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

Tue 2/17/2026 4:22 PM

Dear Education Committee Members,

We are writing as a Waterford parent concerned about the real-world impact of the February 5 proposed district map. We are raising our 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.

Vermont is not only Burlington, Rutland, or Montpelier. Rural communities in the NEK deserve policy decisions grounded in data, transparency, and an understanding of how these changes affect housing stability, community viability, and long-term growth.

This is not simply a line on a map. It affects where children are educated, how far they travel, whether families choose to move here, and whether communities remain sustainable.

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

Sincerely,
Trace Douse and Tanzie Douse
Waterford