

Important Informational Meetings about ACT 46 and the NEK Choice School District

Wednesday, March 1 – Bloomfield – 5:30 pm

Wednesday, March 1 – Brunswick – 7:00 pm

Thursday, March 2 – Lemington – 5:30 pm

Thursday, March 2 – Norton – 7:00 pm

At Your Town Offices

Please come and learn about the Act 46 Education Law, the upcoming VOTE, and how it impacts your town!

Vermont Legislature Enacted Act 46 in 2015 to help reduce education costs, improve student opportunities, and create sustainable governance structures.

Ten school boards, each from a School District without a school (non-operating districts) voted to form a Choice Exploratory Group to consider forming a new Non-Operating Choice District with the nine other Non-Operating School Districts. The ten districts were: East Haven - in Caledonia North Supervisory Union; Granby, Guildhall, Kirby, Maidstone, and Victory - in Essex Caledonia Supervisory Union; Bloomfield, Brunswick, Lemington, and Norton- in Essex North Supervisory Union.

Exploratory Group met in late 2015 and early 2016, discussed tax struggles, educational opportunities, and Act 46. All districts represented on the committee decided unanimously to continue as a Formal Study Committee, named NEK Choice. The study committee met from May to December 2016 with the following goals:

- *decrease wild fluctuations in local tax rates*
- *pursue quality educational opportunities for students – maintain school choice*
- *fiscal responsibility for each of the ten forming districts*

The Study Group wrote Articles of Agreement and asked to be assigned to and share services with the same supervisory union as the Canaan School District. Canaan operates a preK-12 school and would be ½ of the newly structured Essex North Supervisory Union. Services that require additional support will be filled by approval of the proposed NEK Choice School District Board. The Articles of Agreement, Financial Model, and a Final Report were submitted to the State Board of Education.

The State Board of Education approved the formation of the
NEK Choice School District on January 17, 2017.

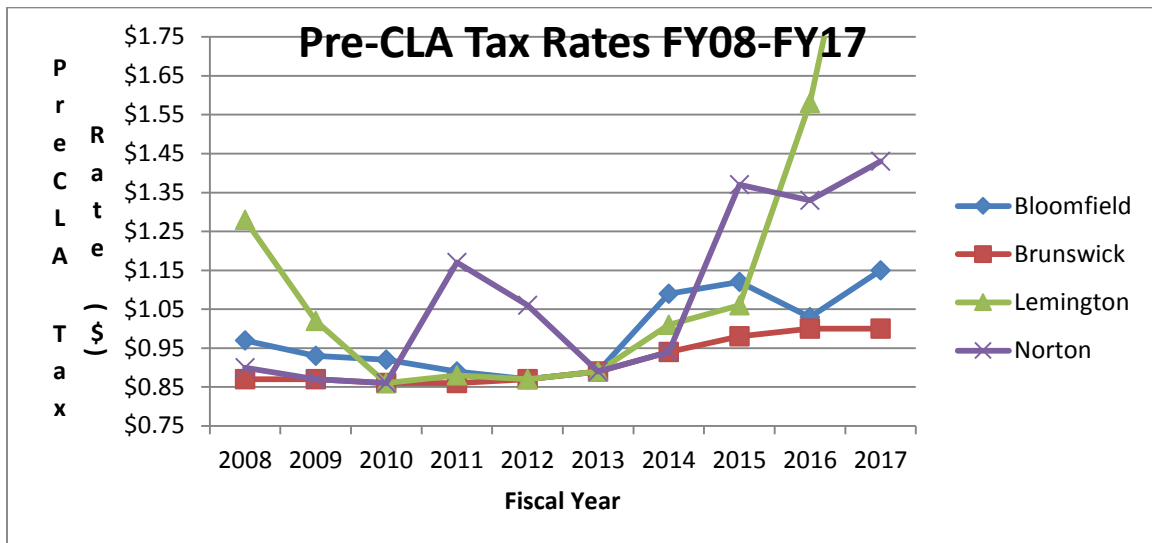
Ten towns will vote by Australian Ballot on Town Meeting Day. The vote will be whether or not to merge ten school districts into one, forming a NEK Choice District; citizens will also vote on Board Members for the proposed district.

Please come to the Informational Meetings (see dates above) and Learn More on How to Possibly Gain Better Control of your Educational Tax Rates!!

Articles of Agreement and copies of complete Final Report available at: Your Town Clerk's office, supervisory union offices/websites; ecsuvt.org, essexnorth.org, canaanschools.org, and cnsuschools.org.

Articles of Agreement Summary:

- * All PreK-12 Students will continue to exercise choice as is the current practice.
- * Transportation services will not be provided unless otherwise required by law.
- * If four (4) or more districts vote yes, NEK Choice School District will begin operations 7/1/18.
- * Operating deficits and/or surpluses of any of the forming districts shall become the property of the NEK Choice District. (In the town of East Haven, the building which was formerly used as a school will retain ownership by the town of East Haven).
- * The new District Board will be comprised of one member from each forming districts except for Kirby, which has a larger population, which will have two board members..
- * The annual budget and election of school directors will be by Australian ballot.
- * The NEK Choice District shall work with the Canaan School District. These districts will make up the Essex North Supervisory Union and will have 3 members from both Canaan and the NEKChoice District.
- * Supervisory Union costs shall be divided equally between Canaan and NEK Choice District.



The above graph shows recent tax rates for the four ENSU districts voting in March. Come to one of the meetings on MARCH 1st and 2nd and learn more about how to possibly eliminate these fluctuations in your tax rates and slow the trend of ever increasing taxes.

For more information: Chris Masson, ENSU Superintendent, 266-3330, or contact board members: Steve Thibault, Kami Burns, Darcy Smart, and Linda Young