Thetford-Rivendell
Safe Harbor Statement

This document is a good faith effort to frame our discussions and help us explore how we might come together to better serve the children of Thetford and Rivendell. All student counts are approximate (from GreatSchools.org). We do not guarantee the complete accuracy of the metrics that went into this analysis nor the conclusions drawn from them. In short, there could be fallacies in one or more of these proposals that we have not considered.
Formed in 1998

Incorporated many best practices
- preschool
- after school & summer enrichment
- individual support for literacy
- no tracking

Student outcomes have soared across 4 towns of varied economic status

- Poverty level at VT average
- Test scores way above average
Rivendell Elementary Schools

Orange County / Fairlee, Vermont / Rivendell Interstate School District

Samuel Morey Elementary School (SME)

B+
Overall Niche Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADES</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>RANKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PK, K-6</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>12th in VT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Westshire Elementary School (WES)

Not Rated by Niche (Too Small? Or PK-4?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADES</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PK, K-6</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For comparison purposes – Newton School not rated either and Thetford Elementary got a B+ as well.

## Westshire Elementary #10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Low Grade</th>
<th>High Grade</th>
<th># Students</th>
<th>Student/Teacher Ratio</th>
<th>% of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch</th>
<th>Rank Data (2015 vs 2014)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Marlow W. Cross School</td>
<td>Norwich School District</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>PK 96</td>
<td></td>
<td>332</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>97.29 ▲ 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brower School</td>
<td>Huntington School District</td>
<td>Huntington</td>
<td>PK 94</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>93.34 ▲ 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Charlotte School</td>
<td>Charlotte School District</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>PK 98</td>
<td></td>
<td>485</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>92.62 ▲ 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Killington Elementary School</td>
<td>Killington School District</td>
<td>Killington</td>
<td>PK 98</td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>89.61 ▼ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shelburne Community School</td>
<td>Shelburne School District</td>
<td>Shelburne</td>
<td>PK 98</td>
<td></td>
<td>831</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>89.44 ▲ 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mt. Holy School</td>
<td>Mount Holy School District</td>
<td>Mount Holy</td>
<td>PK 96</td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>80.38 ▲ 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Woodstock Elementary School</td>
<td>Woodstock School District</td>
<td>Woodstock</td>
<td>PK 96</td>
<td></td>
<td>173</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>89.10 ▲ 11/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Underhill Central School</td>
<td>Underhill School District</td>
<td>Underhill</td>
<td>PK 94</td>
<td></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>68.69 ▲ 11/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Stowe Elementary School</td>
<td>Stowe School District</td>
<td>Stowe</td>
<td>PK 95</td>
<td></td>
<td>330</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>68.20 ▲ 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Westshire Elementary School</td>
<td>Riverdale Intermediate School District</td>
<td>West Fairlee</td>
<td>PK 94</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>67.58 ▲ 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rivendell Academy

State and Regional Ranking

1. Hanover High School (1)
2. Rivendell Academy (11)
3. Plymouth Regional High School (13)
4. Lebanon High School (14)
5. Woodsville High School (42)
6. Kearsarge Regional High School (43)
7. Mascoma Valley Regional High School (71)

Rivendell Academy

Ranked 5th in the state of Vermont by SchoolDigger despite the much higher number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch.
The Rivendell Interstate School District because of its unique interstate construction and governance is exempt from the consolidation mandates of Act 46, but is still beholden to the financial constraints. Rivendell is not eligible for the tax incentives.

Although Rivendell is an interstate system, it operates as a Vermont school district.

Rebecca Holcombe was one of the architects of Rivendell.
Act 46 Review

Education District (the preferred structure):
- The preferred educational governance structure is a single school district that:
  - is responsible for education of all resident PreK-12 students
  - is its own supervisory district (SD)
  - has a minimum average daily membership (ADM) of 900
  - assumes one of 4 most common structures:
    1. operates PK/K–12
    2. operates PK/K–8; tuitions 9–12
    3. operates PK/K–6; tuitions 7–12
    4. tuitions PK/K–12

Superviory Union (alternative structure):
- The preferred structure is not necessarily possible or the best means of achieving VT’s education goals in all regions of the State – so…
  - an SU composed of multiple member districts, each with its own board, can also meet the stated goals
  - particularly if:
    1. the member districts consider themselves collectively responsible for the education of all resident PK–12 students in the SU
    2. the SU maximizes efficiencies, economies of scale, flexibility, etc.
    3. the SU has the smallest number of member school districts practicable
    4. the combined ADM of all member districts is at least 1,100

