

2023-2024 VSBA Resolutions Report to the Membership

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 are guidance for staff and the VSBA Board when they are working in the public policy arena or developing programs and services for our members. Resolutions are not legislation.

Each year, the VSBA Resolutions Committee considers all resolutions submitted by a member school district board, develops resolutions on issues of importance that are not otherwise addressed in existing or submitted resolutions, and reviews all continuing and regular resolutions.

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. All resolutions submitted by member boards will be submitted to the membership at our Annual Meeting, regardless of the recommendation of the Resolutions Committee or the VSBA Board.

After careful consideration of the resolutions submitted by member boards and the VSBA Resolutions Committee, and a review of all continuing and regular VSBA Resolutions, the VSBA Resolutions Committee and VSBA Board submit the following Resolutions Report.

Respectfully Submitted,

Flor Diaz Smith, Chair of the Resolutions Committee

Gaston Bathalon

Suzanne Buck

Martine Gulick

Michael Inners

Mark Kaufman

Colleen MacKinnon

Adrienne Raymond

Nancy Russell

Jim Salsgiver

Marc Schauber

**Resolution Proposal#1:
Missisquoi Valley School District
Section II, SubSection V
Elimination of the Requirement of Federal Grant Assessment
for Vermont School Districts**

WHEREAS, school districts in Vermont currently face a requirement to pay a federal grant assessment to the Vermont State Teachers Retirement System (VSTRS) for all teachers funded by federal grants; and

WHEREAS, this assessment hampers the ability of school districts to fully utilize the federal grant funds they receive, thereby reducing the resources available for the education and well-being of their students; and

WHEREAS, the current requirement creates an inaccurate representation of the school district's expenditure, potentially misleading the public and stakeholders regarding the actual financial commitment to meet the needs of their schools; and

WHEREAS, the assessment is set at an excessively high rate of over 20%, and its continual growth further exacerbates the burden on school districts year after year; and

BE IT RESOLVED: The requirement for school districts in Vermont to pay a federal grant assessment to the Vermont State Teachers Retirement System for teachers funded by federal grants shall be eliminated.

We, the undersigned, hereby express our support for this resolution and call upon the Vermont State Legislature to take swift action to rectify this unjust burden on school districts and ensure the optimal utilization of federal grant funds for the benefit of Vermont students.

**VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS
VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS**

**Resolution Proposal #2:
North Country Union Full School Board
Section II, Subsection W
Use of Surplus Education Funds**

WHEREAS: The State of Vermont education fund has a projected \$63 million in surplus funds for year 2022 and educational spending is expected to increase by at least 8%,

AND WHEREAS: The State of Vermont is facing a severe staffing shortage as well as decreases in funds for student programming for the arts and enrichment curriculums and activities – which are an integral part of a comprehensive and inclusive education that empowers, enriches, motivates, and inspires students to expand their creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: All surplus monies in the Vermont State education fund be used to: a) help school districts defray the costs of unemployment insurance so that support staff professionals can obtain unemployment benefits during times of school breaks and vacations, thereby helping to assure said professionals have a living wage and are therefore motivated to fill employment vacancies and keep our schools fully staffed. b) Provide individual schools funds to support the arts and enrichment programs for the students of Vermont.

**VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS
VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS**

**Resolution Proposal #3:
Addison Northwest School District
Section I, Subsection Q
Collaboration to Benefit all Students**

WHEREAS: Vermont's students, teachers, staff, and administrators have emerged from a world-wide pandemic as well as deal with daily concerns including school shootings and violence, inequity and inequality, and hate speech and actions taken against marginalized persons:

AND WHEREAS: the 2022-23 Vermont statewide student assessments results show an overall reduction in students meeting educational standards in math and language arts;

AND WHEREAS: the State Board of Education and the Agency of Education have facilitated many comprehensive system changes including the statewide Efinance, the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, Vermont's comprehensive student assessment system, changes to block grant funding for Special Education (Act 173), and revised school quality standards;

