

**§ 115C-66.5. Merger of county school administrative units by the State Board of Education.**

(a) Consolidation and Merger. – The State Board of Education shall have the authority to consolidate and merge contiguous county school administrative units or a group of county school administrative units in which each county unit is contiguous with at least one other county unit in the group. The State Board shall adopt a written plan setting forth the conditions of the merger. A merger of county units and reorganization of those units under this section shall not have the effect of abolishing any special taxes that may have been voted in any such units.

(b) Effective Date. – The merger shall become effective on July 1 immediately following the earlier of the thirty-first legislative day or the day of adjournment of the next regular session of the General Assembly that begins at least 25 days after the date the State Board approved the merger. If a bill that specifically disapproves the merger is introduced in either house of the General Assembly before the thirty-first legislative day of that session, the merger becomes effective on the July 1 immediately following the earlier of either the day an unfavorable final action is taken on the bill or the day that session of the General Assembly adjourns without ratifying a bill that specifically disapproves the merger. A merger that is specifically disapproved by a bill enacted into law before it becomes effective does not become effective.

(c) Legislative Disapproval of Merger. – A bill specifically disapproves a merger if it contains a provision that refers to the written plan of merger and states that the merger is disapproved. Notwithstanding any rule of either house of the General Assembly, any member of the General Assembly may introduce a bill during the first 30 legislative days of any regular session to disapprove a merger that has been approved by the State Board and that has not become effective. (2015-241, s. 8A.5.)