Source: http://www.vtvsba.org/SectionbySectionSummary.pdf
Act 46 Review

Sec. 6. Accelerated Activity; Supervisory Union Becoming a Supervisory District; Enhanced Tax Incentives; Small School Support; Data and Report

[Senate language with amendments]

(a) Accelerated Activity. A newly merged district will receive enhanced tax incentives if:
- an existing SU becomes an SD by merging into a unified union school district (and, in addition, could also merge with a neighboring supervisory district)
- there is a positive electorale vote after June 30, 2015 and before July 1, 2016
- the new district:
  - is responsible for the education of all resident PK–12 students
  - is its own SD
  - has a minimum ADM of 900
  - operates under one of three common governance structures listed in Sec. 5
  - demonstrates its ability to meet the goals established in Sec. 2
  - is operational on or before July 1, 2017
  - provides data at Secretary’s request and otherwise assists the Secretary to evaluate the merger

- Homestead tax rate reduction: A newly merged districts will receive a homestead tax rate reduction of $0.10 / 0.08 / 0.06 / 0.04 / 0.02 in the first five years of operation. [This is more favorable than the incentive available to regional education districts (four years beginning at $0.08)]
What do we want for our kids?

**Improve**

1. Better subscribed specials/extracurriculars
   1. Music/Chorus
   2. Baseball
   3. Track/Cross-Country
   4. Robotics
   5. Foreign language (more and earlier)
2. More Advanced Course Offerings (and APs)
   1. More than Dartmouth, CCV, etc.?
3. Summer and after school programs
4. Larger more diverse social pool?

**Preserve**

1. Sense of Identity/Community
   1. Events like Raptor Run and Rivendell Ramble
   2. Sports
2. Small Classes
3. Theatre
4. Place-based learning
5. Cross-Rivendell Trail
6. Small(ish) but great

**Collaborate**

1. Special Ed
2. Technical Education
3. ESL
4. Food Service
5. Transportation
6. Facilities, fuel etc.
7. At-Risk Kids
8. Foreign Language

What is our number?

![Graph showing student growth over years]

- Students: 600, 575, 550, 525, 500
- Years: 11
Thetford-Rivendell  
(Middle School Model)  
(approx. 1000 kids)

• Rivendell gives up High School (and Sports)
• Rivendell and TA give up 7-12 model.
• Thetford kids spend middle school years full-time in Orford.
• Close an elementary school?

Single cohesive (expanded) curriculum PreK-12
Thetford-Rivendell
(Two Campuses, One School)
(approx. 1000 kids)

• TA stays independent, leases Rivendell Academy Campus
• The two campuses could specialize in different disciplines.
• Single unified (more expansive) curriculum, shared faculty.
• Degrees would be conferred by TA
• Better sharing of ESL, Sped, Specials, etc.
• Students might spend 2 days in one location and 3 in another.
• Governance – still 2 boards, one TA (7-12) one Rivendell (preK-6). Both expanded.
• Expanded Rivendell district designates TA
• Single Tech destination (Hartford Preferred)
• Close an elementary school

Create a singular learning community while maintaining some sense of the sports rivalry. All kids get to play sports this way as well, and undersubscribed sports thrive.

Sports 7-12
Thetford-Rivendell Club
XC, Track, Golf, Softball?, Baseball?

Thetford (Club)
Soccer, Basketball

Rivendell (Club)
Soccer, Basketball

Theater – separate and joint productions?
Thetford-Rivendell  
(Two Campuses, One School)  
(approx. 1000 kids)

- **Issues**
  - Independent School status needs to be restored (if not already).
  - Teacher pay scales across school roughly equivalent?
  - Governance of both boards rejiggered based on student population counts (or ad valorem property values)?
  - Does the sports “club” concept work?

Create a singular learning community while maintaining some sense of the sports rivalry. All kids get to play sports this way as well, and undersubscribed sports thrive.

Sports 7-12
Thetford-Rivendell Club  
XC, Track, Softball, Baseball?