AND WHEREAS: the Efinance software implementation was a statewide failure and resulted in abandoning the software after spending a significant amount of money from the Education Fund;

AND WHEREAS: the Statewide Longitudinal Data System project was established in 2005 and received \$4.9 million in funding, but useful information from that System is not yet available to local school districts;

AND WHEREAS: the Vermont comprehensive assessment software rollout in the spring of 2023 (which replaced SBAC with Cognia) failed to provide usable or historically comparable results due to system-wide software failures resulting in more hardship for school communities and a further lack of assessment results, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: The VSBA enlist the support of the Vermont Superintendents Association, Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Vermont Business Managers Association and work with legislators by January 2025 to provide recommendations for changes to the Governor and their appointed State Board of Education and Secretary of Agency of Education so that Vermont students receive the benefits of all the VSBA current on-going resolutions (I.F,I.L, II.B(4), II.S, III.B, III.C, and V.B).

VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS
VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS

**Resolution Proposal #4:
Norwich School District
Section II, Subsection X
Non-Residential Tax Rate Equal to Homestead Tax Rate**

WHEREAS: in 2022 there were 88 towns where the Homestead Education Property Tax Rate was higher than the Non-Residential Education Property Tax Rate;

AND WHEREAS: this property tax rate disparity can incentivize non-residential homeownership in these towns;

AND WHEREAS: this property tax rate disparity places an increased burden on homestead property owners;

AND WHEREAS: many Vermont towns are already facing high property costs and an acute shortage of housing; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: The VSBA calls upon the General Assembly to examine the impact and feasibility of raising the Non-Residential Tax Rate to the same rate as the Homestead Tax Rate in every town where the Non-Residential Tax Rate is lower than the Homestead Tax Rate.

VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: TAKE NO ACTION

VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS

**Resolution Proposal #5:
Winooski School District
Section V, Subsection F
Youth Mental Health**

WHEREAS: In 2021 U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy released a national advisory, Protecting Youth Mental Health, citing increased rates of psychological distress among youth, increased number of emergency department visits for suspected suicide attempts, and recognition that it was more difficult to recognize signs of mental illness during the pandemic;

AND WHEREAS: In 2023 Dr. Murthy stated that the increase in youth mental health needs is “the defining crisis of our time;”

AND WHEREAS: Results from the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey of Vermont’s middle and high school students report that 35% experience poor mental health “most of the time” or “always,” with higher percentages among girls (49%) and LGBTQ+ students (59%);

AND WHEREAS: According to the survey, students of color were almost twice as likely to have attempted suicide as compared to white students, and LGBTQ+ students were more than three times as likely as compared to heterosexual/cisgender students, in the 12 months prior to the survey;

AND WHEREAS: Vermont Department of Health published data and analysis on suicidality in 2022, stating that “suicide-related risk factors in youth are increasing,” suicide is the second-leading cause of death among youth, and hospital visits for intentional self-harm are statistically significantly higher for 15- to 24-year old youth as compared to other age groups;

AND WHEREAS: In 2023, Superintendent Lynn Cota testified to the House Education Committee of a “growing complexity and severity of student behaviors” including violent outbursts, vandalism, sexualized behaviors, and threats of harm to self or others among schools;

AND WHEREAS: Superintendent Cota described the “unintended consequences” that come from schools hiring mental health professionals without coordinating efforts with social service partners, including the exacerbation of staffing shortages in the Designated Agencies and the Department for Children and Families; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: The VSBA urges the General Assembly and Congress to champion the health and well-being of Vermont's youth by enacting legislation that supports our youth's mental health and protects them against intentional self-harm, and ensures adequate funding for any programs or requirements that are mandated by enacted legislation. Further, the VSBA calls upon the Governor to develop a comprehensive plan to support and protect youth mental health through meaningful collaboration among the Administration, schools, Designated Agencies, and other community partners.

VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION

VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION

Resolution Proposal #6
Resolutions Committee
Section V, Subsection G
Flavored Tobacco Products

WHEREAS: Flavors in tobacco products increase the appeal of tobacco to young people, with the highest prevalence of flavored tobacco use seen in U.S. teens aged 12-17, followed by young adults aged 18-24;

AND WHEREAS: First use of a flavored tobacco product is also associated with continued use and progression to regular tobacco use;

AND WHEREAS: Of the 873 Vermont teens and young adults who completed surveys conducted by PACE Vermont in Fall or Winter 2020 addressing nicotine and tobacco product use (electronic vapor product (EVP), cigarette, and cigar), use of flavored tobacco products, and beliefs about flavored tobacco products, nearly 1 in 5 (18%) of participants used an EVP in the past 30 days; of those, 83% used flavored EVPs. More than a third (37%) of past 30-day cigarette smokers used menthol or flavored cigarettes and 44% of past 30-day cigar, cigarillo, or little cigar smokers used flavored cigars;

AND WHEREAS: In that same survey, of those participants aged 12-20, 55% believed that flavored tobacco products were “easier to use” than non-flavored tobacco products (44% “about the same” and 2% “harder to use”);

AND WHEREAS: Also in that survey, nearly three-quarters (72%) believed that the harms of using flavored tobacco products were “no different” than non-flavored tobacco products (26% “more harmful” and 2% “less harmful”);

AND WHEREAS: The Executive Director of the Vermont Principals Association testified during the 2023 legislative session that “[v]aping in schools is reaching a crisis level not only in high schools but also in middle schools in the state. School administrators are spending an inordinate amount of time checking bathrooms and other spots in schools and on school grounds during school hours tracking down students who are seeking to feed their addiction. School districts are spending a great deal of money setting up vape sensors in bathrooms and other places within the school. Schools are catching students vaping and providing them with educational training as a part of their plan for addressing these issues - these education modules dealing with vaping are not free and schools are paying for this programming.”;

AND WHEREAS: The VSBA Board of Directors approved a motion on Feb. 12, 2020 supporting the ban on the sale of flavored cigarettes, flavored e cigarettes and flavored substances that contain nicotine or are otherwise intended for use in an e-cigarette; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: The VSBA supports a ban on the sale of flavored cigarettes, flavored e cigarettes and flavored substances that contain nicotine or are otherwise intended for use in an e-cigarette.

VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION

VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION

Resolution Proposal #7
Resolutions Committee
Section II, Subsection Y
Separation of Church and State

WHEREAS: The Compelled Support Clause in Chapter I, Article 3 of the Vermont Constitution states “that no person ought to, or of right can be compelled to attend any religious worship, or erect or support any place of worship, or maintain any minister, contrary to the dictates of conscience”;

AND WHEREAS: The Supreme Court in *Carson v. Makin* made it clear that if Vermont (and other states) provides taxpayer-funded vouchers for private schools, it must expand to send public money to all private schools, including religious ones;

AND WHEREAS: The Vermont Agency of Education, in response to *Carson v. Makin*, issued guidance advising school districts that religious schools could not be excluded from public tuition payments based on Vermont Constitution’s Compelled Support Clause, Vermont Constitution Chapter I, Article 3.;

AND WHEREAS: The Agency of Education’s guidance is inconsistent with the Vermont Supreme Court’s interpretation of the Compelled Support Clause in the *Chittenden* case, which held that school districts violate the Vermont Constitution's Compelled Support Clause when they "reimburse tuition for a sectarian school .. in the absence of adequate safeguards against the use of such funds for religious worship.”;

AND WHEREAS: By sending public tax dollars to religious schools, Vermont is supporting religious indoctrination and training for future religious leaders and adherents, which is contrary to the Compelled Support Clause;

AND WHEREAS: If the General Assembly does not act, Vermont tax dollars will continue to flow to religious schools; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: The General Assembly must act to bring Vermont tuition reimbursement policy and practice into compliance with the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in the *Carson v. Makin* without violating the Compelled Support Clause in Article III of Chapter I of the Vermont Constitution.

VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION

VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION

Resolution Proposal #8
VSBA Staff
Section V, Subsection H
Restraint and Seclusion

WHEREAS: 16 V.S.A § 1161a states that “each public and each approved independent school shall adopt and implement a comprehensive plan for responding to student misbehavior. To the extent appropriate, the plan shall promote the positive development of youths;”

AND WHEREAS: in 2012, the US Department of Education (USDE) identified 15 principles for states, local school districts, preschool, elementary, and secondary schools, parents, and other stakeholders to consider as the framework for when states, localities, and districts develop and implement policies and procedures... related to restraint and seclusion to ensure that any use of restraint or seclusion in schools does not occur except when there is a threat of imminent danger or serious physical harm to the student or others, and occurs in a manner that protects the safety of all children and adults at school;

AND WHEREAS: On July 31, 2009, USDE Secretary Duncan sent a [letter](#) to states and territories urging them to develop or review and, if appropriate, revise their state policies and guidelines to ensure that every student in every school under its jurisdiction is safe and protected from being unnecessarily or inappropriately restrained or secluded;

AND WHEREAS: The State of Vermont does not have any policies or guidelines on the use of restraints or seclusion in schools;

AND WHEREAS: The use of restraints and seclusion in schools is governed only by the Vermont State Board of Education Rule Series 4500;

AND WHEREAS: Data reporting is only required when there is death, injury requiring outside medical treatment or hospitalization to staff or student as a result of a restraint or seclusion; or when physical restraint or seclusion has been used for more than thirty (30) minutes; or when physical restraint or seclusion has been used in violation of the 4500 Rules, including the use of any prohibited restraint or seclusion;

AND WHEREAS: The 2023 General Assembly heard testimony regarding the ongoing and potential overuse of restraint and seclusion, inadequate training on de-escalation techniques, limited data reporting, and lack of monitoring of the use of restraint and seclusion practices and compliance with Rule 4500; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: The VSBA calls on the General Assembly to prohibit the use of restraint and seclusion in any learning environment that receives public funds from the State of Vermont, except when there is a threat of imminent

danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, and when it occurs in a manner that protects the safety of all children. Further, the VSBA calls for thorough data reporting requirements that would provide student demographic information, and the development and implementation of statewide technical assistance to promote positive development of youth through evidence-based, developmentally-appropriate programs. Technical assistance should address consistent and accurate reporting, to include demographic information.

**VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS
VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION**

Resolution Proposal #9
Resolutions Committee
Section I, Subsection Q
Remote School Board Meetings

WHEREAS: Vermont Open Meeting Law, 1 V.S.A. §312(a), requires that if a quorum or more of the members of a public body attend a meeting without being physically present at a designated meeting location, (1) the agenda shall designate at least one physical location where a member of the public can attend and participate in the meeting, and, (2) at least one member of the public body, or at least one staff or designee of the public body, shall be physically present at each designated meeting location;

AND WHEREAS: the General Assembly passed Act 1 (2023), which suspends the designated physical location requirements and permits a quorum or more of the members of a public body to attend a regular, special or emergency meeting by electronic or other means without being physically present at a designated meeting location, without designating a physical location, and without requiring staff to be physically present at that location until July 1, 2024;

AND WHEREAS: the temporary suspension of designated meeting location requirements have increased community participation, equity of access, transparency and accountability, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: The General Assembly should amend Vermont's Open Meeting Law to make fully remote meetings a permanent, voluntary option.

VSBA RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT PASS
VSBA BOARD RECOMMENDATION: PASS AS A REGULAR RESOLUTION

Recommendations For Continuing Resolutions

The VSBA Resolutions Committee and VSBA Board also reviewed the continuing resolutions and made the following recommendations. As a reminder, continuing resolutions are in effect until amended or deleted.

