

2021-2022 VSBA Resolutions Board Report
August 11, 2021

According to the VSBA Bylaws, resolutions are "positions taken by the Association on issues of importance to Vermont school boards. They may include recommendations for action by the VSBA, local school boards, the Legislature, the Executive Branch...or other decision-making bodies." Resolutions provide guidance for staff and the VSBA board when they are working in the public policy arena or developing programs and services for VSBA members. Resolutions are not legislation.

All resolutions submitted by member boards will be submitted to the membership at our Annual Meeting, regardless of the recommendation of the Committee or the VSBA board. The VSBA Resolutions Committee and the VSBA Board make a recommendation to "Pass", "Do Not Pass" or "Take No Position" on any resolution submitted by a member school district board. After careful consideration of resolutions submitted by member boards, the VSBA Resolutions Committee developed the following Resolutions Report and presented it to the VSBA board at the August board meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Flor Diaz Smith, Chair of the Resolutions Committee

Gaston Bathalon

Don Collins

Laurie Childers

Dan MacArthur

Colleen MacKinnon

Jeremy Metcalf

Judy Murray

Nancy Russell

Adrienne Raymond

Jim Salsgiver

2021-2022 Resolutions Submitted to

The Vermont School Boards Association

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Resolution Proposal #1: Addison Northwest SD
Section II, Subsection T
Shared School District Financial Software System

WHEREAS: Vermont School Boards and their related education systems rely on the State Board of Education and Agency of Education leadership and response for student success,

WHEREAS: the mission of The State Board of Education and Agency of Education is to “provide leadership, support, and oversight to ensure that the Vermont public education system enables all students to be successful.”

WHEREAS: uniform data reporting can be achieved by use of the Uniform Chart of Accounts without the need to share identical software.

WHEREAS: the software chosen for the Shared School District Financial Software System has not met the deliverables agreed upon in that process.

WHEREAS: school districts should not be forced to convert to a program that has subpar capabilities and less efficiency than the current software they use.

WHEREAS: the goal should be to improve technology, efficiency, and cut costs, not increase them.

WHEREAS: the Uniform Chart of Accounts has only recently been enacted by school districts, and the continued delay and uncertainty around the single state-wide accounting software system has made for difficult choices by business managers about planning for systems for accounting.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the VSBA uses its influence to support district business and finance managers, Superintendents, and school boards by advocating to the legislature and Agency of Education that any and all current plans for a single state-wide accounting software system be abandoned.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS as a regular resolution

**Resolution Proposal #2: Addison Northwest SD,
Rutland NE SU: Otter Valley UUSD, Barstow UUSD
Section III, Subsection K
Equal and Equitable Opportunities in Any School Receiving Public Funds**

WHEREAS: recognizing the imperative value of education in sustaining a democracy, Vermont was one of the earliest states to enshrine a universal education guarantee in its state Constitution, and

WHEREAS: this purpose was first achieved through a network of post-colonial public, private, and religious schools, and

WHEREAS: national and state recognition of equity and equality demands that publicly funded initiatives and institutions be free of all forms of discrimination, and

WHEREAS: since Brown v. Topeka (1954), the state and the nation have a long and proud tradition of adopting and non-discriminatory laws, policies and practices, and

WHEREAS: the increasing awareness of discrimination on the basis of ability, socio-economic status, racial group, school choice or other groups raise anew the issues of equity and equality,

WHEREAS: our work remains undone.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Vermont School Boards Association requests the General Assembly guarantee, through law, that all public and independent schools receiving public funds adopt and exercise, equal and equitable opportunities in admissions, programs and practices in order to operate in the state of Vermont, and

That the state invigorate the moribund school approval processes for public and independent schools to assure operational, financial, and educational accountability and excellence.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS as continuing resolution

Resolution Proposal #3: Burlington SD + 8 other boards
Section II, Subsection U
Education Finance

WHEREAS: Vermont’s students come to school with dissimilar learning needs and socioeconomic backgrounds that may require different types and levels of educational supports for them to achieve common standards or outcomes;

WHEREAS: schools of different sizes and in different geographic locations require different levels of resources due to scale of operations or the price they must pay for key resources;

WHEREAS: Vermont’s formula for calculating funding utilizes weighting factors that were created over twenty years ago and do not reflect contemporary educational policy, circumstances or costs;

WHEREAS: Vermont’s legislature in 2018 directed the Agency Of Education to commission a study to consider and make various recommendations for changes to the census grant funding model, changes or additions to the per pupil weighting factors used to allocate special education funding under the census grant model, and any additional methods for consideration;

WHEREAS: the resultant “Pupil Weighting Factors Report - Act 173 of 2018, Sec. 11” was published in December 2019;

WHEREAS: the report was clear in its recommendations to update Vermont’s funding formula to account for the differing needs of all Vermont students and schools;

WHEREAS: the Vermont School Boards Association and its member districts are committed to advocating for and working to achieve equitable access to education services for all Vermont students;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: the Vermont School Boards Association fully supports the findings as presented in the Pupil Weighting Factors Report dated December 24, 2019.

