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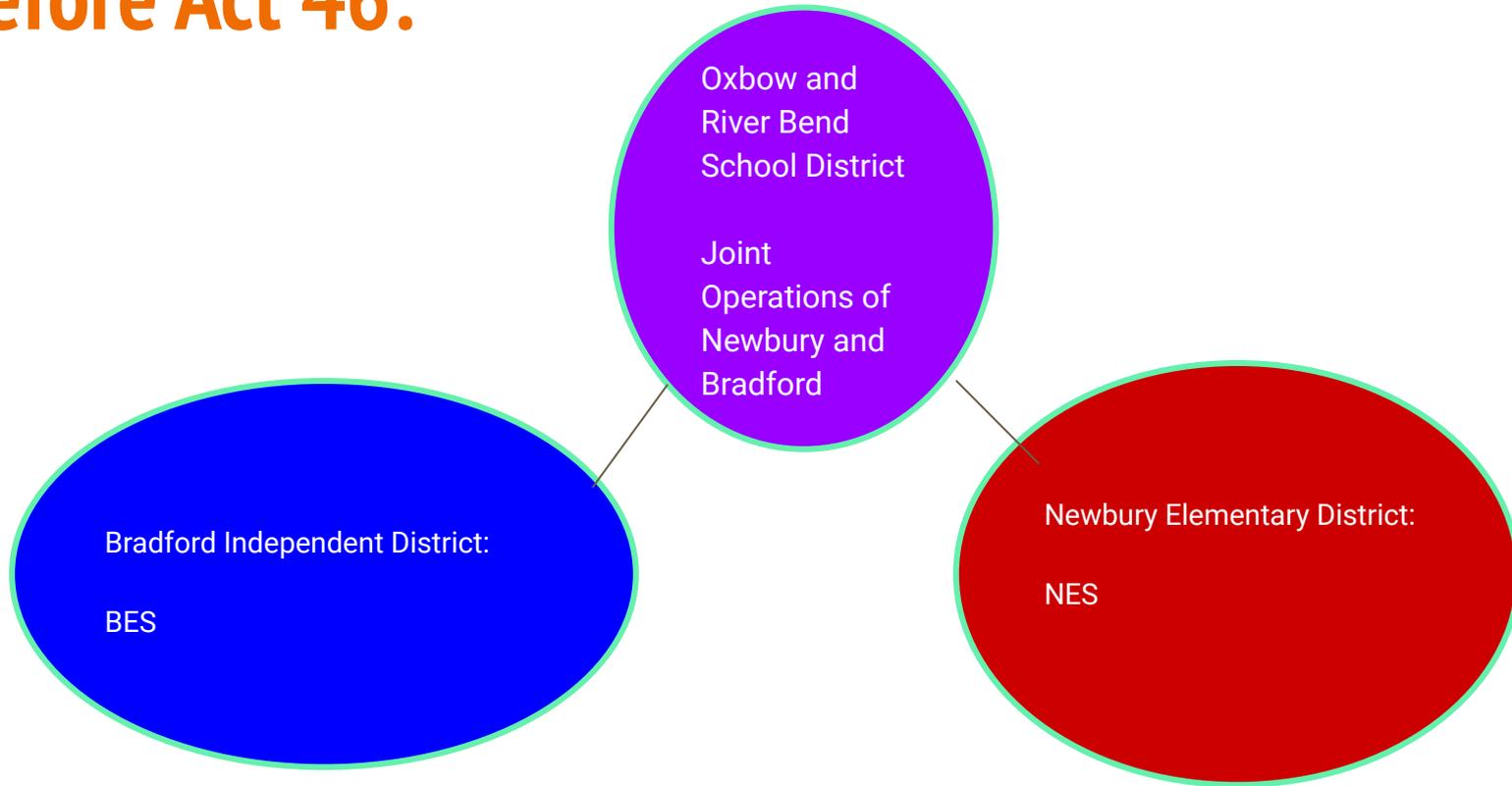
# Why OUUSD?

*Unity - Stability - Opportunity-*  
*This is not about losing local control it is*  
*about broadening our positive influence.*

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# Before Act 46:



# OUUSD

When OUUSD was formed by State Board of Education NES, BES, OHS & RBCTC were merged and old structure was dissolved.

**One district run by two towns  
operating four schools for  
prek-12:**

**BES, NES, OHS, RBCTC**

If OUUSD is dissolved the two towns would have separate school districts. Each Pre-k - 12. But no joint high school and no joint agreement with RBCTC.

# If Vote Passed: Joint Operation Cease

**Town of Newbury  
District  
Prek-12**

**Town of Bradford  
School District  
Prek-12**

**Debt and Bond Responsibility?**

**Financial Implications?**

**Where will students in grades 7-12  
attend school? Will schools close?**

**Tax Implications?**

**Will Bradford run Oxbow and  
River Bend?**

**Questions This Raises????**

# What happens if Newbury votes to dissolve?

1. Bradford would need to warn and hold a vote to approve Newbury's withdrawal. OUUSD remains operational.
2. If Bradford votes to allow the withdrawal. OUUSD remains operational.
3. The State Board of Education would hold a hearing and decided if Newbury can return to its independent school board. OUUSD becomes dissolved and all schools cut ties.
4. If they approve Newbury and Bradford cut all ties. Including ties to Oxbow and River Bend. Essentially the Newbury School would become a Pre K - 12 system.
5. The Newbury School board would need to decide what high school would become the sending school
6. The Newbury School Board would need to be assigned to a Supervisory Union in order to provide special education and have a superintendent.
7. This would NOT be going back to how it was before. The School Board would need to reconfigure the school system including the Union High School.

