,765; this is in part due to increased federal funding to address the impact of the pandemic.



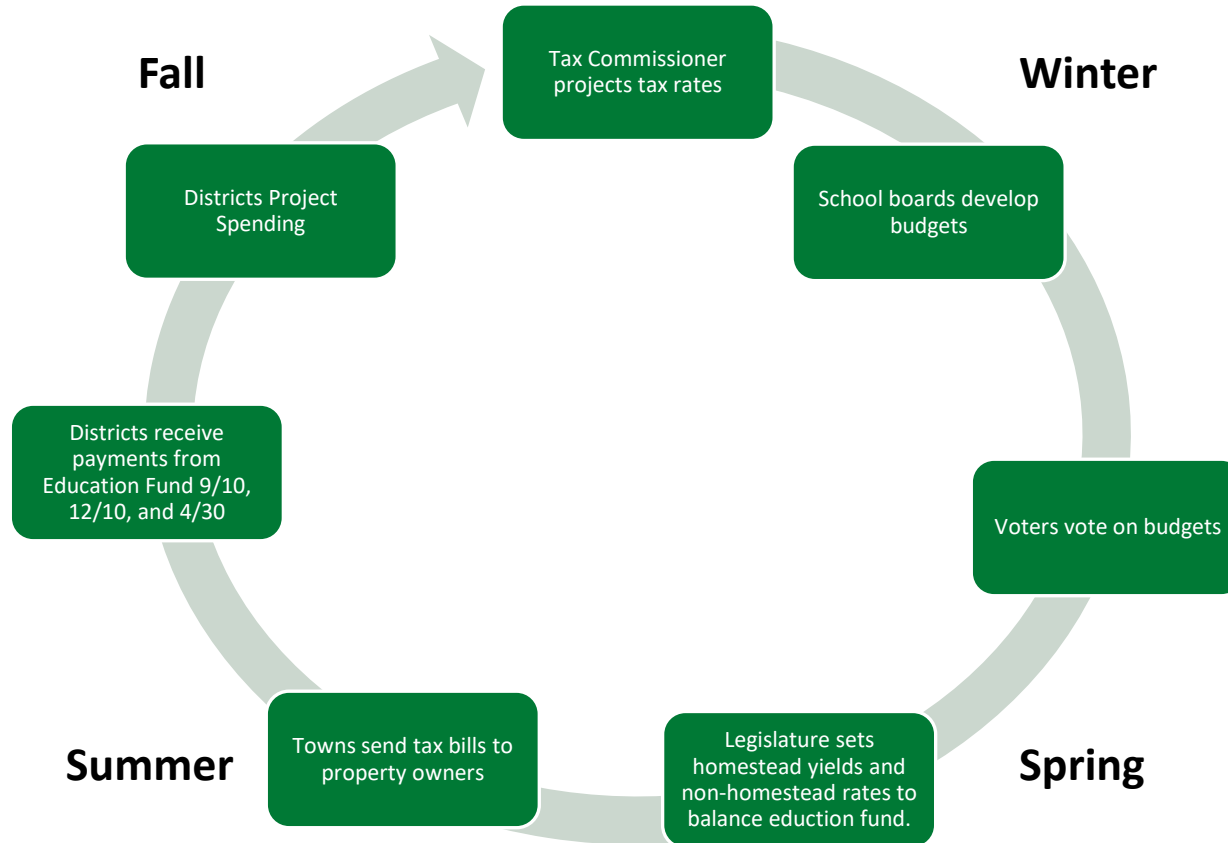
*Average Daily Membership (ADM) is the unweighted, single year count of publicly funded students that an SU/SD is responsible for, including tuitioned students.*

# Total Expenditures per ADM by SU/SD Size Group

Expenditures per ADM are higher in the smallest SU/SD settings. This is likely due to a lack of economies of scale. Also, smaller SU/SD settings tend to serve higher need student populations.