Thetford (Club)  
Soccer, Basketball

Rivendell (Club)  
Soccer, Basketball

Theater – separate and joint productions.
Thetford-Rivendell
(approx. 1000 kids)

- Rivendell governance – based on pupil counts (Thetford is estimate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Future 1</th>
<th>Future 2</th>
<th>Future 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orford</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairlee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Fairlee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vershire</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Large</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thetford</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thetford-Rivendell (with Strafford)  
(approx. 1125 kids)

- Rivendell governance – based on pupil counts (Thetford is estimate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Future 1</th>
<th>Future 2</th>
<th>Future 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orford</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairlee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Fairlee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vershire</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Large</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thetford</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strafford</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thetford-Rivendell
(approx. 1000 kids)

Thetford Academy’s Trustees 2015-2016

Cameron Cudhea - President
North Thetford
Kate Hesser - Vice President
East Thetford
Tom Yurkosky - Lyme Representative - Treasurer
Lyme
Peter Boyd - Clerk/Alumni Representative
East Thetford
Shannon Darrah - Thetford Representative
East Thetford
Bob Bauer
South Strafford
Giovanni Bosco
Thetford Center
Ann Bumpus
Thetford
Zoe Hack Keller
Boston
Suzanna Liepman
Strafford
Therese Linehan
Strafford

Hilary Linehan - Strafford
Representative - Strafford
Curtis Richardson
Thetford Center
Donna Steinberg
North Thetford
Jonathan A Stableford
Strafford
Andy Welch
Thetford Center
Carrie Wells
Thetford Center
Bill Weyrick
Thetford
Robert Christensen
Thetford VT
Jim Wilson
Strafford
1. Thetford and Rivendell form a new **Supervisory Union (Act 46 Alternative Structure)**
   
   1. We have a structure in place that is looking at both districts. Over time we evolve the SU in a measured intentional fashion. *Thetford keeps TA as designated high school.*
   2. Would need to bring Strafford, Warren, and Piermont into the mix to get even close to 1100 ADM size that the law requires.

**New Issues:**

1. The state is pushing for a district model. Doing away with SAUs.
2. Under recent clarification of Act 46, Thetford could not continue to send kids to TA unless whole SAU/District was sending.
3. This of course throws into question the continued structural viability of OESU as it stands today under Act 46.

**Alt Structure**

Revisit this idea? Both the structure and the student numbers?

No tax incentives apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>ADM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TES</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WES</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strafford</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piermont</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total ADM: 1100
Thetford-Rivendell Catch-Basin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>BMU PK-12</th>
<th>K-6 PK-8</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMU</td>
<td>447</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corinth</td>
<td>K-8</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyme</td>
<td>K-8</td>
<td>201</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newbury</td>
<td>K-9</td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>PK-6</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piermont</td>
<td>PK-8</td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>RISD-RA</td>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>RISD-SME</td>
<td>PK-6</td>
<td>187</td>
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<tr>
<td>RISD-WES</td>
<td>PK-4</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Royalton</td>
<td>PK-12</td>
<td>365</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>PK-6</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strafford</td>
<td>PK-8</td>
<td>128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thetford</td>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>300</td>
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<td>PK-6</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunbridge</td>
<td>PK-8</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>PK-8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wentworth K-8</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodsville</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dothan PK-5 250
Ottau PK-5 250
Hartland PK-8 300
Strengths – similar communities, shared values, great facilities, proximity, I-91
Marc DeBois (chair) – works for Irving Oil Corporation. Has been on the board for eight years, the last two as Chair. Marc has three children in the district.

Mark Avery (vice-chair) – is owner and general manager of the Lake Morey Resort. Mark has been on the board for six years and is currently vice-chair. He has one child in the district.

Kathy Blanchard - has served Rivendell as the member at large since 2011. She is a retired educator who worked for more than 35 years in (sequentially) Guam; Canaan, NH; Makati, Philippines; Bangkok, Thailand; OESU; Lebanon; Piermont; & OESU again. Her greatest interests these days are family, a huge vegetable garden, and travel. Her four granddaughters all live locally, two in Lyme and two in West Fairlee. Her Rivendell girls are in 4th grade at Westshire and 5th grade at Samuel Morey.