<u>Res #</u>	<u>Resolution Name</u>	<u>Committee and Board Recommendation</u> (Delete, Adopt for 1 year, Amend, Take No Action)
I.C.	Supervisory Unions	Delete
I.J.	Appointments to Unified Boards	Delete
II.N.1.	Cost Containment - Statewide health insurance benefit	Amend (see below)
III.D.	School Choice	Amend (see below)
III.E.	Early Education	Amend (see below)

VSBA Resolutions Committee and VSBA Board (Recommended) Amendments:

II.N.1. - Cost Containment - Statewide health insurance benefit for school employees:

The Resolutions Committee and VSBA Board recommend the following amendment:
~~*In order to ensure equity and sustainability in the health care benefits available to all school employees, the General Assembly should adopt a process for the negotiation of health care benefits at the state level by a council of school board members to apply to contracts that expire in 2019. Any legislative approach for addressing health care for school employees must demonstrate that it will reduce costs to school districts over the near and long term and should reflect the health insurance plan norms for the majority of Vermonters.*~~

III.D. - School Choice -

The Resolutions Committee and the VSBA Board recommend the following amendment:
~~*Vermont needs to recognize the long history of school choice in many towns and to leave in place that status quo. VSBA is concerned that expanded school choice for all other towns could have significant unintended consequences. If this option is to be seriously considered it requires extensive study with substantial involvement by VSBA.*~~

III.E. - Early Education -

The Resolutions Committee and the VSBA Board recommend the following amendment:
~~**E. EARLY EDUCATION** – The VSBA encourages the General Assembly to create~~

~~universal access to pre-kindergarten education, through a system that emphasizes equity, quality, and simplicity. School districts should play a central role in assuring quality and accountability in publicly funded early education programs.~~

E. PRE-KINDERGARTEN - The VSBA encourages the General Assembly to support fully-funded, full-day pre-kindergarten education through a system that emphasizes equity, high-quality and simplicity. School districts must ensure equitable access, quality and accountability in publicly funded pre-kindergarten education.

Recommendations For Regular Resolutions

The VSBA Resolutions Committee and VSBA Board also reviewed the regular resolutions and made the following recommendations. As a reminder, regular resolutions are in effect until the next annual meeting when they may be deleted, continued for one year, or amended.

<u>Res #</u>	<u>Resolution Name</u>	<u>Committee and Board Recommendation</u> (Delete, Continue, Amend)
I.L.	Timely and Reliable Information & Implementation	Amend (see below)
I.M.	Monitor Outcomes From Act 46 Goals	Continue
I.O.	Governance of Career & Technical Education Schools	Continue
I.P.	Governance Standards	Continue
II.E.	Common Level of Appraisal	Continue
II.F.	Reform the Education Tax System	Continue
II.O.	Broadband Access for Education	Continue
II.S.	Shared School District Financial Software System	Delete
II.T.	Education Finance	Continue
III.J.	School Stabilization: Student Mobility and Resilience	Continue
V.E.	Universal Meals	Continue

VSBA Resolutions Committee and VSBA Board (Recommended) Amendment:

I.L. Timely and Reliable Information & Implementation -

The Resolutions Committee and the VSBA Board recommend amending the existing language as follows: *The VSBA will prioritize and use its influence to support Vermont School Boards in ensuring that Business Managers, Superintendents, and School Boards receive required, useful and timely information from the Agency of Education*

and that the implementation of the statewide Chart of Accounts and Accounting System will not become a burden for its member school districts.

WASHINGTON NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION

CABOT SCHOOL – TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL

POLICY D8

ALCOHOL AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

Policy

It is the policy of the Washington Northeast Supervisory Union and the Cabot and Twinfield Union School Districts to maintain a workplace free of alcohol and drugs. No employee, volunteer or work study student will unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use alcohol or any drug on or in the workplace. Nor shall any employee, volunteer or work study student be in the workplace while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that an employee, volunteer or work study student is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on or in the workplace, the person will be immediately removed from the performance of his or her duties.

Definitions

Drug means any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance as defined by state or federal statute or regulation.

