

Rutland South Supervisory Union (RSSU)

Clarendon, Shrewsbury, Tinmouth, & Wallingford

What is Act 46?

- Act 46 by the Vermont Legislature relates to the consolidation of school governance, not school consolidation.
- The preferred Act 46 configuration is several schools together providing a pre K through 12th grade education operating under one school board with a minimum of 900 resident students.
- RSSU has 815 resident students, which does not meet the minimum of 900.
- With tuition students the total number of students served is over 900 students.
- The Vermont State School Board will not grant RSSU a waiver regarding the 900 resident student requirement.
- However, RSSU can consolidate into one school board under the existing Acts 153 and 156 and meet Act 46 requirements. Acts 153 and 156 require a minimum of four districts (including Mill River, we have five districts).
- Acts 153 and 156 require the formation of a study committee with representation from the four towns. The school boards of our four towns have formed a study committee.
- The charge of the study committee is to develop a plan for the new governance and create articles of operation for the new larger school district.
- The meetings and minutes of the study committee will be posted in accordance with the open meeting law.
- The plan and articles have to be approved by the Vermont State Board of Education.
- The plan has to demonstrate increased quality of education and a reduction of expenses.
- The plan has to then be approved by the voters in all four towns individually.

Why consolidate?

- First, it is a Vermont state law that requires all school boards to consolidate.
- This is not something that Rutland South Supervisory Union dreamed up.
- If we vote to consolidate by 2016, there will be a reduction in property taxes for four years starting with 8 cents, 6 cents the following year, then 4 cents, and a 2 cent reduction on the fourth year.
- The new district will keep the small school grants currently paid to Tinmouth and Shrewsbury (\$167,296).
- If the plan is approved, we will receive \$150,000 for reorganization costs.
- Consolidation will more easily allow the sharing of resources to reduce education costs.
- If the above plan is successful and approved by the voters, then the four elementary schools and Mill River will operate under one school board.
- The new school board would have the power to appoint advisory committees of local citizens for each school.
- **Each school will operate just as it is now with the added benefit of easily sharing resources.**

What happens if we do nothing?

- If we do not approve a consolidation plan by 2018, in 2019 the Agency of Education will consolidate the school districts that have not consolidated, as the Agency of Education desires.
- Keep in mind that there are five high schools within a very short bus ride of each other.
- Any of our schools could wind up in a different school district.
- Tinmouth and Shrewsbury would lose the small school grants of \$167,296.
- If people wish to keep the schools operating just as they are and retain some local control through continued cooperation of citizens, teachers, and staff, a successful consolidation needs to take place.