**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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Date February 3rd 2025

**Vermonters Rally to Protect Rural Schools Against Governor Scott’s Education Overhaul**

Vermonters who value strong public education are standing up to protect our community schools. Governor Phil Scott’s education proposal disregards Vermont’s unique history and geography, dismantling a system that has evolved over 200 years in favor of a top down, bureaucratic centralized model. His plan treats Vermont’s education system as if it’s nothing more than spare parts that should be eliminated. We strongly disagree.

Rural community schools are the backbone of our towns, providing high-quality education while fostering deep community connections. In response to the Governor’s plan, local school boards and town leaders across the state are uniting under the **Rural School Community Alliance**, a coalition dedicated to preserving and strengthening our public schools.

Escalating property taxes need to be addressed. This goal can be accomplished through reasonable means that tackle cost drivers and recognize Vermont’s values – equity and democratic engagement. Stability and recovery should guide us forward. School systems have been rocked by a global pandemic and a plethora of new laws from Act 46 to weighting that have not been evaluated or fully implemented.

Since January 1st, the following school boards and municipalities have discussed the formation of the Rural School Community Alliance. A number have voted to join, and additional districts have votes scheduled for the coming weeks:

 **School Districts & Supervisory Unions**

* Westminster School District
* Marlboro School District
* Peacham School District
* Craftsbury School District
* Cabot School District
* Lincoln School Supervisory District
* Ludlow Mt. Holly Unified Union School District

**White River Valley Supervisory Union**:

* Granville Hancock Union District
* Sharon School District
* First Branch School District
* Strafford School District
* Rochester Stockbridge School District
* White River Unified District

**Grand Isle Supervisory Union**:

* South Hero
* Grand Isle
* North Hero
* Alburgh

**North Country Supervisory Union**:

* Coventry School District
* Brighton School District
* Charleston School District
* Derby School District
* Holland School District
* Jay Westfield School District
* Lowell School District
* Newport School District
* Troy School District
* NCUHS District
* NCUMS District

**Orleans Central Supervisory Union**:

* Orleans Central Elementary District (serving Barton, Glover, Irasburg, Brownington, Orleans, and Albany)
* Lake Region Union High School District

**Municipal Support**

* Town of Greensboro Select Board
* Town of Peacham Select Board
* Marlboro School Association

The time to defend Vermont’s rural public schools is NOW. We invite school boards, community members, and local leaders to join us in standing up for our children, schools and communities.

For more information, visit [**vtruraledu.org**](http://vtruraledu.org) or email **vtschoolsrock@gmail.com**.