

19 January 2018

To the towns of Concord, Granby, Guildhall, Kirby, Lunenburg, Maidstone, Victory, and Waterford:

It is not an exaggeration to say the changes to the education system in the Northeast Kingdom over the last year are historical. Community members, in twenty-two individual school districts and four supervisory unions, spent more than two years imagining how to improve our school systems and eventually created three new merged Supervisory Districts; Kingdom East, NEK Choice, and the Caledonia Cooperative. By restructuring governance, these new districts freed up resources to improve opportunities for students, enhance choice for families, maintain our small school culture and provide opportunities for taxpayers. The combined votes to create these new districts were overwhelmingly positive and the hard work of the boards to realize these opportunities has begun and will continue to be refined over the next several years. These are exciting times in education!

Another result of these mergers is the Essex-Caledonia Supervisory Union will stop making operational decisions on June 30, 2018, and will cease to exist on December 31, 2018. While this final Essex-Caledonia Supervisory Union Superintendent's Report will be published in this March's town reports each of the new districts will be making decisions at annual school district meetings throughout the spring and may be providing additional information at different times and in different ways.

Caledonia Cooperative: (Waterford, Walden, Barnet)

The Caledonia Cooperative vote was held on May 23, 2017, and passed. However, the K-12 side of the merger failed. The Caledonia Cooperative then explored the possibility of creating a side by side merger with Peacham and as a result of a positive merger vote by Peacham November 28, 2017, the Caledonia Cooperative merger was successful. The Caledonia Cooperative organizational meeting was held on January 16, 2018, and the voters decided the annual school district meeting for the Caledonia Cooperative will be held annually on the first Tuesday of May. The Caledonia Cooperative School District is part of the Caledonia Central Supervisory Union, and Mat Forest is the Superintendent.

Kingdom East (Concord, Lunenburg, Lyndon, Burke, Sutton, Newark, Sheffield, and Wheelock).

The Kingdom East vote was held on March 7, 2017, and passed. The Kingdom East organizational meeting was held on May 30, 2017, and the voters decided the annual school district meeting for the Kingdom East School District will be held annually on the second Tuesday of April. The Kingdom East School District is a single district, and Jennifer Botozjorns is the Superintendent.

NEK Choice (Bloomfield, Brunswick, East Haven, Granby, Guildhall, Kirby, Lemington, Maidstone, Norton, and Victory)

The NEK Choice vote was held on March 7, 2017, and passed. The NEK Choice organizational meeting was held on June 22, 2017, and the voters decided the annual school district meeting for the NEK Choice School District will be held annually on the first Tuesday of March. The NEK Choice School District is part of the Essex North Supervisory Union and, Karen Conroy is the Superintendent.

It has been an honor to serve the Essex-Caledonia Supervisory Union and the member districts for the last three years. Our focus for the remainder of the year will be on transitioning individual districts to their new school systems. I am proud of the work that has been done in all of the communities. Thank you to the school board members for the hundreds of volunteer hours they have given and their dedication to education throughout the Northeast Kingdom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Clark", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael J. Clark
Essex-Caledonia Supervisory Union
Superintendent