Kathy Hooke – has taught at the Mountain School in Vershire for the past 20 years and has served on the Rivendell Board since 2010. She has taught high school science and math at both public and private schools. She loves spending time outdoors. When Rivendell was just getting started, she was involved in the initial planning for the Cross Rivendell Trail, a project that her husband David led for several years. Her son is a 5th grader at Samuel Morey Elementary School.

Michael Smyth – is serving his first year on the Rivendell School Board, representing the town of Orford. Having moved to the district five years ago with two now elementary school-aged children, he has a strong interest in the health and sustainability of the school system, and believes strongly in well-rounded education and diverse life experience. He holds bachelor degrees in psychology and information technology, and has experience working in technology and systems integration, communications, and the performing arts. Other personal interests include running and triathlon, musical theater, and travel whenever possible.
The Rivendell Board
(who are we?)

Bruce Lyndes – is the Media Relations Director at Plymouth State University. He is the father of two daughters. The eldest is a Rivendell graduate and UNH student and the youngest is a senior at Rivendell Academy. Bruce has been a Fairlee representative on the Rivendell Board for eight years.

Jean MacDonald – from Vershire is a retired business owner, a Justice of the Peace, and has served on a variety of boards. She has also been a volunteer tutor and mentor since the 1970s, and currently volunteers for Revels North. This is her third year on the Rivendell Board. She has no children in the district. And yes, she is related to Vermont State Senator Mark MacDonald.

Kevin Dexter - works for a local construction company for the past 23 years and is currently a Project Foreman. When not at work or at a school board meeting he enjoys spending time with family, watching his kids play sports and other school activities, taking his two girls hunting and ice fishing, and spending time with his wife. Kevin has represented West Fairlee as a member of the Rivendell Board for the past six months.

David Ricker – is an IT Director at Dartmouth College and sits on a number of boards including an advisory board for Western Governors University (WGU) and a pair in Indian software companies whose products relate to education. In 2009, he helped develop the curriculum for the "From the Other Side of the Stethoscope (FOSS)" program of the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth, a requirement for all 3rd year medical students at the completion of their 6-week pediatric clerkship. He still serves this program as a facilitator and a member of its Family Faculty. An Orford resident, he has been on the board for almost four years, is a member of the task force seeking a new use for the historic 1851 Orford Academy building, and has four children in the district.

Sarah Rinehimer - is a West Fairlee representative, parent and educator. She has been on the board for two years. Sarah is an Early Childhood Teacher and has spent the past few years working in alternative educational settings. Sarah has two sons in our elementary schools.
How taxes are calculated for 4 Rivendell towns (a basic map with simplified numbers)

Voters approve a $10 million budget

VT Towns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Population</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Amount to be Raised in Taxes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300 students = 60%</td>
<td>$6,000,000</td>
<td>$4,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 students = 40%</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Divide expenses based on student population

Subtract income (in reality varies by state)

Amount to be raised in taxes

Divide expenses based on student population

Orford

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Population</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Amount to be Raised in Taxes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 students</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 students = 40%</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Divide expenses based on student population

Divide by $10,000 (yield set by state)

Base tax rate for VT towns

Divide by 300 equalized pupils

Orford tax rate: per $1,000 property value
($100,000 house pays $2,222)

Three different tax rates for 3 VT towns – per $100 property value
($100,000 house pays $1,500 if tax rate is 1.500)

Base tax rate for VT towns

Divide by Orford Grand List (thousands of dollars)

Voters approve a $10 million budget

1.500

1.050

0.950

1.428

1.579

1.500

22.22

1.500

3,000,000

135,000

3,000,000

135,000

22.22
Actual numbers for FY16 (taken from 2015 Annual Report p8-13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VT Towns</th>
<th>5,955,873</th>
<th>-1,046,827</th>
<th>4,909,046</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

263.22 students ≈ 61.68%

Divide expenses based on student population
Adjusted to take into account state-specific costs
Such as vocational tuition, transportation, debt service

Subtract State & Fed aid – different for each state (SPED, IDEA, Voc Ed, Driver Ed, Building, NH Adequacy)

Cost per equalized pupil

4,909,046
293.14 = 16,746

Base tax rate for VT towns

16,746
9,459 = 1.7704

Divide Common Level of Appraisal (CLA)

1.7704
1.0091 = 1.7545
1.7704
1.0037 = 1.7639
1.7704
0.9906 = 1.7872

Fairlee 1.7545*  West Fairlee 1.7639*  Vershire 1.7872*

Voters approve $9,961,522 budget (article 4)
Subtract income from tuition, athletic events, interest
Subtract $300,000 district surplus from FY13

