

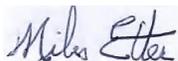
Northeast Kingdom Choice School District Summary

A year ago an unprecedented Vermont development occurred in the Northeast Kingdom. Pressures on Vermont's educational delivery has strained taxpayers throughout the state. With State Board of Education approval, voters from central Caledonia to northern Essex counties representing 10 towns: Bloomfield, Brunswick, East Haven, Granby, Guildhall, Kirby, Lemington, Maidstone, Norton, and Victory, determined to merge their belief and commitment that school choice offered their children the best opportunities for educational development, by forming the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District (NEK). NEK Choice will continue to support tuitioning students with the belief that the ability of parents to choose the educational settings that best fits their child's need will lead to the best outcomes for these students.

NEK Choice School District was given approval and assigned to Essex North Supervisory Union (ENSU, Canaan School District), as a Unified Union School District. This union shares administrative and other traditional services. A significant piece of this approval waived the statute for representation for a Unified Union School District. (Normally operating districts have three representatives while tuition districts have one.) They approved a new configuration, which Canaan heartily supported, that there be three representatives from Canaan and three from NEK Choice. The spirit of cooperation between the two districts has begun strongly and both realize student needs are better supported by working together. Our new Superintendent, Karen Conroy, has worked hard to support this new and unique merger. The efforts have focused on solidifying a good office staff with technology improvements to enhance and increase efficiency, quality, and productivity.

The NEK Choice Board has diligently pursued the challenges of meeting the needs of 287 students in our new district. Establishing policies regarding Tuition, Residency, and Voucher are keys to ensuring integrity for our taxpayers as well as providing the best options for successful education. Communication is another vital component that the board is challenged with. We are in the process of building and launching a website for NEK Choice that will be part of the ENSU website. We feel that the area NEK Choice encompasses presents a great challenge to successful communication. A quality website is a key piece to meeting this need. Another resource tool that is coming together is a Parent/Guardian Resource Guide. Mission, history, policies and process will accompany a large collection of information about schools throughout our Northeast area. We intend to print this and have it available at the Town Clerk's office of each town in NEK Choice. This will also be available on our website. The daunting task of putting together a first-ever budget for this type of district has required a great deal of time with the state and the need to become educated to understand a budget that is new to us all. In a tough state-wide fiscal year, the one piece that appears reassuring is that our merger has given us some control over spending, in particular the 5% throttle for increase and decrease. As you can see, there is work being done and work to do to ensure a successful first year beginning July 1, 2018 our first official day of operation.

I would like to thank you all for having the courage to move forward with a view that expands our communities to a broader involvement for the benefit of our children. A larger voice will help us to maintain our educational desires for our children. We thank you and welcome your participation and support. Thanks on behalf of our Board!



Miles Etter

Chair of NEK Choice School Board