

PRESS RELEASE

Joint Fiscal Office – One Baldwin Street – Montpelier, VT 05633 – 802-828-2295 – Fax: 802-828-2483

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 14, 2011
Contact: Theresa Utton-Jerman, Joint Fiscal Office
Phone: 802-828-5767 or 802-828-2295
Fax: 802-828-2483

PRESS RELEASE: Two Public Hearings to seek input as part of the Evaluation of Vermont's Education Finance System

The legislative consultants, Lawrence O. Picus and Associates, continue their evaluation of Vermont's education system. They will be holding the second of three sets of public hearings to seek input on Vermont's Education Finance System.

Two public hearings are scheduled on Tuesday, November 15, 2011. The purpose of these hearings is to gain an understanding of the issues and concerns facing citizens and education stakeholders regarding the financing of K-12 education in Vermont. Lawrence O. Picus and Associates will use the information from these public hearing sessions to help guide their study.

Individuals testifying at the hearings are asked to address three specific questions:

1. Vermont education spending is high:
 - ✓ Does student performance match the level of effort to provide funding?
 - ✓ Are there strategies for improving student performance – and what costs, if any, would be associated with them?
 - ✓ Teacher salaries are relatively low – can salaries be increased without accelerating increases in education spending?
2. Is Vermont getting its money's worth?
3. Can we find ways to improve performance at a lower cost?
 - ✓ Is trading larger classes for higher teacher salaries an acceptable option?
 - ✓ Would school reorganization help?
 - ✓ Are Vermont students well-educated and prepared for the workforce?

The first hearing will take place from 3:30 to 5:00 PM through the School Based Learning Network (LNV) to provide the state's education community an opportunity to offer input to the

study. Site locations include: Berlin Elementary, Danville School, East Montpelier Elementary School, Hyde Park Elementary School, Lyndon Town School, Mill River Union High School (North Clarendon), Randolph Union High School, Burlington High School, St. Albans City School, and Twin Valley High School (Wilmington). For up-to-date site detail, see:

http://www.leg.state.vt.us/JFO/education_RFP_2011.aspx.

The general public is invited to testify at the second hearing from 5:30 to 7:00 PM to be held at the 14 Vermont Interactive Television (VIT) sites, including: Bennington, Brattleboro, Castleton, Johnson, Lyndonville, Middlebury, Montpelier, Newport, Randolph Center, Rutland, Springfield, St. Albans, White River Junction, and Williston. The Waterbury site is NO longer available due to flood damage. Site information, including directions may be found at: <http://www.vitlink.org/>

Lawrence O. Picus and Associates will be represented by Larry Picus and Mike Griffith. They will attend both hearings and will be available to answer questions about the study, as appropriate, during the times outlined above.