

February 21, 2023



Dear Alison,

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court changed the law related to taxpayer funding of private schools. In that decision, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote, "A State need not subsidize private education, but once a State decides to do so, it cannot disqualify some private schools solely because they are religious."

The Vermont Legislature is considering bills to address the Court's decision. Whether you serve on a school board that operates all grades or tuitions some (or all) grades, it's important to understand Vermont's history of subsidizing private education, how it affects the Education Fund and how it affects school budgets statewide. These informative presentations by VSBA President Neil Odell, developed for his local board and community, explore the history and financing of tuitioning in Vermont.

Vermont's Tuitioning System

- [A History](#)
- [Financing](#)

[Click here](#)

... to share your opinion about how prepared your board is to onboard a new member.

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HOT TOPICS

3/3/23 - BIPOC Affinity Group Meeting
3:30-5:00 pm

If you are a BIPOC school board member and would like to consider participation in an affinity group, [please click here to be added to the contact list](#). VSBA is launching our first Affinity Group, exclusively for BIPOC School Board Members. The first meeting will be by Zoom on Friday, March 3, 3:30-5:00 pm. During the meeting, participants will discuss the direction and guidelines they want for their group. Bonnie Johnson-Alan, a well-respected Vermont administrator and experienced facilitator, will help get the group off to a great start. Affinity Groups are spaces where individuals can relate with each other, share ideas and suggestions, and receive mutual support to help them do their work. We know how important it is to provide support for BIPOC teachers and administrators. We believe it is also valuable for school board members.

GOVERNANCE TIP

Written and Agreed Board Operating Protocols

The foundation for good governance includes a commitment to clear governance priorities, agreed and written protocols, and transparent predictable board processes. A board cannot do its best work without agreed and clearly written norms and protocols for how it does its work. Developing a powerful set of board operating protocols requires a conversation about values, acceptable norms of conduct, and how to work productively together. It is a mistake to assume or neglect to do this important work. Stephen M. R. Covey conducted research and reported on the importance of trust in relationships and organizations. His book, *The Speed of Trust*, highlights that things get accomplished much quicker, with less drama, and with less cost in organizations that have high trust. His next book, *Smart Trust*, outlines the importance of accountability. Clearly written and agreed Board Operating Protocols can reduce drama from surprises and help a board hold itself and the superintendent accountable for accomplishing the mission of a school district—educating each and every child to a high level.

EQUITY

Farmers Night Series Honors Alexander Twilight

On February 22 at 7:30pm, the [Vermont Legislature's Farmers Night Series](#) will honor our nation's first Black state legislator, Alexander Twilight, who graduated from Middlebury College and was elected to the Vermont Legislature in 1836. [Click here](#) for more information.

SAVE THE DATE



2/24/23 Zoom Forum

THIS FRIDAY

Board Chairs & Vice Chairs

9:00 - 10:00am

We are convening a meeting for current board chairs and vice chairs on Friday, February 24 at 9:00am. The intent is to discuss common challenges and opportunities. You may be interested in sharing questions or suggestions for navigating uncertainties, running effective meetings, receiving public comments, or other aspects of your role. Come prepared to contribute and learn. [Click here to register](#) for more information. This networking will not be recorded. Please register if you can attend live. Participation will be limited to the first 40 registrants.

3/2/23 Webinar

The New 2023 School Board:

Onboarding New Board Members and Reorganizing the Board

Noon - 1:00pm

Town meeting day is coming quickly. Leave this webinar with key insights to ensure your district has excellent practices for onboarding and working well with new members. Too many boards leave this to hope and happenstance. Nearly no one automatically knows how to be an effective school board member. We have to be shown the ropes, coached along the way, learn from our mistakes, and know that we are part of a team that has the best interest at heart. The way you provide information, resources, and encouragement in the first sixty days to a new school board is critical for them to contribute meaningfully to the board and its work. Consider ways your board can be intentional about bringing new members onto the team and supporting the long term success of your board.

This webinar includes practical tips to consider when reorganizing your board including qualities to look for in board officers and mistakes to avoid.

This webinar is open to all central office staff as well as school board members.

The speakers will be Ben Niehaus the Wisconsin Association of School Boards Director of Member Services and Phil Gore the VSBA Director of Board Services.

[REGISTER HERE](#) FREE WEBINAR

3/3/23

BIPOC Affinity Group Meeting

3:30-5:00 pm

[Please see above](#)

3/6/23

Leading for Educational Equity Curriculum Pilot

POSTPONED

VSBA has a newly developed curriculum for school boards on Leading for Educational Equity. We had a pilot of the curriculum scheduled for March 6 and need to postpone that due to schedule conflicts. If this topic is of interest to you or your board, please stay tuned for more information.

4/1/23 - 4/3/23

National School Boards Association

Annual Conference and Exposition

Orlando, FL

The [NSBA 2023 Annual Conference and Exposition](#) brings together education leaders to learn about best governance practices, gain insight into child development and learn about new programs and technology that can help enrich student learning.

If you have any thoughts about the VSBA Weekly Updates, please let us know. We always welcome your feedback.

Thank you for your dedicated service as school board members. **What you do makes a difference!**

Sincerely,

Sue Ceglowski
VSBA Executive Director





Our mailing address is:
2 Prospect St, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602

You can [unsubscribe from this list](#).