

# South Burlington School District

March 29, 2010

To: School Board Members

From: John Everitt

Re: Superintendent Report – April 7, 2010  
Policy 2.9 – Communication and Support to the Board

1. Clean energy grants – The district was successful in the application for two grants from the Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF). (See February 17 Superintendent's Report.) The grants will bring \$100,000 from CEDF and \$11,732 from Efficiency Vermont to supplement the district contribution of \$5,580 in-kind. The work will address interior fluorescent fixture lighting upgrades at the high school and Community Library; Central and Orchard School gymnasium lighting upgrades, including motion sensors; sensor switches in the high school and middle school; and street lighting upgrades at all of the district's locations.
2. Legislative report – As of this date, it appears that the Legislature is leaning toward keeping the statewide property tax rates at 86¢ for next year. This rate acknowledges that school budgets were \$20M lower than predicted last fall by the Vermont Tax Commissioner when he recommended the 2.2¢ increase.

The difficulty is that the Challenges for Change study reported that Vermont school districts could save \$17M in 2010-11 in special education and administration (operations). The DOE estimates that about \$5M of the lower than expected budgets can be credited to special education and administration. This leaves \$12M yet to be saved in education in order to meet the expectations of Challenges for Change. I have heard about three ways to close the so called \$12M shortfall:

- Shift the \$12M to the property tax by retaining the 2.2¢ increase in the property tax rates. (This is an increase in revenue rather than a reduction in spending.)
- Ask some or all of the school districts to reconsider their budgets to find the \$12M in reduced expenditures. (This solution is not popular with many legislators.)
- Use some of the education fund reserve to fill the gap. (This too is not a reduction in expenses.)

In one way or another, the situation for next year will be solved. The larger issue for us to watch is for 2011-12 when Challenges for Change calls for a savings of \$40M in special education and administration.

3. Reduction in force – Because the teacher contract is still in negotiations and there are not funds in the budget for increases in teacher salaries, I have reduced a total of 10.6 full-time equivalent teachers to ensure the district has enough funds for teacher salaries in 2010-11 and that we have the correct match between student needs and qualified teachers. Some of the reductions were from teachers with one-year-only positions, some from teacher retirements, and some from reductions in force (six teachers totaling a reduction of 4.6 FTE).

**Please bring your policy manual to the board meeting.**