



# Windham Northeast Supervisory Union

*"Creating an Inclusive Community through Personalized Student Engagement."*

Athens Grafton Rockingham Westminster

Dear Mr. Carroll and members of the SBE:

Thank you for your guidance letter of April 8.

I would like to address several items you have identified in your letter roughly in the order that you have identified them as items for action. Please note that we are submitting this note in advance of your 4/15 deadline so as to be sure that we have addressed your concerns satisfactorily. If not we will do our best to cover any gaps by noon, Thursday.

To begin with, Mr. David Major, Westminster Town Moderator and former Westminster Town School Board Chair (copied in this correspondence for contact), will be making the presentation for consideration of Westminster's request to withdraw from the WNUESD."

With regards to our response to items C, and D

- Per C1 and C2, the Westminster Elementary School (also known as the Westminster Community School, or WCS) is the building in that community serving the educational needs of the young people in that town from Kindergarten through Grade 6. In addition, there is a pre-K program administered by the Windham Northeast Supervisory union (Our SU) for Westminster students housed at WCS. Because of the logistics issues that building serves Westminster Children almost exclusively.
- The Superintendent of the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union is preparing a document to detail the numbers of students from each grade and this should be coming to you in a separate document.
- Per C3, and C4, I have heard of no plan or suggestion from any member of the Westminster community that would envision changing the Westminster school configuration from its current K-6 in-person instruction at the WCS or the current practice of tuitioning its 7-8 students. As there is no Westminster School Board to make any changes in this current educational plan, there is no one who can speak in any official capacity about the future. However, neither I, nor members of the Westminster Advisory Committee, nor members of the Westminster select board, nor any of our current or past Westminster Board members have ever suggested any changes to the current configuration are being contemplated. You are encouraged to validate this point with the members of the Westminster Community who will testify.



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- Per C5, I will defer to Mr. Pratt if he wishes to list all the private and public schools to which Westminster's 7th and 8th grade school children are currently attending. I can say that in the past this list has included the Bellows Falls Middle School in Rockingham, VT, The Compass School in Westminster, with some attending Putney Central and The Grammar School in Putney Vermont. All these schools have accepted Westminster middle school students in the past, many have had the same kind of attendance declines that other schools in Vermont have had and there is absolutely no reason to anticipate these rates of acceptance will change or that students will be disadvantaged by a change in status from part of the WNUESD to its own district. If you wish written letters by these various schools confirming this fact, we can make an effort to ask them, but candidly, we have no power to compel them to respond by your deadline. Please advise.
- Per D, I am sure that you will get passionate affirmation from community representatives that the Westminster Community School is "in compliance with" State Board rules and that the school is a quality institution that will not be materially harmed by its separation from the WNUESD. Independent ratings are with the SBE's time. According to independent evaluators such as , [Niche.com](https://www.niche.com/k12/westminster-schools-westminster-vt/), "Westminster Schools is an above average, public school located in Westminster, VT." <https://www.niche.com/k12/westminster-schools-westminster-vt/>

In a separate letter we will address your item F, namely the issue of "whether it is in the best interests of the State, the students, and the members remaining in the district for the [WNUESD] to continue to exist" after Westminster's withdrawal.

We will argue that it is, and that there is no educational reason or community interest in separating the towns or breaking up the remaining WNUESD.

Best regards,

Jack Bryar

Member for Grafton, former chair of the Athens Grafton Joint school board, current chair, WNUESD