

PHILIP B. SCOTT  
Governor



State of Vermont  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

April 2, 2018

Krista Huling  
Chair  
State Board of Education  
2776 VT Route 108N  
Jeffersonville, VT 05464

Dear Krista,

Pursuant to 3 V.S.A. sec. 2702, I am writing to ask that you initiate the selection process for a new Secretary of Education.

Vermont has one of the best education systems in the country. We do, however, face a diverse range of challenges. These include a consistently declining student population (a trend we do not expect to change within the next decade), persistent inequality and performance gaps and social and human services pressures.

Vermont's commitment to strong schools is among our proudest traditions, reflected in our unique brand of local administration. In an environment of steadily declining student counts, however, we must work to improve the value of our investments in education for our students.

Last year in my state of the state address, I laid out my vision for a cradle-to-career education system – one that produces the best outcomes in the country by investing in strong education at every phase of life. I believe this vision is achievable by redirecting more of what we currently spend to students, rather than allowing outdated overhead costs to absorb so much of our investment in education and drive up tax rates. In more modern and adaptable school systems, we can use improvements in efficiency to reinvest in expanding the scope of opportunities for kids. This work requires relentlessly positive and optimistic leadership at the Agency of Education.

I ask that when you evaluate candidates, you prioritize applicants who, above all else, have experience managing complex issues (not necessarily in education), share my optimistic vision of what our system of education must be, and have enthusiasm for the work of Vermont's school boards. Again, I believe that right-sizing our system increases its capacity to preserve and expand the opportunities we can provide to kids, despite declining enrollments, and will help attract

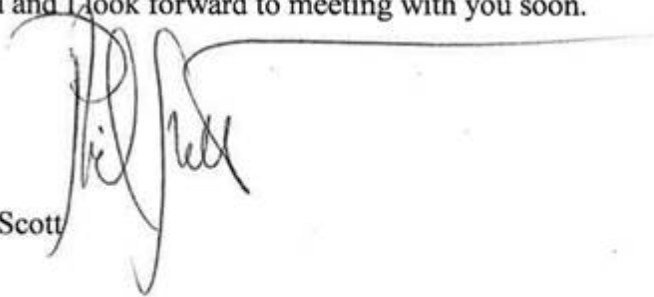
young families here, making our education system the state's strongest economic development tool. Our next Secretary must share this view.

Finally, Act 46 was an important step toward facing the realities of a declining student population, while maximizing the value of the investments we make in our education system. Much to their credit, newly merged districts have proven to be among the most capable of managing growth in budgets, and tax rates, by capitalizing on new economies of scale and sharing of resources while maintaining or expanding educational opportunities. While we conduct our search for a new Secretary, this work must continue without delay.

Thank you and I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

Phillip B. Scott  
Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phillip B. Scott", is written over a long horizontal line that extends across the page.