Amount to be divided VT-NH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orford</th>
<th>3,523,649</th>
<th>-515,035</th>
<th>3,008,614</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

163.55 students = 38.32%

Divide by Orford Grand List
Old # (in annual report)

3,008,614
143,643,726 = .02094

New # (due to reassessment)

3,008,614
135,087,611 = .02227

Estimated tax rate Published in Annual Report

20.94*

Actual tax rate on 2015 tax bills

22.96

*Voters approve $50,000 for Capital Reserve Fund (Article 5) which is apportioned among the 4 towns, adding a small amount to the tax rate
Proposed Budget FY17

VT Towns

- 313 students = 65.48%
- 478 students

6,440,649

- 1,070,707

5,369,942

Divide expenses based on student population

Adjusted to take into account state-specific costs
Such as vocational tuition, transportation, debt service

Subtract State & Fed aid – different for each state
(SPED, IDEA, Voc Ed, Driver Ed, Building, NH Adequacy)

Amount to be raised in taxes

Cost per equalized pupil

Base tax rate for VT towns

Divide by 296.65

5,396,942

296.65

18,102

Divide by $9,870

18,102

9,870

1.8340

Divide Common Level of Appraisal (CLA)

1.8340

1.0294

1.806

1.8340

1.0154

1.939

1.8340

0.9461

1.782

Fairlee

(up 2%)

West Fairlee

(up 10%)

Vershire

(up 1.4%)

Orford

165 students = 34.52%

3,380,648

-465,610

2,875,038

What tax rate would have been with old Grand List

3,008,614

143,643,726

= .02001

Divide by Grand List

(base to reassessment)

2,875,038

135,087,611

= .02128

Orford

(down 8.3%)

21.28*

Orford tax rate: per $1,000 property value
($100,000 house in Orford pays $2,128)

* $30,000 for Capital Reserve Fund is already included in this tax rate
But VT has one more twist: **income sensitivity** for those earning less than $90,000.

### Amount to be raised in taxes by VT towns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{5,396,942}{296.65} )</td>
<td>18,102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cost per equalized pupil (same as previous page).

\[ \frac{18,102}{11,065} = 1.636 \]

Income sensitivity for property taxes

Property taxes capped at 3.272% of income (for households earning less than $90,000)

Here’s how it would work for a family in West Fairlee in a house assessed at $100,000, earning $50,000:

- **Assessed value x tax rate**
  \[ 100 \text{ thousand} \times 1.939 \text{ per thousand} = 1,939 \]
  Property tax bill before income sensitivity adjustment

- **Property tax bill after income sensitivity adjustment**
  \[ 50,000 \times 3.272\% = 1,636 \]
  (state pays difference directly to town of West Fairlee)
Act 46 Timeline

The Vermont Agency of Education, in cooperation with the Vermont State Board of Education, is dedicated to the implementation of Act 46 of 2015. This new legislation is an opportunity for school districts and supervisory unions to unify existing, disparate governance structures to preferred governance structure by 2020, while providing substantial equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities statewide. This timeline visually represents actions needed by education entities.
Vermont towns that tuition students or designate schools

2010 school district data from the Vermont Department of Education website. More information is available at www.SchoolChoiceVermont.com

Revised 12/22/11
Supervisory Unions and District Boundaries
Current Understanding of Operating and Tuitioning Options
(Courtesy of WSESU)

VT Statutes Related to Operating and Tuitioning Options

All Districts must offer substantially equivalent opportunities to all children within the district. Districts can’t offer different options to different students within the same district.

**Act 46, Section 4:** The electorate of the district chooses whether to operate a school or pay tuition for some or all grades, including High School.

**Act 46, Section 45:** Parents of secondary students choose a school in or out of the state unless the district votes to designate up to three VT schools (generally for purposes of cost containment).

**VSA 16, §822 (c):** School board may choose to pay tuition for students if it is in the best interests of the children. Act 129 of 2012 allows students to apply to attend any other public high school in the state; money does not follow the child.

VT Operating and Tuitioning Options

**NO:** Required to tuition at some or all levels. Parents get to select where kids go, unless board designates.

Primary challenges: Cost containment and equity.