# What happens if the vote does not pass?

1. If the vote fails in Newbury the OUUSD continues to operate
2. If the vote fails in Bradford the OUUSD continues to operate
3. If the State Board of Education does not approve of the withdrawal OUUSD continues to operate.

## Concern: Budget increases over two years

### **THE OUUSD Board DID NOT DEVELOP THE 2019/2020 BUDGET,**

- Budget was approved by Transitional Board. The members: Newbury Elementary: Emmy Hausman, Paul Jewett; Bradford Elementary: Angela Colbeth, Kim Frydman; Oxbow: Barbara Briggs, Adam Lornitzo The Chair was Paul Jewett. Please read the minutes (<https://oesu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ouusd-minutes-5-7-19-1.pdf>)
- They UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE BUDGET AMOUNT OF \$16,287,560.00. A budget to budget increase of: \$688,194.00.
- Tax rate changed after the budget vote due to a drop in the equalized pupil count. The OUUSD board has NO control over the pupil count. The state provides the OESU business office with an estimate to use for budget development but then sends the final number to the towns to calculate the taxes. This was not an error or increase in spending.
- OUUSD proposed budget this year is an increase of 2.86% = \$467,248.00.00. The two year combined increase is approx. 7.133%.

Concern: The OUUSD only has three members on the OESU board

**This is true, however the OESU board has become more cohesive and is working hard to create a unified vision for the supervisory union. This work has been made possible by a spirit of collaboration and teamwork. The OUUSD board members that are on the OESU must also work hard remain focused on the needs of our schools and taxpayers.**

**Concern: The OUUSD budget failures have been damaging to the schools.**

**This is true. The budget not passing has been caused by many factors:**

- 1. Increased cost**
- 2. pandemic uncertainty**
- 3. merge**
- 4. this group campaigning to defeat the budgets.**

**There is no denying that these budget failures have caused damage to all the schools. We believe that it is time to start working together for the good of our students, schools, and communities.**

## **Concern: The Newbury community voted against this merge**

**That is true the concerns at the time were: Equal representation, Protection from school closure, Local control, and Financial implications.**

- **The OUUSD board has equal representation from Newbury and Bradford.**
- **The amendment passed that protects both Newbury and Bradford from a school closure.**
- **A school board does not have “control” of the school. The school board supervises the superintendent. It is the superintendent's job to oversee the school principals and the principals job to run the school.**
- **Yes the financial configuration has changed. The board is working hard to find efficiencies and ways to improve education opportunities for students. This type of budget work takes time. We have a budget/finance committee to help with the work.**

## **Concern: No substantive change to educational opportunities.**

Not True:

1. Teachers, principals and central office leaders, have vetted, adopted and begun to implement a common math curriculum and supporting math program.
2. The same work being done in the area of literacy. These common student experiences support the curriculum at Oxbow and benefit students for years to come.
3. Multi Tiered Systems of Support was adopted at the OESU level this is to create programs and practices that are universal across ALL schools.
4. Technology Director has allowed email, platform and building technology alignment. The efficiency this move has provided cannot be overstated.
5. Shared Social Worker position between Newbury and Bradford. As well as additional time for guidance position at Oxbow to work toward a smoother 6th grade to 7th grade transition.

6. Farm to school activities have been shared, food service workers and directors have shared ideas, resources and time.
7. Shared digital schoolhouse between NES and BES
8. OESU has come into compliance with centralization ordered under Act 153 in 2010: individual districts were out of compliance until 2019. Data collection and reporting, transportation, special education, curriculum and technology.
9. Board and administration all working at the district level so schools are seen as a Pre K - 12 system. Aware of all levels of needs.

## OUUSD's efforts to promote transparency, accountability and increased involvement

- Board expanded from 4 members to 6, all dedicated to long term progress of our schools.
- Board now meeting twice a month. Public engagement is high through Zoom
- Articles of Agreement, Budget/finance, School/community engagement, Strategic Planning Committees formed.
- Meeting dates, communication from the board, budget and school information posted to list serves, school FB pages, newspapers.
- Live events scheduled.
- Recordings of meetings made available on OESU website.
- OUUSD is listening and responding to community questions and concerns.

# What we should know:

- As a district and region we are losing students. If we don't work to improve our school system this trend will continue. In order to be competitive we MUST pool our resources and work as team of two towns with one goal...Do what is best for kids. Going back to a system with four separate schools with different boards all making their own decision is not what is best for kids or our communities.
- At times the Newbury School Board inserted itself between the Superintendent and the Principal. Intentions may have been good but this type of management undermines the system, creates animosity and distrust throughout the organization.

## Consequential financial implications for Newbury taxpayers, setting conditions for friction within the merged board;

- Newbury and Bradford elementary schools have been ranked in the bottom quartile of spending per equalized pupil. Oxbow has been in the bottom half generally from year to year. This has not changed appreciably since the unification of the schools into one district, though it has been equalized across the districts.
- We still have per pupil spending in the lower third of Vermont.
- Our tax rates are higher given the spending levels. Property valuation and a declining enrollment are the chief drivers of this phenomenon. The best way to combat this is to have consistency of governance, leadership and commitment to the long term future of our students.
- This friction has been realized due in part to the continued focus the negatives and on things that have happened years ago and general mistrust of the OESU. Merged or not the town of Newbury is going to need to find a way to put aside these feelings and work with the OESU. They are essential to the success of our students.