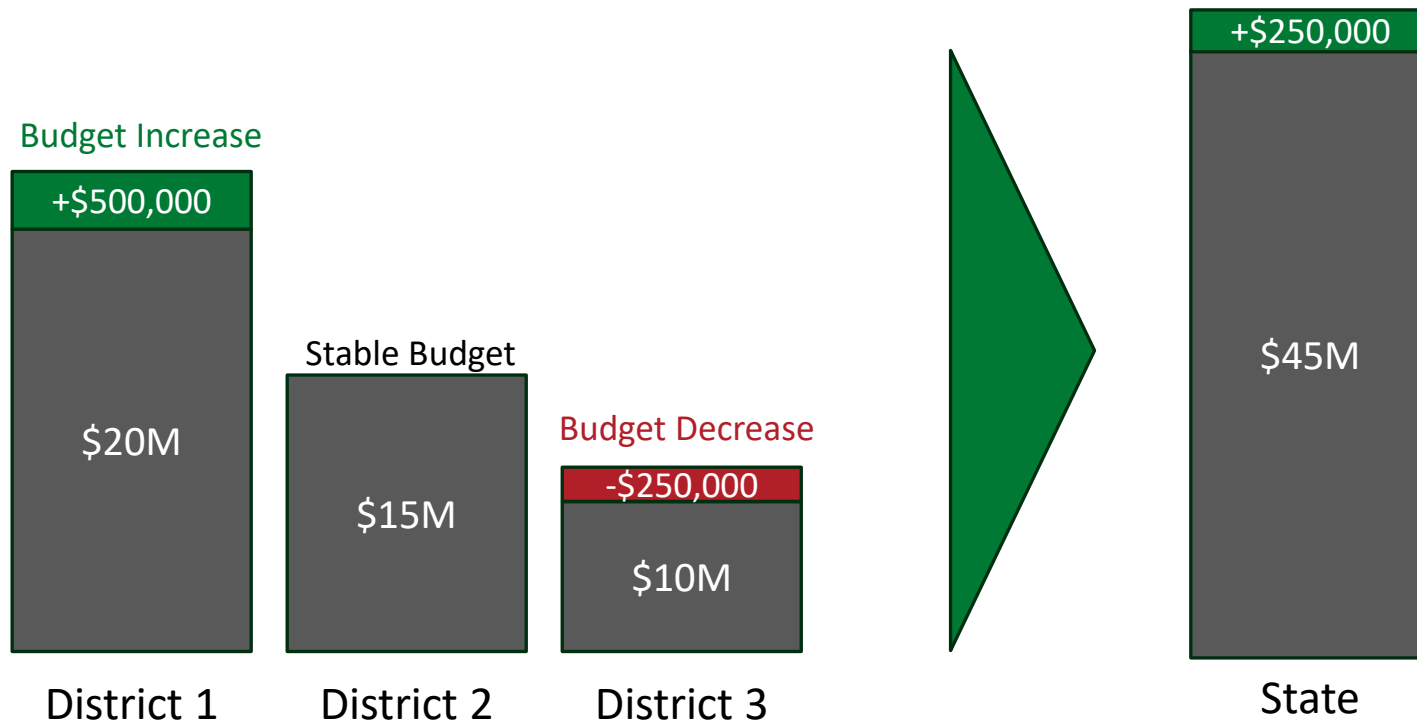


# Education Funding Timeline



# Local Budgeting in a Statewide Funding System

Since Vermont pools funding at the state level, higher spending in some districts can lead to higher statewide tax rates to cover the total statewide cost of education.



