

Minutes
ORANGE SOUTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025
6 PM AT WRVSU Central Office
461 Waterman Road, South Royalton
6 PM, White River Valley High School, Royalton Campus

[Click Here](#) for a video recording of the meeting.

AGENDA

- **Call meeting to order** – Anne Kaplan called to order at 6:12 pm
Board attending: Ryan Anderson, Anne Kaplan, Aimil Parmelee, Beverly Lauchner, Martha Hafner, Sam Hooper. Administration: Michael Clark, Kyle Southworth.
- **Citizens and staff** to be heard – no public attending
- **Meet with White River Valley Supervisory Union** to discuss potential opportunities related to Act 73 (H454)

Members of the WRVSU welcomed the OSSD Board to their meeting. Conversation began with questions about the relationship with schools under the supervisory union, community tensions that resulted from the merger, and how each board felt about being proactive in this situation rather than reactive.

WRVSU confirmed that there had been some tension, and there were unhappy community members, but the communities had worked through that. Having a partnership between communities that shared values was important. WRVSU noted they were interested in maintaining their supervisory union and were looking at other districts to expand their boundaries.

Aimil Parmelee commented that the OSSD board operated under Policy Governance, and asked if that governance system would be required to change. WRVSU responded that they did not use the Policy Governance model, and would not have required the OSSD to change. They further clarified that the supervisory union board was designed to provide direction to schools but did not get enmeshed in the day-to-day.

When asked what they saw as advantages versus disadvantages of joining, the size of the district itself was described as a hard task, and it was noted that the relationship the superintendent had forged with staff and community could suffer. WRVSU believed they operated very well and would rather pick their partner and get to know them and how best to work with them. They emphasized that it was important to protect small schools.

There was discussion of districts that had non-operational grade levels, which resulted in those students having school choice across the union. Anne Kaplan asked how the number of representatives was determined. WRVSU responded that they saw district representatives as co-equals, and the entire board worked well together. The system

made the elected officials more accountable to their constituents. Currently, the OSSD board was comprised of four representatives from Randolph and two each from Brookfield and Braintree.

There was discussion of what resources were operated by the supervisory union—facilities, special education, transportation, and policy were among those things that were centralized. It was noted that RTCC was the regional tech center. Employees at the SU level were utilized by various schools and then billed back to that school. The supervisory union had been able to find efficiencies, separating needs into local versus central.

Ryan Anderson asked what the vehicle was that allowed schools to remain open. WRVSU explained their model took pains to ensure understanding of the effects to communities. They had lost schools, but access to expertise allowed them to run at this level, and sharing labor allowed the supervisory union to provide services and resources that benefited all the schools.

Concerns were expressed that a large board might not recognize how important small schools, and the related decisions, were. Those decisions had to be personalized. WRVSU noted that each board decided what the effect was, not someone from another county or non-adjacent district. This model answered geography questions. Choosing the partners was imperative. WRVSU emphasized that we all had neighbors and family throughout the region, we all understood the importance and challenges, and the key was coordination.

There was discussion of the importance of the Rural School Alliance, and its mission of supporting school districts was seen as critical to maintaining democracy in Vermont.

WRVSU noted they had spoken or were planning to speak with Echo Valley and Lincoln. They asked the OSSD board where they were in their process. Anne Kaplan clarified they had spoken with districts to the north and were still exploring options and how things worked.

Michael Clark spoke briefly about the Up for Learning events that would allow student representatives to speak about what they would like the schools to offer, and what they wanted from the education system as a whole.

Superintendent Jamie Kinnarney told the OSSD board they were willing to attend a local board meeting and answer questions from faculty, staff, and community.

- **Adjourn** – with no further business, Anne Kaplan adjourned the meeting at 6:55 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle M Southworth

Kyle M. Southworth 9/24/2025

Administrative Assistant