

Articles of Agreement Barre Unified Union District

The Barre Supervisory Union Act 46 Study Committee recommends the following Articles of Agreement for the creation of a Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 unified union school district, to be named the Barre Unified Union School District. The forming districts are the Barre City School District, Barre Town School District, and the Spaulding Union High School District. As Barre City and Barre Town are the only members of the Spaulding Union High School District, an affirmative vote in both town districts shall bring it into the merged district.

Article 1: Necessary Forming School Districts

The School Districts of Barre City, Barre Town, and the Spaulding Union High School District are necessary for the establishment of the Barre Unified Union School District. The above referenced school districts are hereinafter referred to as the “forming districts”.

Article 2: Additional Districts

No additional districts are included in the proposed Barre Unified Union School District.

Article 3: Grades to Operate

The Barre Unified Union School District will operate grades Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12, including the Central Vermont Career Center.

Article 4: Proposed New School Construction

No new schools are proposed to be constructed as part of the formation of the Barre Unified Union School District.

Article 5: Plan for First Year of Operation

The Barre Unified Union School District will provide for the transportation of students, assignment of staff, and curriculum that is consistent with the practices, contracts, collective bargaining agreements, and provisions of law that are in effect during the first year that the new Union District is providing full educational services and operations.

The board will comply with the 16 VSA Chapter 53, subchapter 3, regarding recognition of the representatives of employees of the respective forming districts as the representatives of the employees of the union school district and will commence negotiations pursuant to 16 VSA Chapter 57 for teachers and 21 VSA Chapter 22 for other employees. In the absence of new collective bargaining agreements on July 1, 2019, the Board will comply with the pre-existing master agreements pursuant to 16 VSA Chapter 53, subchapter 3. The Board shall assume all individual employment contracts that are in place in the forming districts on June 30, 2019 until their termination dates.

Article 6: Indebtedness of Member Districts

A. Capital Debt

The Barre Unified Union District shall assume all capital debt of the forming districts as may exist on June 30, 2019, including both principal and interest, of the forming school districts that joined the new union district.

B. Operating Fund Surpluses, Deficits and Reserve Funds

The Barre Unified Union District shall assume any and all operating deficits, surpluses, and fund balances of the forming districts that may exist on the close of business on June 30, 2019. In addition, reserve funds identified for specific purposes will be transferred to the Barre Unified Union District, and will be applied for lawful district purposes unless otherwise designated through lawful conditions of use.

C. Restricted Funds:

The Barre Supervisory Union and the forming school districts will transfer to the Barre Unified Union District any preexisting specific endowments or other restricted accounts, including student activity and related accounts, held by school districts that may exist on June 30, 2019. Scholarship accounts or similar accounts, held by school districts prior to June 30, 2019, that have lawful specified conditions of use will be used in accordance with said provisions.

Article 7: Real and Personal Property

A. Transfer of Property to the Unified District:

No later than June 30, 2019, the forming districts will convey to the Barre Unified Union District, for the sum of one dollar, and subject to the encumbrances of record, all of their real and personal property, including all land, buildings, and content.

B. Subsequent Sale of Real Property to Towns:

In the event that, and at such subsequent time as, the Barre Unified Union Board of Directors determines, in its discretion, that continued possession of the real property, including land and buildings, conveyed to it by one or more of the necessary forming districts will not be used in direct delivery of student educational programs, the Barre Unified Union School District shall offer for sale such real property to the town/city in which such real property is located, for the sum of one dollar, subject to all encumbrances of record, the assumption or payment of all outstanding bonds and notes, and the repayment of any school construction aid or grants required by Vermont law, in addition to repayment of costs of capital improvements subsequent to July 1, 2019 as explained in the next paragraph. Article 13 of these Articles of Agreement addresses the conditions under which a building may be closed.

The conveyance of any of the above school properties shall be conditioned upon the town owning and using the real property for community and public purposes for minimum of five years after conveyance to the municipality. In the event the town elects to sell the real property prior to five years of ownership, the town/city shall compensate the Unified District for all capital improvements and renovations completed after the formation of the Unified District prior to the sale to the town. In the event a municipality elects not to acquire ownership of such real property, the Unified District shall, pursuant to Vermont law, sell the property upon such terms and conditions as established by the Barre Unified Union School District Board of School Directors.

Article 8: Board of School Directors Representation

The Board of School Directors shall have nine (9) members, with four (4) residing in and representing Barre City; four (4) residing in and representing Barre Town; and one (1) elected at-large by the voters of both municipalities. The Barre Town and Barre City specific numbers of directors are consistent with current census figures. Each time there is a new decennial census, the proportionality of the Barre Town and Barre City specific numbers of directors shall be aligned to the new counts if necessary.

