

Subject: February 5 Proposal Forces Waterford Students to Lose Their Nearest High School

Thu 2/19/2026 8:19 AM

Dear Education Committee Members,

I am writing as a Waterford parent concerned about the real-world impact of the February 5 proposed district map. I am raising my children in Waterford because of the educational access our town has long provided, including reliable access to our nearest high school. As written, this proposal would require students to travel significantly farther away, even though their closest and long-established option remains nearby.

For generations, the majority of Waterford students have attended St. Johnsbury Academy. This time-tested partnership has provided stability, strong academic and career outcomes, and continuity for families in the Northeast Kingdom.

The proposal would force students to bypass our nearest high school and commute significantly farther away. In a rural region where families already navigate long distances and limited resources, this change feels out of touch with the realities of the Northeast Kingdom. It is deeply troubling that such a disruption would be proposed at all for a community where the current system is working.

This change would impact the ability for students to participate in after school events or to play sports, etc. Most children would be forced to rely on the bus for transportation to and from school. Parents are not going to be able to navigate transportation 30-40 minutes away twice daily. Kids having to rely on the bus would not be able to get back to school for practices etc. The amount of time they will be on the bus and the times in which they will have to be at their bus stops are going to affect their home lives, their sleep habits, and significantly cut into their free time. The potential change will be detrimental to our children and our families.

We urge you to revise the map to reflect geographic common sense and preserve access for Waterford families.

Respectfully,
Joseph Giddings

Waterford