**YES:** Operate.

Primary challenge: Maintaining quality and breadth of opportunities.

Good Reference....
http://www.wsesu.net/act-46/
In the hopes of finding financial savings to counteract decreasing enrollment, as well as to better share resources across districts, the Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union in 2016 will dissolve into the Orange-Windsor Supervisory Union, together becoming the White River Valley Supervisory Union. That new body will serve the towns of Bethel, Chelsea, Granville, Hancock, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge, Strafford and Tunbridge.
Old Options
1. Rivendell stays as is and continues to cultivate tuition students from area towns.
2. More actively advocate for economic development in our core towns.
3. Seek areas of collaboration/cost sharing with proximate districts.
4. Sustainable?

- Towns sending students to Rivendell either currently or in the past.
Option 1

1. What might collaboration look like?
2. More informal
   1. Regular joint-board meetings
   2. A joint committee on Thetford-Rivendell affairs.
3. Formalize with a joint-resource of some kind (consultant or hire)

Does not solve Thetford’s Act 46 compliance.

Collaboration Opportunities
1. Special Ed
2. Technical Training
3. ESL
4. Food
5. Transportation
6. Fuel
7. Facilities
8. At-Risk Kids
9. Foreign Language
Option 2

1. TES leaves OESU and joins Rivendell. Essentially taking refuge in our Act 46 exemption status.
   3. What is in it for Rivendell? Future reconfiguration options and cost savings over time.

This option benefits:
1. Time for a more measured and considered process of integrating the two entities
2. Both can parties to take advantage of short-term tax savings? *No, still too small and ineligible.*
3. Might be the easiest option from a logistical standpoint.

*Others?* 194 TES 105 WES 187 SME 200 RA

Cannot do at present, open to challenges of equal access and constitutionality. The only way this could work is if TES stayed K-6 and all their kids went to RA or all Rivendell kids went to TA. Could not have some kids going to one and some to the other. See good explanation at: [http://www.wsesu.net/act-46/](http://www.wsesu.net/act-46/)
Watch Video Update from Oct 28th by Dr. David Baker – Windsor SE SU Superintendent. Also see slide ahead in reference section.
1. Thetford and Rivendell form a new **Supervisory Union (Act 46 Alternative Structure)**
   1. We have a structure in place that is looking at both districts. Over time we evolve the SU in a measured intentional fashion. *Thetford keeps TA as designated high school.*
   2. Would need to bring Strafford, Warren, and Piermont into the mix to get even close to 1100 ADM size that the law requires.

**New Issues:**
1. The state is pushing for a district model. Doing away with SAUs.
2. Under recent clarification of Act 46, Thetford could not continue to send kids to TA unless whole SAU/District was sending.
3. This of course throws into question the continued structural viability of OESU as it stands today under Act 46.

**Option 3**

Revisit this idea both the structure and the student numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>ADM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TES</td>
<td></td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WES</td>
<td></td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td></td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others?</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strafford</td>
<td></td>
<td>1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piermont</td>
<td></td>
<td>686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No tax incentives apply.
Option 4b

   1. *Entire district goes choice.* TA takes its chances in the open market. **OR entire district “designates” TA as High School.**
   2. RA becomes the middle school.
   3. Perhaps down to two elementary schools from three.
   4. Real-estate market warms?.

What is in it for Thetford? Choice, configuration options at elementary level, cost savings over time. *TA could get more reach into NH if other towns join new choice district.*

What is in it for Rivendell? Long term viability of RA infrastructure in Orford, choice and cost savings over time, configuration options at elementary levels.

**Major Drawback – both communities lose strong sense of community identity. We become Lyme.**

*Will need written assurance from State of NH re: Croydon Issue – NH public dollars to VT “Independent” school(s).*
Option 4a Revisited

If the new district got even bigger by 1 or more towns, TA could think about an expansion that would repurpose TE infrastructure.

Old Orford Academy building becomes a dormitory?
Thetford-Rivendell

**Option 99a**

**PreK-6**
Orford = 89
Fairlee = 108
West Fairlee = 59
Vershire = 41

**RISD K-5 Tot:** 260

**TE 194 PK-6** (PK-6 170 6 – 24)
**TA 300 7-12** (9-12 200 7-8 100)

321+ kids at RA?

WES (105)
SME (187)