

## Washington Central Unified Union School District

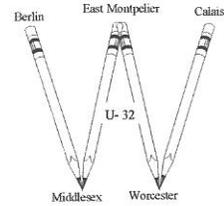
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*WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.*

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Bryan M. Olkowski  
Superintendent



**House Ways and Means Committee**  
**Attn: Rep. Janet Ancel, Chair**  
**115 State Street**  
**Montpelier, VT 05633-5301**

**March 10, 2021-Testimony H.31-An act relating to extending merger benefits to schools districts that were involuntarily merged under the State Board of Education's Act 46 merger order.**

Washington Central Unified Union School District is one of fourteen districts who were involuntarily merged under the State Board of Education's Act 46 merger order.

Washington Central Supervisory Union was previously comprised of: Berlin School District, Calais School District, East Montpelier School District, Middlesex School District, Worcester School District, Union 32 School District and Washington Central Supervisory Union. The new unified union school district is comprised of the same district entities as the Washington Central Supervisory Union.

### **Small Schools Support/Merger Support Grant (Title 16 V.S. A. S4015)**

On an annual basis, two of the districts, Calais School District and Worcester School District received Small Schools Support. Using the information provided by the Agency of Education, the two schools still meet the eligibility requirements to receive Small Schools Support of approximately \$181k for fiscal year 21-22. After conferring with Brad James, Finance Manager, Agency of Education, the current legislation only guarantees Small Schools Support in the form of a Merger Support Grant to districts who voluntarily merged.

### **Equalized Pupils (Title 16 V.S. A. S4010) Declining Enrollment 3.5% Hold Harmless**

In the past, Washington Central has qualified for the hold harmless calculation in the equalized pupil formula. This calculation is prepared by the Agency of Education on an annual basis. For the fiscal year 21-22 budget, Washington Central UUSD does not have a decline in equalized pupils to meet the formula requirements. However, due to a declining enrollment, the district may qualify for the fiscal year 22-23 budget.

After conferring with Brad James, Finance Manager, Agency of Education, the current legislation only provides the Hold Harmless provision for declining enrollment to district's who voluntarily merged.

**SUMMARY**

- We are asking for your support by extending these two merger benefits to school districts that were involuntarily merged under the State Board of Education's Act 46 merger order.
- H.31 would provide these same provisions not just to Washington Central Unified Union School District, but to all the fourteen districts who involuntarily merged per the Act 46 merger order.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,



Lori T. Bibeau

Washington Central UUSD Business Administrator



Bryan M. Olkowski

Washington Central UUSD Superintendent