And furthermore, the Vermont School Boards Association requests the Vermont Legislature to thoughtfully and expeditiously establish an implementation plan for the Report’s recommendations.

This resolution is co-sponsored by the boards of the following:

1. Winooski School District
2. Washington Central Unified Union School District
3. Twin Valley Union Unified School District
4. Rutland City Public Schools
5. River Valleys Unified School District
6. Marlboro School District
7. Kingdom East School District
8. Hazen Union School District
9. Burlington School District

BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS as regular resolution

Resolution Proposal #4: VSBA Resolutions Committee

Section II, Subsection L

Independent School, Prekindergarten, and Afterschool Funding

~~Public dollars that support private independent schools should carry with them the same obligations regarding quality, equity, efficiency, transparency and accountability that apply to public school districts. In order for an independent school (other than an independent school with a specific state purpose) to be eligible to receive public education funds, the school should:~~

- ~~1. Not discriminate or deny enrollment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability~~
- ~~2. Operate with an open admissions policy, meaning that it accepts all publicly funded students on a space-available basis~~
- ~~3. Be approved for special education services in *at least* four categories and arrange for special education services related to *any* disability category if required in an enrolled student's individual education plan~~
- ~~4. Administer state assessments and make outcomes data available to the public in the same manner as public schools~~
- ~~5. Provide free and reduced lunch to all eligible students~~
- ~~6. Employ teachers and administrators that have licenses and endorsements required by professionals working in public schools.~~

Public dollars that support private independent schools, **prekindergarten programs, and afterschool programs** should carry with them the same obligations regarding quality, equity, efficiency, transparency and accountability that apply to public school districts. In order for an independent school (other than an independent school with a specific state purpose), **prekindergarten program, or afterschool program** to be eligible to receive public education funds, the school or program should:

1. Not discriminate or deny enrollment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability;
2. Operate with an open admissions policy, meaning that it accepts all publicly-funded students on a space-available basis; and
3. Employ teachers and administrators that have licenses and endorsements required by professionals working in public schools.

In addition, independent schools should:

4. Be approved for special education services in *at least* four categories and arrange for special education services related to *any* disability category if required in an enrolled student's individual education plan;
5. Administer state assessments and make outcomes data available to the public in the same manner as public schools; and
6. Provide free and reduced lunch to all eligible students.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS as continuing resolution

Resolution Proposal #5: VSBA Resolutions Committee

Section III, Subsection I

Equity and Anti-Racism

The VSBA is committed to the success of every student, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, family economics, class, geography, ability, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or initial proficiencies. VSBA will incorporate principles of equity within all policies, operations, practices, and resource allocations, which may include the use of an equity lens when responding to proposed legislation.

The VSBA should demonstrate and promote the unequivocal, collective responsibility for equitable and inclusive education environments by recognizing, responding, and speaking out against injustice and racial inequity. In support of this goal, the VSBA commits to the following: 1. promote and support implicit bias training for all faculty and staff in Vermont public schools, including athletic and co-curricular personnel, and officials across the state (~~see H.714 of 2020~~); and 2. promote professional learning for school leaders and school board members that include but not be limited to: Equity Literacy, Curriculum Audits, Review Protocols for Examining Bias in School Policies and Procedures, Culturally Responsive Instruction and School Culture, Student Leadership and Voice, and Examining Power and Privilege in Schools.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS as continuing resolution

Resolution Proposal #6: VSBA Resolutions Committee

Section I, Subsection J

Appointments to Unified Boards

~~School boards can provide valuable input to selectboards when there are needs to fill vacancies on union school district boards. Additionally, collaborations between school and town officials can only serve to benefit their communities. The VSBA supports a change to the union school district statutes to provide that a selectboard will seek input from the school board prior to filling a vacancy on that board.~~

Selectboards can provide valuable input to School Boards when there are needs to fill vacancies on unified union school district boards. Additionally, collaborations between school and town officials can only serve to benefit their communities. The VSBA supports the requirements of Act 154 of 2020 regarding a vacancy on the board of a unified union school district: if the vacancy is in a seat that is allocated to a specific town, the unified union school district board, in consultation with the selectboard, shall appoint a person who is otherwise eligible to serve as a member of the unified union school district board to fill the vacancy until an election is held at an annual or special meeting unless otherwise provided in accordance with the unified union school district's articles of agreement.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS as continuing resolution