# Equity and Budgets: How does student need impact budgets?

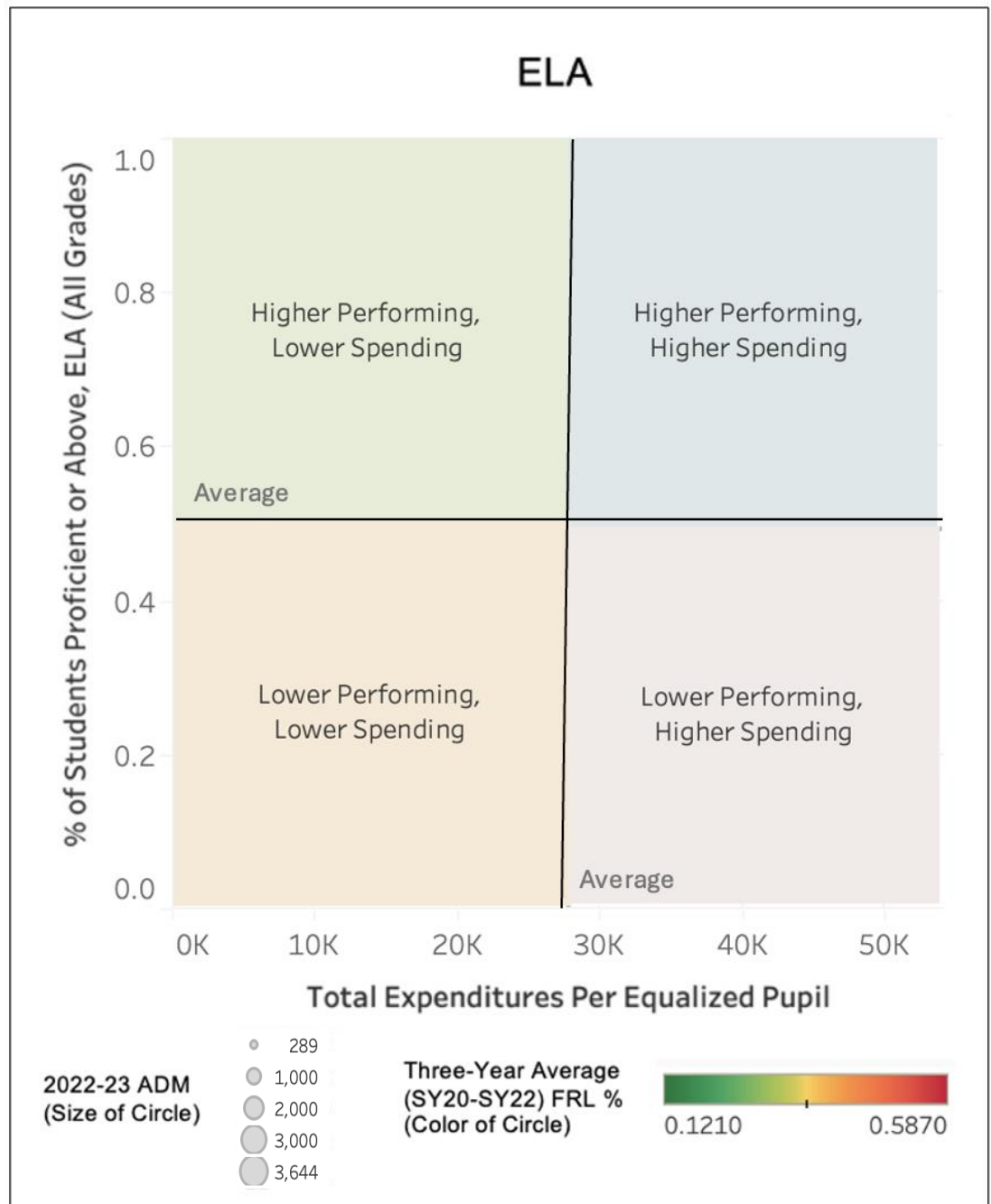
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In an effort to increase equity, the current system makes adjustments for schools who serve students that cost more to educate (e.g. English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged, etc.) to spend more per pupil without triggering a great tax burden on the local community.

In theory, this makes it possible for schools that serve students with greater needs to have larger budgets.

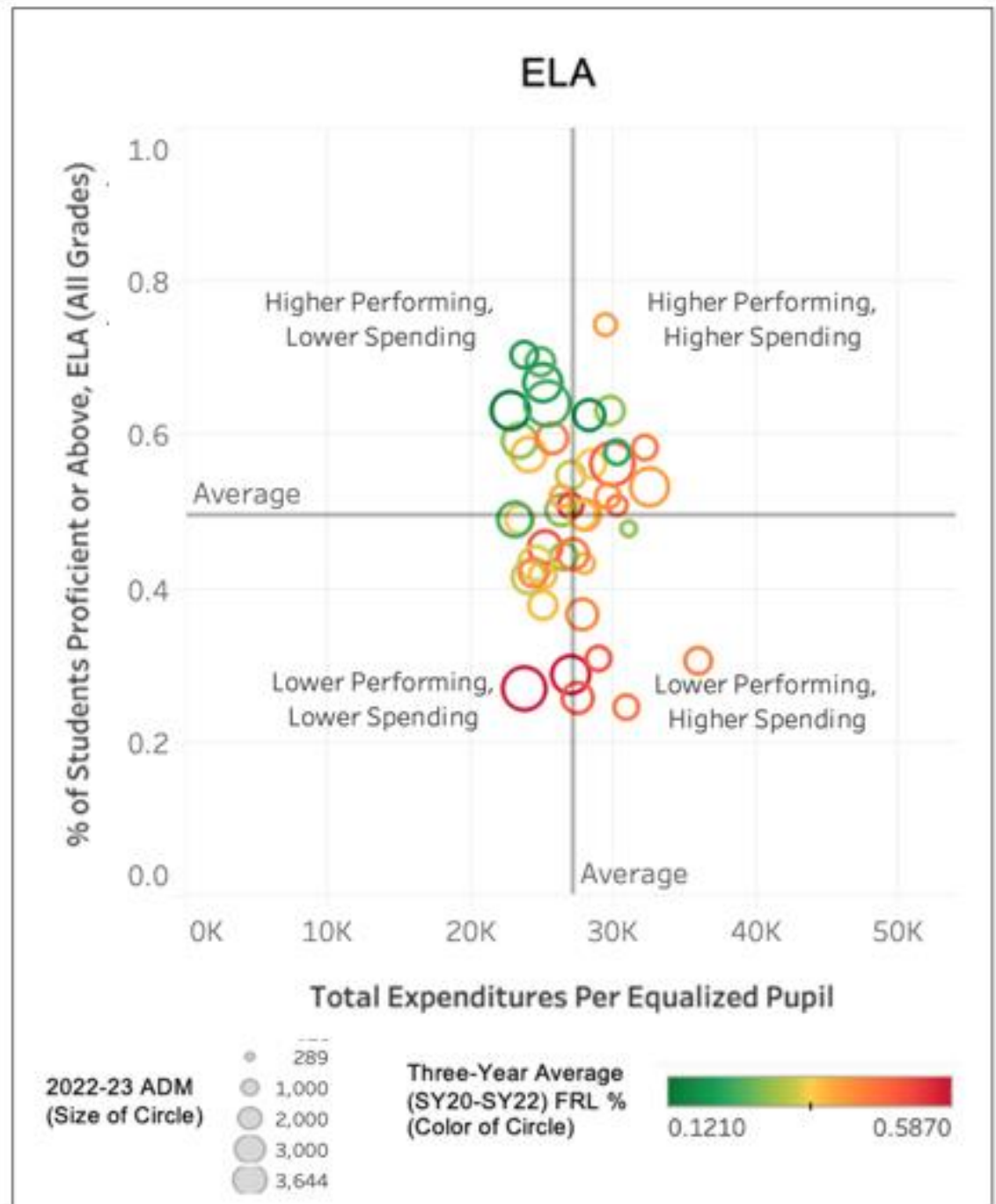
# Expenditures vs. Performance, in the Context of SU/SD Size and Need (FRL)