Workplace means the site for the performance of work for the School District, including any school building or any school premises and any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities. It also includes off school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the School District.

Employee means all persons directly or indirectly compensated by the school district for providing services to the district and all employees of independent contractors who provide services to the district.

Volunteer means an individual not employed by the School District who works on an occasional or regular basis in the school setting to assist the staff. A volunteer works without compensation or economic benefits provided by the school district.

Work Study Student means a student who receives compensation for work performed at the school as part of a college work experience program. For purposes of this policy, an intern, working without pay, will be considered as a work study student. A student working toward a teaching credential who may be placed at a school as a student teacher is not a work study student.

Employee Responsibilities

As a condition of employment, each employee will notify the Superintendent in writing of his or her conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring on or in the workplace as defined above. The employee must notify the Superintendent no later than five days after such conviction. Entry of a *nolo contendere* plea shall constitute a conviction for purposes of this policy, as will any judicial finding of guilt or imposition of sentence. Within 10 days of notification from an employee, or receipt of actual notice of an alcohol or drug conviction, the Superintendent will notify any federal or state officers or agencies legally entitled to such notification.

An employee, volunteer or work study student who violates the terms of this policy may be asked to satisfactorily complete an alcohol or drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved by the Superintendent. In addition, an employee who violates the terms of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to non-renewal, suspension or termination at the discretion of the Superintendent or, if required, the Board.

Legal Reference(s): 49 U.S.C. §§ 5331, 31306 (*Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991*)
49 C.F.R. Parts 40, 382, 391, 392, 395 and 653
21 V.S.A. 511 et seq.

	<u>WNESU</u>	<u>Cabot</u>	<u>Twinfield</u>
Warned:	November 20, 2014	November 17, 2014	November 11, 2014
Adopted:	May 18, 2015	December 1, 2014	November 25, 2014
Reviewed:			

WASHINGTON NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION

CABOT SCHOOL – TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL

POLICY F7

STUDENT ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

It is the policy of the Washington Northeast Supervisory Union and Cabot and Twinfield Union School Districts that no student shall knowingly possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal drug, regulated substance, or alcohol on any school property, or at any school sponsored activity away from or within the school. It is further the policy of the district to make appropriate referrals in cases of substance abuse.

Definitions

Substance Abuse is the ingestion of drugs and or alcohol in such a way that it interferes with a person's ability to perform physically, intellectually, emotionally, or socially.

Drug means any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance as defined by state or federal regulation or statute.

Educational Program. The Principal shall work with appropriate staff members to develop and conduct an alcohol and drug abuse educational program. The program shall be consistent with the Vermont Alcohol and Drug Education Curriculum Plan. If the school district is a recipient of federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds, the Act will be considered in the development of the alcohol and drug abuse educational program.

Support and Referral System. In each school the principal or his or her designee shall develop a support and referral system for screening students who refer themselves and students who are referred by staff for suspected drug and/or alcohol use and/or abuse problems. The support and referral system will include processes to determine the need for further screening, education, counseling or referral for treatment in each referred case. In addition, the principal shall establish procedures for administering emergency first aid related to alcohol and drug abuse.

Cooperative Agreements. The Principal shall annually designate an individual to be responsible for providing information to students and parents or guardians about outside agencies that provide substance abuse prevention services and to encourage the use of their services and programs when appropriate.

The Washington Northeast Supervisory Union and the Cabot and Twinfield Union School Districts, have entered into a cooperative agreement with Central Vermont Substance Abuse Services (Agency). The Agency will provide substance abuse treatment to students who are referred through the school's support and referral system, or who refer themselves for treatment.

Staff Training. The Principal will work with appropriate staff to provide training for teachers and health and guidance personnel who teach or provide other services in the school's alcohol and drug abuse prevention education program. The training provided will meet the requirements of State Board Rules related to staff training.

Community Involvement. The Principal will work with school staff and community members to implement a program to inform the community about substance abuse issues in accord with State Board of Education rules.

