

**From:** Campbell, Patrick [Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 01, 2016 11:41 AM  
**To:** Pepper, James  
**Subject:** FW: From the Office of the Governor DM

FYI

---

**From:** Campbell, Patrick  
**Sent:** Monday, August 22, 2016 4:31 PM  
**To:** James, Brad <Brad.James@vermont.gov>; Russo-Savage, Donna <Donna.RussoSavage@vermont.gov>; Gaidys, Maureen <Maureen.Gaidys@vermont.gov>  
**Cc:** Talbott, Bill <Bill.Talbott@vermont.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: From the Office of the Governor DM

Hey all,

Thank you for the prompt response. I agree that sounds like a good idea. I do not know the details of the merger in Chittenden East or many more details pertaining to this issue particularly, and am not sure I can speak intelligently enough to the issue to draft a response that may satisfy Ms. Martin. I don't know if one of you would mind drafting a response that could be sent from your office? I would really appreciate it, as we have already responded to her on behalf of us to a previous response, and this is essentially her response to that letter.

Thank you again for taking a look at this and keeping us in the loop!

Best,  
**Patrick Campbell**  
Office of the Governor  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609  
(802) 828-3333

[Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov](mailto:Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov)

Visit Governor Shumlin's Online Resources:

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)

---

**From:** James, Brad  
**Sent:** Monday, August 22, 2016 3:58 PM  
**To:** Campbell, Patrick <[Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov](mailto:Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov)>; Russo-Savage, Donna <[Donna.RussoSavage@vermont.gov](mailto:Donna.RussoSavage@vermont.gov)>; Gaidys, Maureen <[Maureen.Gaidys@vermont.gov](mailto:Maureen.Gaidys@vermont.gov)>  
**Cc:** Talbott, Bill <[Bill.Talbott@vermont.gov](mailto:Bill.Talbott@vermont.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: From the Office of the Governor DM

Hi, Patrick.

I just reread the e-mail from Martin. Donna and I discussed a response briefly and pretty much all I could add to Donna's suggestion is to show the total dollars in the Education Fund from FY2010 through FY2016 or FY2017 in response to his statement that the State of Vermont has, "... been reducing its education funding since 2010- with the hope that small towns upon feeling a deeper pinch of costs would be all too willing to consolidate."

I'm not sure including that information would be a useful response. He suggests leaving small school alone until the voters decide to close them themselves – essentially what Act 46 is offering. I don't think a discussion of the statewide nature of our funding system would be of use. I think Donna's suggestion of using the Smilie School in Bolton as an example of a merger (Chittenden East) saving a small school is the best bet. That can get at the issue of consolidating governance versus consolidating schools.

Brad

---

**From:** Campbell, Patrick  
**Sent:** Monday, August 22, 2016 8:49 AM  
**To:** Russo-Savage, Donna; Gaidys, Maureen  
**Cc:** Talbott, Bill; James, Brad  
**Subject:** RE: From the Office of the Governor DM

Hey all,

I just wanted to check in and see if there were any updates on this. It looks as though you may be meeting today based on the email below, but I wanted to check in incase there was anything new. Thank you so much again for taking a look and for keeping us in the loop!

Best,

**Patrick Campbell**  
Office of the Governor  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609  
(802) 828-3333

[Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov](mailto:Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov)

Visit Governor Shumlin's Online Resources:

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)

---

**From:** Russo-Savage, Donna  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 11, 2016 3:39 PM  
**To:** Gaidys, Maureen <[Maureen.Gaidys@vermont.gov](mailto:Maureen.Gaidys@vermont.gov)>  
**Cc:** Talbott, Bill <[Bill.Talbott@vermont.gov](mailto:Bill.Talbott@vermont.gov)>; Campbell, Patrick <[Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov](mailto:Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov)>;

James, Brad <[Brad.James@vermont.gov](mailto:Brad.James@vermont.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: From the Office of the Governor DM

Hi –

I can take a stab at a response to at least one part of this - e.g., that nothing in Act 46 contemplates closing small schools, that small school grants continue indefinitely in a merged district, and that the experience in Chittenden East suggest that a small school is more likely to stay open if it is part of a larger governing / taxing unit.

On quick review, many of the issues seem to be tax- and funding-related. Perhaps Bill and/or Brad and I can come up with something. I added Brad to the cc'd names. I'm flat out for the rest of this week and am on vacation for all of next, but could meet to discuss when I return on August 22.

Donna

Donna Russo-Savage  
Principal Assistant to the Secretary, School Governance  
Vermont Agency of Education  
[Donna.RussoSavage@vermont.gov](mailto:Donna.RussoSavage@vermont.gov)  
802.479.1744

---

**From:** Gaidys, Maureen  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 11, 2016 3:05 PM  
**To:** Russo-Savage, Donna  
**Cc:** Talbott, Bill  
**Subject:** FW: From the Office of the Governor DM

Donna,

Are you able to please respond to the forwarded constituent inquiry below that was forwarded to us from the Gov's Office? Please mention in your response that this was forwarded to us from the Gov's Office and please copy both myself and Patrick on the response to the constituent.