The following chart brings together expenditure, ELA performance, ADM and FRL data and assigns SU/SDs into quadrants based upon whether their spending and performance is higher or lower than average



# Expenditures vs. Performance, in the Context of SU/SD Size and Need (FRL), cont.

- Higher performing, lower spending SU/SDs tend to have less student need as measured by FRL (mostly green circles)
- Lower performing, lower spending SU/SDs tend to have higher student need as measured by FRL (darker orange/red circles)
- Larger settings (larger circles) tend to be lower spending





# Short term cost containment vs long term transformation

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## Short Term

- Host training series for education leaders on strategic budgeting and cost-effective practices. Sample topics:
  - Cost-effective education best practices
  - Budget building best practices
  - Budget communication best practices

## Long Term

- Evaluate and model state-wide budget strategies to reduce costs and improve student outcomes
- Produce “How-To Guides” for education leaders on select strategies and practices
- Provide on-going training and support to school and district leaders

# Breakout Session

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# Tonight's Breakout Sessions

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- We will be breaking up into smaller groups to allow for more personalized discussions
- Each session will cover the same three topics including:
  - Student Success
  - Student Supports
  - The impacts of Vermont's funding system
- The sessions will be led by a facilitator with a notetaker present to capture the thoughts of the group

# Discussion Norms and Procedures

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- We understand that discussions about our education system can raise strong feelings we ask that:
  - Participants come prepared to actively listen to others
  - Assume positive intent of one another, as everyone is focused on ensuring success for Vermont students, schools and communities
  - Please respect the facilitator as they work to ensure the group can cover all topics
  - If for any reason you are unable, or uncomfortable, to make a comment publicly, you will have the opportunity to provide feedback in other ways

# Questions: Student Success

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- When you know a student is successful, what does that look like at different levels of education including:
  - Elementary
  - Secondary
  - Post Secondary
- When you think about these successes what data or information do you rely on to measure the success of:
  - Your student
  - Your school
  - The students in the state

# Questions: Student Supports and Experiences

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- How do your schools support students to be successful? (outdoor education, social emotional learning, academic supports, etc.)
- Are there other resources you would like to see for students that aren't currently available?
- Is there a minimum level of educational opportunities or experiences you think should be available to all students, regardless of the school they attend?
  - Do you think there are barriers to providing this minimum opportunity in certain settings?

# Questions: Budget

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- School systems across the state are facing declining student enrollment. Is this true in your system and if so, what impacts have you seen?
- Some schools in the state have low enrollment which can make them more costly to run and difficult to provide students with a full range of educational opportunities. However, these settings are often important to the community. How should Vermont balance small settings with the need for educational opportunities for students?
- Vermont is a state that values independence and local control when it comes to education, but there may be advantages to working together. What are the things that you would be willing to share so that students and schools have access to more opportunities at a cost that is sustainable?

# Let's Reflect

Using the stickers provided, please add a sticker to “vote” for ideas, themes, or comments that resonate most.



# Exit Ticket

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**Please complete a short exit ticket before leaving:**

What did you find most beneficial about this public engagement session?

Is there anything else you would like to share?

