5-Town Informational Meeting

February 17, 2022
Who is Save Community Schools (SCS)?

• An ad-hoc group of concerned parents and community members
  ▪ Former superintendents, former school board members, senior education consultant, education finance director, retired college mathematics professor, special educator, early childhood educator, lawyer, parents, community members, and alumni of Lincoln Community School and Mt. Abe.
  ▪ Additionally, the Lincoln Selectboard has provided considerable support

• After the State Board of Education grants conditional approval, Lincoln will elect a new school board

• SCS is not an elected body and can not make decisions for the Lincoln School Board
“A community school is a **public school** - the hub of its neighborhood, uniting families, educators and community partners to provide all students with top-quality academics, enrichment, health and social services and opportunities to succeed in school and in life”

Institute for Educational Leadership (coalition for community schools)
Quick answers to frequently asked questions

• How will Lincoln leaving the district affect education taxes?
  ▪ MAUSD says it will have minimal impact on tax bills for the 4 towns

• How will Lincoln avoid the challenges Ripton is facing?
  ▪ Lincoln and Ripton are exploring forming a new Supervisory Union

• If current teachers and staff decide to work for the SU, what will their salaries and benefits be based on?
  ▪ MAUSD and ACSD have similar teacher contracts

• Where will Lincoln secondary students go to school?
  ▪ That is a decision for the new elected Lincoln School Board whose powers are described in 16 V.S.A. § 563
Why Withdraw Now?

• Act 46 doesn’t work for Lincoln
• Future of Lincoln School unresolved *
• If MAUSD and ANWSD merge, Lincoln and other towns might lose the right to vote
• Rewrite of education statutes might stop Lincoln’s withdrawal process

* Last night’s action by the MAUSD board provided no guarantees that elementary schools would stay open
Uncertain Future for MAUSD

• What part of the Levenson Report with the MAUSD Board adopt?
• Will the Board decide to keep all 5 elementary schools open?
• Will the Board honor the right of towns to vote on whether to close their schools?
• Will the Merger Committee respect the rights of MAUSD towns to vote?
• Will the Merger Committee override all MAUSD plans?
• Will MAUSD middle and high school students go to Mt. Abe or Vergennes?
Withdraw Timeline

Lincoln approves withdrawal  
Aug. 24, 2021

Bristol Monkton New Haven Starksboro Vote at Town Meeting  
March 1, 2022

State Board conditionally approves Lincoln’s withdrawal  
Anticipated by July 2022

New School Board Elected, Lincoln-Ripton SU formed, State Board grants final approval  
Aug. 2022 - June 2023

LCS operates as public elementary school and new Lincoln School Board and town decide where secondary students go to school *

2023-2024

* 16 V.S.A. § 563: grants the School Board power to determine district educational policies
New Governance Structure for Local Control

SU Duties 16 V.S.A. 261
- Curriculum Development
- Review compatibility with other schools
- Provide/Manage Special Education
- Manage Finances
- Receive/Disburse Funds
- Manage Construction Projects
- Manage Student Data
- Transportation, Food Services
- Employment Negotiation & Contracts
- Human Resource Management
- Develop Truancy Policy
What Local Control Gives Us

• We vote for our own school board
• We vote on understandable, detailed school budget annually, including SU costs
• We make our own hiring decisions, in conjunction with the SU
• We make decisions on programming and use of the school building
• We have ability to be creative for additional uses of building (early ed, co-working spaces, etc.)
How Does it Work?

• LCS would continue as an elementary public school, open and free to all Lincoln children and run by our own school board

• New Lincoln School Board and town will decide where students go to middle and high school

• Lincoln and Ripton form a joint Supervisory Union (currently under discussion)
The Benefit of Smaller Schools

➢ Smaller school size has been associated with higher achievement under certain conditions
➢ Smaller schools promote substantially improved equity in achievement among all students
➢ Smaller schools may be especially important for disadvantaged students

A Word About Serving Kids With Special Needs

“No matter how many special ed students we have, we are incredibly under resourced, and kids are not getting what they need.” - current MAUSD educator

- Students with special needs were being well served prior to the current MAUSD model. Resources were appropriate and IEPs were being legally met.
- Small schools, including LCS, have a long record of providing great care to students with special needs.
- With an appropriate model and resources, they could be well served again.
Impact on MAUSD when Lincoln Withdraws  
Source: MAUSD Administration, Sept. 28, 2021

Instruction

➢ MAUSD has no authority for curriculum * in Lincoln, even though “presumably most Lincoln students would attend Mt. Abe” (quote from MAUSD Superintendent)

➢ “Programming at Mt. Abe could be impacted slightly as we would not budget for 100% of Lincoln students Tuitioning to Mt. Abe”.

* Supervisory Union responsible for developing curriculum and “periodically review(ing) the compatibility of the SU’s curriculum with those of other schools.” 16 V.S.A.§ 261a
Impact on MAUSD when Lincoln Withdraws
Source: MAUSD Administration, Sept. 28, 2021

Operational

➢ “MAUSD would reduce approximately 15-18 positions * due to Lincoln withdrawal”.

* These are positions at Lincoln Community School. We hope the Lincoln teachers and staff will continue to be part of the Lincoln Elementary School
# Central Office Presentation to MAUSD Board (Sept 28, 2021)

## State Board Option 1 (Lincoln in other SU) or 2 (Lincoln as own SD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>FY 22 Budget</th>
<th>FY 22 Option 1 or 2</th>
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<td>Total Expenses</td>
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<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$4,426,845</td>
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<td>Less Lincoln Direct Costs</td>
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<td>MAUSD Tax Rate before CLA</td>
<td>1.6274</td>
<td>1.6320</td>
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* Based on 85% of Lincoln 7-12 students attending Mt. Abe

Equals $4.60 per $100,000 assessed value
Vermont’s Tuition System

• Vermont’s Tuition Program was established in 1869.

• Many smaller Vermont towns do not operate a local secondary school. These towns may vote to designate up to 3 secondary schools for the district.

• “Sending” towns pay tuition directly to the "receiving" schools.

• Payment for independent schools is not more than statewide average per-pupil cost in union school districts. Parents responsible for cost above that amount.

• Independent schools receiving public funds must be "approved" as having met state standards for independent schools.
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<th>School</th>
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Economic Data for MAUSD Towns

- **Per capita income**
  - Monkton: $40,000
  - NH: $50,000
  - Bristol: $30,000
  - Starksboro: $20,000
  - Lincoln: $10,000

- **Median Household Income**
  - Monkton: $80,000
  - NH: $60,000
  - Starksboro: $40,000
  - Lincoln: $20,000
  - Bristol: $10,000

- **% Poverty**
  - Monkton: 0.0%
  - NH: 2.0%
  - Lincoln: 4.0%
  - Starksboro: 6.0%
  - Bristol: 8.0%

- **Median Household Value**
  - Lincoln: $280,000
  - NH: $270,000
  - Monkton: $260,000
  - Bristol: $250,000
  - Starksboro: $240,000

Source: https://censusreporter.org (US Census, American Community Survey, 2019)
Concluding Thoughts

• Agency of Education: “... one of the strengths of Vermont's education system lies in its rich diversity and the ability for each local school district to adapt its educational program to local needs and desires”.

• SCS believes the best way to provide high quality education to meet local needs is to have LOCAL CONTROL

• Lincoln’s vote to withdraw from MAUSD was by a 3-1 margin
We ask for your support

During your town meeting, please vote **YES** to ratify Lincoln’s decision to withdraw from the Mount Abe Unified School District (MAUSD)

*Thank you!*
Discussion, Questions, Comments