Annual Report. In a standard format provided by the Vermont Department of Education, the Principal will submit an annual report to the Commissioner of Education describing substance abuse education programs and their effectiveness.

Notification. The Principal shall ensure that parents and students are given copies of the standards of conduct and disciplinary sanctions contained in the procedures related to this policy, and are notified that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory. Notice to students will, at a minimum, be provided through inclusion of these standards and sanctions in the student handbook distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year or when a student enrolls in the school.

Legal Reference(s): 20 U.S.C. §§7101 et seq. (Safe & Drug-Free Schools & Communities Act of 1994)
16 V.S.A. §909 (Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention Education Curriculum)
16 V.S.A. 131(9) (Comprehensive Health Education)
16 V.S.A. §1045(b)(Driver Training Course)
16 V.S.A. §1165 (Alcohol and drug abuse)
18 V.S.A. §4226 (Drugs: minors, treatment, consent)
Vt. State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices §§4200 -4215)

	<u>WNESU</u>	<u>Cabot</u>	<u>Twinfield</u>
Warned:		February 12, 2015	February 5, 2015
Adopted:		March 16, 2015	March 10, 2015
Reviewed:			

CALEDONIA CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION

CABOT SCHOOL

ADDENDUM TO POLICY C18

STUDENT SELF-EXPRESSION - FLAGS

Purpose

This addendum establishes the procedure and protocol for student expression through use of flags or other symbols displayed on Cabot School property.

Procedure

The flying of flags, or installation/display of expressive material, is subject to the following conditions:

1. Students have a right to express themselves on school property through speech or expressive actions, including the flying of flags, provided that such expression does not materially or substantially interfere with the orderly operation of the school and the rights of others. The underlying policy, and this addendum, prohibit student self-expression that:

- A. Is obscene, vulgar, or profane, or harms the reputation of others;
- B. Violates federal, state or local laws;
- C. Advocates the use or availability of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs;
- D. Incites violence; or
- E. Interferes with or advocates interference with the orderly operation of the schools.

2. Student expression outside of normal classroom activities, including flying of flags, or installation/display of expressive materials on the school campus, must rationally and substantially relate to educational goals developed through the following means:

- A. An independent course of study, approved and supervised by Cabot School faculty or staff; or
- B. A student lead, faculty or staff facilitated, effort to advance the goals of the Cabot School District's diversity, equity, and inclusion policy or continuous improvement plan.

3. A student, student group, or administration official acting on behalf of a student or student group may petition the School Board to approve the flying of a flag on the school flagpole or placement of a temporary installation/display on campus. The School Board may approve in whole or in part such requests, may delegate decision making to

the administration in whole or in part, or may deny requests consistent with law, this policy, and other Supervisory Union or District policies in effect at the time of the petition.

Date Warned: 5/27/2020 - Cabot

Date Adopted: 6/22/2020- Cabot

*Cross References: C18: Student Self-Expression
A__: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

WASHINGTON NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION

CABOT SCHOOL – TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL

POLICY G13

ANIMAL DISSECTION

Policy

It is the intent of the Washington Northeast Supervisory Union and Cabot and Twinfield Union School Districts to comply with the requirements of Act 154 of 2008 regarding the right of students to be excused from participating in or observing activities involving the dissection or vivisection of animals. Students enrolled in District schools shall have the right to be excused from participating in any lesson, exercise or assessment requiring the student to dissect, vivisect or otherwise harm or destroy an animal or any part of an animal, or to observe any of these activities, as part of a course of instruction.

Definition

As used in this policy, the word “animal” means any organism of the kingdom animalia and includes an animal’s cadaver or the severed parts of an animal’s cadaver.

Alternative Education Method

A student who is excused under this policy shall be provided with alternative methods through which he or she can learn and be assessed on material required by the course. The alternative methods shall be developed by the teacher of the course, in consultation with the principal if necessary.