Thank you,

*Maureen*

Maureen Gaidys  
Executive Assistant  
Vermont Agency of Education – Secretary's Office  
219 North Main Street, Suite 402  
Barre, VT 05641  
802-479-1060 (phone) 802-479-1835 (fax)

**My email address has changed:** [maureen.gaidys@vermont.gov](mailto:maureen.gaidys@vermont.gov)

*PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: Due to the nature of the Secretary's duties to the State of Vermont and its citizens, there are occasions when the Secretary needs to cancel and/or postpone meetings or events in order to attend to pressing state matters. Please keep this in mind when planning for events.*

---

**From:** Campbell, Patrick  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 11, 2016 2:44 PM  
**To:** Gaidys, Maureen  
**Subject:** From the Office of the Governor DM

Hey Maureen,

Our office received the following correspondence from the constituent below. We had sent her some information regarding our position on Act 46 in response to a letter she wrote us, yet she still seems frustrated with the answers she is receiving. I was hoping someone from your office could take a look and possibly draft a response from your office that could respond more directly to some of her concerns.

Thank you so much for taking a look and for keeping our office in the loop!

**Original Correspondence:**

Donna Martin  
PO Box 174  
South Reading, VT 05153  
802-952-1119  
[Ax46ourschools@gmail.com](mailto:Ax46ourschools@gmail.com)

Subject: Re: Re: Responding to your message

Mr. Shumlin,

Maintaining our local involvement, as parent taxpayers, to our youngest learners, with our local non-child taxpayers having a direct and impactful voice as for the budgets of these small schools---- is at the heart of Vermont life. These small schools are in small voter towns. These voters voices will be watered down under consolidation. School boards will serve the predominant towns which will vote in and out members to suit the needs that the receiving towns(of our students) want.

You , along with the rest of our representatives should really realize that at some point, Vermont becomes a scenic playground for the wealthy This Act 46 hurts our most economically disadvantaged the most, folks that rely heavily on local childcare, close to schools for aftercare and emergency "sick child" care while they work. They have transportation issues and family issues that are accommodated by neighbors in our local towns.

My family moved here for the small town feel of things. If Act 46 were to place finances and this illusion of school equity into play, then we have already discussed moving back to Connecticut, where we had very good schools, with all the bells and whistles. Both private school kids, we are devoted to our children attending public schools, with two already having established successful careers having attended state colleges.

Education is expensive. Period. It is up to you to figure out a way to compensate these small towns with increased funding until such a time that the individual towns decide to close their school themselves.

After just a cursory look at our state compared to others it seems a fair suggestion to increase "user" based taxes. The state of Vermont has been reducing its education funding since 2010- with the hope that small towns upon feeling a deeper pinch of costs would be all too willing to consolidate.

A some point, you lose the intrinsic nature of these towns which may, for the sake of argument go the way of many of the "second home" towns we all know. Manicured lawns, mowed by the few locals that serve the area- lights that go on for 9 weekends a year if the foliage and snow cooperates....hmmmm....Some towns may be on the outs ----but Reading is not one of them...certainly not now.

It is a lie and a fallacy that there will be any savings- any "savings" will reabsorbed into the ever expanding list of new requirements and extraneous costs that large entities incur.

Reading already decided, itself, to send our 7-12 students to Woodstock-- giving up choice years ago--- it did not save us money.

The younger kids( pre-k-through 6) do extremely well here. The town has a life and a vitality to it that would be lost.

If you're betting that these small towns in Vermont are just going to roll over, you would be wrong.

Small business support, and encouragement, user based -tourism-taxes on rooms etc..., the wealthy residents and visitors paying fair taxes on their "use" of Vermont would help. We may not have a large indigenous population but we have millions of visitors.

Certainly, you realize that it is very difficult to suggest to a parent that their children will get a better education further away and that one extra gym class a week is soon important ---and equally difficult, convincing a taxpayer that their education tax dollars will go further in the town 30 minutes away.

You were hasty. It will have a consequence. The population of Vermont will continue to dwindle and it will become the Northeastern version of Florida. What a shame.

We'll still come and visit after we move, if that's any consolation. Because if the "equitable education " items outlined in Act 46 are really that important- we made the wrong decision in moving here.

Martin

**Patrick Campbell**  
Office of the Governor  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609  
(802) 828-3333

[Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov](mailto:Patrick.Campbell@vermont.gov)

Visit Governor Shumlin's Online Resources:

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)