

Dear Representative Conlon and Members of the House Committee,

I write to express strong support for maintaining Vermont's long-standing school choice model. Preserving school choice is a top priority for my family and my community.

For decades, school choice has provided families in our region with access to both public and independent schools. This model has allowed students to attend schools that best meet their academic, social, and developmental needs. Our independent schools are accredited by respected third-party organizations and offer high-quality educational environments that have helped generations of children thrive.

School choice empowers families to make decisions that reflect their values, circumstances, and aspirations. The success of our students is a direct result of this flexibility. Removing that choice and requiring families to attend a public school many miles away would undermine both common sense and the goals of equitable access. In many cases, families would be forced to drive past excellent independent schools in their own communities simply to reach a designated public school farther away.

The impact of eliminating school choice would extend far beyond education. It would have a ripple effect across our towns and the broader region. School choice is a major factor in attracting and retaining employees who make our communities thrive. Many families who live in our communities today chose this region specifically because of the educational options available to them. Changing this model would negatively affect property values, recruitment efforts, and the overall appeal of our towns and our state to new families.

As you consider new district maps and the future of Vermont's education system, I urge you to keep these realities in mind. The school choice model has served our communities exceptionally well for generations.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Erin Quatrini-Hill

CCSD Board Member (Waterford)