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Barre Unified Union School District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2025

Contact: Michael Boutin, Chair

Barre Unified Union School District Board

Statement from Board Chair Michael Boutin: Superintendent JoAn Canning Reappointed for 2025–2026

On behalf of the Barre Unified Union School District Board, I am pleased to announce that the Board has unanimously voted to reappoint Superintendent JoAn Canning for the 2025–2026 school year. This extension includes a one-year contract with an option for renewal in January 2026.

Earlier this year, the Board engaged the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) to facilitate a superintendent search. NESDEC’s process, which began in January and concluded in late March, included an online survey, four stakeholder focus groups, and the formation of an application screening committee composed of a cross-section of Barre community members. These efforts ensured that a wide range of voices from across the district were heard.

From the outset, the Board has always maintained the hope that we would have an opportunity to retain superintendent JoAn Canning. While we remained committed to a comprehensive and open search process, we also recognized the value of the steady leadership she brought to our district during a time of transition.

Based on community feedback, NESDEC developed a candidate profile outlining the key skills, traits, and challenges a successful superintendent would need to address. The screening committee reviewed multiple applicants, interviewed four candidates, and advanced two finalists. Before the public finalist stage, one candidate withdrew and the other accepted a different position.

While the search was thorough and inclusive, the outcome ultimately reaffirmed the desire to maintain the current leadership already in place. Superintendent Canning was initially brought on during a challenging time for our district. Since then, her steady leadership and extensive experience have helped us rebuild momentum. Under her guidance, we’ve passed two consecutive school budgets, restored trust through transparent communication, and begun building a more stable, student-focused future.

JoAn brings more than 30 years of administrative experience in Vermont, having served as superintendent in both the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union and the Addison Northwest School District as well as an American school in the Middle East and Hawaii. Her roles have also included curriculum coordinator, director of special education, assistant superintendent, interim principal, and third-grade teacher. This broad background gives her a deep understanding of the needs of students, educators, and families alike.

She continues to demonstrate her commitment to community engagement through both formal outreach and informal opportunities, including her popular “Coffee and Conversation” sessions, which have fostered open dialogue between families, educators, and district leadership.

Given the current instability across Vermont’s education landscape, the Board is grateful to have JoAn’s stability, professionalism, and focus guiding our district.

We look forward to continuing this partnership and will revisit the contract renewal in January.

Sincerely,

Michael Boutin

Chair, Barre Unified Union School District Board