



SAU 39 Consolidation Recap

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SAU 39 BOARD MEETING

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STREAMLINE – Challenges to be Solved

- SAU39 will be fiscally responsible by operating without duplication of resources within the districts and maximize the usefulness of the resources (4/12/2014).
- Align PK-12 Governance in one board to prevent diverging priorities and curriculum.
- Perceived opportunities to reduce costs by consolidating and better utilizing:
 - Instructional Personnel
 - Student Services Personnel
 - Support and Maintenance Personnel
 - Instructional Equipment
 - Maintenance Equipment (esp. grounds)
 - Facilities
 - AND by doing so, eliminate bookkeeping overhead
- Secondary STREAMLINE PILLAR priorities:
 - Technology (Use software to improve processes)
 - Personnel (School-level management restructuring)
 - Learning (Athletic Program restructuring)

Latest Proposal

- **Amherst School District and Mont Vernon School Districts merge into Souhegan Cooperative School District creating one PK-12 district serving all students in Mont Vernon and Amherst. (May, 2016)**
- Considered and rejected by the STREAMLINE committee:
 - Status Quo - 3 separate districts
 - Merge Mont Vernon and Amherst Districts into one PK-8 Coop, Retain SCSD as 9-12 Coop.
 - Merge Amherst and Souhegan into a PK-12 Coop, and then have Mont Vernon tuition all K-8 students into it.

Controversial Components of Proposed Action

- Projected Cost Savings not “big enough” (FY17 Tax rate down \$0.37-0.89 for Amherst, \$0.55-1.18 for MV).
- If student enrollment trends continue as projected, the consolidated district will have one too many elementary schools for cost-effective operations. Either MV will lose the presence of an operational Village School, or Amherst will be bussing some grade levels to Mont Vernon.
- Loss of “local control” for Mont Vernon voters. At the moment, they have
 - Grades 9-12: 2/7 votes on the Souhegan Board
 - Grades 7-8: no control (tuition without voice to AMS)
 - Grades K-6: total control.
 - In a consolidated district, Mont Vernon would have a minority of seats under any reasonable formula (best case possible might be 3/7; expansion to 9 or 11 seats is not recommended, and would at best narrow the majority/minority split, not change it).
- Loss of grade-specific focus. In the current (uncommon) configuration, we have boards with specific grade responsibilities (K-6, PK-8, 9-12). In a consolidated district, all board members would be P-12 “generalists”.