The Board member elected at-large shall be subject to voting by the electorate in both forming districts, with the candidate receiving the highest vote total prevailing. The eight Board members representing a specific municipality shall be subject to voting only in their municipality of residence, with the candidate(s) receiving highest vote totals prevailing.

Article 9: Initial Directors Terms of Office

School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot for three year terms, except for those initially elected at the time of the formation of the new Unified District (Barre Unified Union District). In the initial election of School Directors, the terms of office will be as follows:

Town	Term ending March <u>2020</u>	Term ending March <u>2021</u>	Term ending March <u>2022</u>
Barre City	2	1	1
Barre Town	1	2	1
At- Large	0	0	1

The terms of the initial school directors indicated above will include the months in between the organizational meeting and the first annual meeting to be held in the spring of 2019.

Nominations for the office of Barre Unified Union School Director representing a specific town shall be made by filing, with the clerk of that district/town proposed as a member of the Unified District, a statement of nomination signed by at least 30 voters in that district/town or one percent of the legal voters in the district/town, whichever is less, and accepted in writing by the nominee. A statement shall be filed not fewer than 30, nor more than 40 days prior to the date of the vote.

Nominations for the office of the at-large School Director shall be made by filing a statement of nomination signed by at least 60 voters from one or more of the forming districts with the clerk of any district/town proposed as a necessary member of the Unified District. A statement shall be filed not fewer than 30, nor more than 40 days prior to the date of the vote.

Pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. – 706j(b), directors initially elected to the new district shall be sworn in and assume the duties of their office.

Thereafter, members of the Board of School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot at the unified school district’s Annual Meeting. Terms of office shall begin and expire on the date of the school district’s annual meeting. In the event the district’s annual meeting precedes Town Meeting Day, the Director’s terms shall expire on Town Meeting Day.

Article 10: Submission to Voters

The proposal forming the Barre Unified Union School District will be duly warned and presented to the voters of each town school district on November 6, 2018. The vote shall take place in each of the school districts by Australian ballot.

Article 11: Commencement of Operations

Upon an affirmative vote of the electorates of the forming districts and upon compliance with 16 VSA – 706g, the Barre Unified Union School District shall have and exercise all of the authority which is necessary in for it to prepare for full educational operations beginning on July 1, 2019. The Barre Unified Union School District shall, between the date of its organizational meeting under 16 VSA – 706j and June 30, 2019, undertake planning and related duties necessary to begin operations of the new unified union school district on July 1 2019, including preparing for and negotiating contractual

agreements, preparing and presenting the budget for fiscal year 2020, preparing for the Barre Unified Union School District annual meeting and transacting any other lawful business that comes before the Board, provided however, that the exercise of such authority by the Barre Unified Union School District shall not be construed to limit or alter the authority and/or responsibilities of the school districts that will form the new unified union school district and that will remain in existence during the transition period for the purpose of completing any business not given to the Barre Unified Union School District.

On July 1,2019, when the Unified District becomes fully operational and begins to provide educational services to students, the school districts of the forming towns and the union high school shall cease all educational operations and shall remain in existence for the sole purpose of completing any outstanding business not given to the Unified District under these articles and state law. Such business shall be completed as soon as practicable, but in no event any later than December 31,2019. Upon the completion of outstanding business or December 31,2019, whichever date is earlier, the forming school districts shall cease to exist pursuant to 16 VSA §722. The Barre Supervisory Union shall cease all operations within a reasonable timeframe of the completion of all outstanding business of its member school districts, but in no event any later than January 31,2020.

Article 12: Australian Ballot Voting

The Barre Unified Union School District shall vote the annual school district budget and public questions by Australian ballot. In the Australian ballot voting, the ballots shall not be commingled between Barre City and Barre Town, with each merging district's votes to be counted separately before a determination of total combined votes.

Article 13: School Restructuring and Closing

Any proposal by the district's new unified board of directors to restructure the district's current elementary school configuration into one elementary and one middle school may not be considered without the approval of the electorate of the Barre Unified Union School District. Any proposal by the district's new unified board of directors to close any school in the district may not be considered without the approval of the electorate of the Barre Unified Union School District.

Article 14: Redistricting/Choice

Students in elementary schools (PreK-8) will not be required to attend school outside of their current town of residency. Students and their families may voluntarily request assignment at another elementary school (Prek-8) according to policies on intra-district choice established by the Board.

Article 15: Local Input

The new unified board shall ensure ongoing opportunities for local input on policy, budget development, and other topics relevant to the operation of the schools. Structures to support and encourage public participation within the Barre Unified Union School District, such as site-based or school-based councils, will be established by the Board prior to the commencement of operation of the Barre Unified Union School District.