



SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
33 Mechanic Street, Fair Haven, VT 05743
Phone: 802.265.4905 Fax: 802.265.2158
www.slatevalleyunified.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Slate Valley Board Moves Forward with District Reorganization
Votes to Create Middle School Campus at Fair Haven Union High

Fair Haven, VT, May 25, 2021 –The Slate Valley Unified Union School Board voted in favor of districtwide elementary and middle school reconfiguration at their regular meeting on May 24, 2021. The Board also voted to close Castleton Village School. Castleton voters will have the opportunity to vote on the future of the building on Town Meeting Day in 2022.

“I am happy the Board was able to see this process through with a successful vote to reconfigure,” said Tim Smith, Board Chair. “We are thankful for the community feedback received during this process and their ultimate support as we move forward. We are mindful of the uncertainties created by this change for some of our school communities and staff and pledge to work with every stakeholder to ensure this reconfiguration is implemented successfully.”

The vote comes as part of the Board’s overall district reorganization plan. On December 7, 2020, the Board voted to realign Benson Village School to a PreK through 6 school beginning July 1, 2021 and allow Benson middle school students to have in-district school choice for the 2021-2022 school.

Monday’s vote continues along this path, realigning Castleton Elementary School, Fair Haven Grade School, and Orwell Village School to PreK-6 and realigning Fair Haven Union High School to 7-12 beginning July 1, 2022. A middle school campus would be created within the Fair Haven Union High School campus. Grade 7 and 8 students would begin attending the middle school for the 2022-23 school year.

“This district has been talking about the possibility of a consolidated middle school for decades,” said Brooke-Olsen Farrell, Superintendent. “We are excited that we now have the opportunity to grow Slater Nation!”

Reorganization is an effort by the district to address the ongoing challenges facing many districts throughout the state including declining enrollment, infrastructure needs, increasing costs, and decreasing capacity to meet student needs.

The Board projects a savings of \$170,000 annually with the closure of Castleton Village School. An additional \$1,000,000 in personnel cost savings is projected from moving middle school students to the high school. Along with cost savings, reorganization will provide educational and social/emotional benefits.

“Next year will be focused on renovating the existing footprint of Fair Haven Union High School to better accommodate our middle school students as well as preparing the students, staff and community for the transition ahead,” said Olsen-Farrell. “This is certainly an exciting time to be a part of the Slate Valley School District.”

###