

For the record: Laura Sibilia, independent state representative for the Windham 2 District representing Dover, Jamaica, Somerset, Stratton and Wardsboro

I'm here today to introduce: [H.209](#) An act relating to public elementary school choice within a supervisory union

This bill proposes: to give students within a supervisory union the choice to attend an elementary school located within another school district within the same supervisory union, subject to capacity limitations determined by both the sending and receiving elementary school. This bill also proposes that no tuition will be charged by the receiving district.

Why is this necessary?

In [16 V.S.A. § 822a](#), Vermont high school students are provided a choice to attend any public high school within the state that has the capacity to accept them, limited by their sending district to no less than 5 percent of their student population and a student's ability to secure transportation.

If more students wish to attend a receiving high school than the allowable number set by the sending district, a lottery may be held by the receiving district.

There is a safeguard for students in small and rural high schools and protection against recruitment for financial reasons as the receiving school receives no tuition dollars (but must be reimbursed for special education costs that are incurred) and the sending school is able to retain the student in its ADM count.

H.209 replicates this public school choice, but only within a Supervisory Union where the Superintendent has the ability to move staffing within the SU, if necessary, to carefully accommodate pupil shifts from district to district.

In my Supervisory Union, the Windham Central Supervisory Union, we have three districts with elementary schools: River Valleys which includes Wardsboro and Dover elementary schools, West River which includes Townshend, Newfane and Jamaica elementary schools, and the standalone Marlboro school district. Each district is located near employment, after school and childcare options. Students in the River Valleys and West River districts are permitted to attend a school within their district that is not their residential district, but not to attend another district within the SU. H.209 would allow students to switch between public elementary schools within their SU.