Discrimination

No student shall be discriminated against based on his or her decision to exercise the right to be excused afforded by this policy.

Procedures

The Superintendent shall develop and implement procedures to ensure compliance with the provisions of Act 154 of 2008. The procedures shall include provisions for the timely notification to each student enrolled in the course and to the student’s parent or guardian of the student’s right to be excused from participating in or observing the lesson and the process by which a student may exercise this right.

Legal Reference: Act 154 of 2007-2008 Adjourned Session
16 V.S.A. §912

	<u>WNESU</u>	<u>Cabot</u>	<u>Twinfield</u>
Warned:		April 6, 2015	March 24, 2015
Adopted:		May 4, 2015	April 28, 2015
Reviewed:			

WASHINGTON NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION

CABOT SCHOOL – TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL

POLICY B3 BOARD MEMBER CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Policy

It is the ethical and legal duty of all School Board members to avoid conflicts of interest as well as the appearance of conflicts of interest.

Definitions

“Conflict of interest” means a situation when a board member’s private interests, as distinguished from the board member’s interest as a member of the general public, would benefit from or be harmed by his or her actions as a member of the board.

Implementation

In order to comply with the obligations thus imposed, the Board and its members will adhere to the following recommended standards.

1. A Board member will not give the impression that he or she would represent special interests or partisan politics for personal gain.
2. A Board member will not give the impression that he or she has the authority to make decisions or take action on behalf of the Board or the school administration.
3. A Board member will not use his or her position on the Board to promote personal financial interests or the financial interests of family members, friends or supporters.
4. A Board member will not solicit or accept anything of value in return for taking particular positions on matters before the Board.
5. A Board member will not give the impression that his or her position on any issue can be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of the question.
6. Board members will be familiar with, and adhere to, those provisions of Vermont education law which define School Board powers and govern Board member compensation and public bidding processes.

Avoiding Conflicts

When a Board member becomes aware that he or she is in a position that creates a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest as defined in state law or this policy, he or she will declare the nature and extent of the conflict or appearance of conflict for inclusion in the Board minutes, and will abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of the issue giving rise to the conflict.

Complaints of Conflict of Interest

When a conflict of interest claim against a Board member is brought to the Board in writing and is signed by another Board member or a member of the public, and the Board member against whom the claim is made does not concur that a conflict in fact exists, the following Board procedures will be followed.

1. Upon a majority vote of the remaining Board members, or upon order of the chair, the Board will hold an informal hearing on the conflict of interest claim, giving both the Board member and the person bringing the claim an opportunity to be heard.
2. At the conclusion of the informal hearing, the remaining Board members will determine by majority vote whether to:
 - a. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is not supported by the evidence and is therefore dismissed;

- b. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and that the member should disqualify him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the Board deliberations or decision related to that issue, as required by Vermont statute; and/or
- c. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and the Board member should be formally censured or subjected to such other action as may be allowed by law.

Legal Reference(s): 16 V.S.A. § 262(d) (Election of officers)
 16 V.S.A. §557 (Gratuity/compensation prohibited)
 16 V.S.A. §558 (Eligibility for election to school board)
 16 V.S.A. §559 (Public bids)
 16 V.S.A. §563(20) (Powers of school boards)

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Reviewed:			

CB001 – Community Service Policy

Community is the heart of the town of Cabot, and likewise, its school. Requiring high schoolers to do work in service of their community not only strengthens that bond between town and school, but also offers students unique opportunities to develop vital life skills while providing help to people in need.

Therefore, it is the policy of the school board to require all students to engage in a minimum community service requirement. The amount of community service shall be set in consultation with the administration and student representatives and reviewed as needed.

Paid work and internships can satisfy this requirement at the discretion of the administration. Students who far exceed the required hours will be recognized on the student's transcript, as well as acknowledged at their high school graduation ceremony.

The Administration shall develop and maintain a system for supporting students in attaining community service hours as well as specifying the number of hours required for graduation.

Date Warned: 06/28/2021

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