



TOWN OF STARKSBORO

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Dear Bristol Selectboard Members,

We are writing with urgent concern: the voices of MAUSD students and residents are being ignored in decisions that will shape the future of our schools.

At its August 26th meeting, the MAUSD Board moved to explore 7 “education delivery models”. The majority of the models involve closing community schools and cutting staff (potentially eliminating 35 jobs). The Board voted to examine these specific models, aiming for possible implementation in the ‘26-27 school year, without presenting clear financial details, exploring alternatives, or giving the community a voice.

Voter rights are being disregarded. The Articles of Agreement remain in force, and towns retain the right to vote on any school closure or repurposing. It appears that the MAUSD Board intends to base the ‘26-27 MAUSD budget on one of these models, without adequate time for community input or planning. The community is not being adequately informed. Equally troubling, the Board has failed to consider cost savings from administrative, contractual, or facilities adjustments — excluding community input entirely.

These rushed discussions seem to ignore imminent state-level changes that could provide financial relief and make closures unnecessary.

Time is running out. By December 1, the VT Education Redistricting Task Force will finalize recommendations on governance. The MAUSD Board has not yet communicated to the Task Force its position on local representation, voting rights, or governance structure.

Without immediate action to convince the Task Force to adopt a Supervisory Union governance model for our region in Addison County, our local board may be dissolved entirely and towns’

voting rights will no longer exist. Instead, regional education budget amounts will be determined in Montpelier, and school board members will be elected by “wards” rather than towns.

We urge you to act now to preserve local representation and protect the future of our schools.

We ask that you immediately appoint a liaison to monitor MAUSD Board actions and report back to voters in your town.

We urge you to take immediate action:

1. Write to the VT Education Redistricting Task Force demanding Supervisory Union governance for our region that delivers cost savings, preserves local democracy, preserves Articles of Agreement that are the founding covenant of our 2016 Act 46 consolidation, and guarantees towns’ right to vote on school closures.
2. Write to the MAUSD Board insisting that all financial and governance options be fully considered, including statewide changes, before any radical changes to our current educational delivery model are enacted.
3. Mobilize the community by raising awareness and consider working with the Starksboro Save Our Schools group.
4. Attend upcoming MAUSD Board and Board Committee meetings to demand financial transparency, insist on fair deliberation, and ensure voter rights are respected.

Thank you for standing with us in defending voter rights, local democracy, and the future of our rural community schools at this critical moment.

Best,

The Starksboro Selectboard