

Adopting a New “Superintendent Services” Model for SAU 104

What Does This Mean?

In 2020, the Rollinsford School District separated from SAU 56 in Somersworth and became its own, single-district school administrative unit (SAU) 104.

All SAUs are required by NH Statute RSA 194-C:4 to provide “superintendent services” to oversee the educational mission as well as the operational management (i.e., fiscal oversight) of the district. In 2020, SAU 104 agreed to purchase these services from SAU 56, in lieu of hiring their own SAU staff.

The agreement between SAU 56 and SAU 104 is set to renew in June 2025. The Rollinsford school board appointed an ad hoc committee to conduct a feasibility study to see if the board should renew the agreement or adopt a different superintendent services model to better meet the district’s educational and operational needs.

The results of the feasibility study were presented to the full Rollinsford school board and the public at their public budget meeting on October 24, 2024. The feasibility study report and public presentation slides are available at www.sau104.org under the “Rollinsford School Board” tab.

The Ad Hoc committee recommended that the school board take the following actions:

1. End the current superintendent services agreement with SAU 56 at the conclusion of the 2024-2025 school year.
2. Adopt a new superintendent services model which includes hiring the school district’s own part-time superintendent. Other necessary staff will be hired as SAU 104 employees or contracted services.
3. Contract special education services through MSAD 35 (Marshwood School District).

The committee believes that this change in superintendent services models will:

1. Give the school board direct oversight of the hiring and evaluation of the superintendent of schools, the educational leader of the school district.
2. Improve the implementation of the school board’s vision for educational opportunities for all Rollinsford students.
3. Give the school board full control of SAU budgetary costs.
4. Strengthen the relationship between SAU 104 and MSAD #35 to assist in the successful transition of students from Rollinsford Grade School to Marshwood Middle School.
5. Engage in long-term strategic planning to better allow the Rollinsford school board to meet current needs as well as plan for the future.

What a change in superintendent services DOES NOT mean is:

1. A change in our existing tuition agreement with MSAD #35. This agreement will remain the same, and was renewed in October, 2024. The students in grades 7-12 will continue to attend Marshwood’s schools as they have for the last decade.

2. A change to the existing educational opportunities at RGS. It is anticipated this will lead instead to opportunities to enhance the current and future educational opportunities for Rollinsford's elementary students.

Although this is a management decision that rests with the school board, it is important for the public to understand this change and what the advantages are. **There will be a public forum held at Rollinsford Grade School on November 13th at 7pm in the gym.** If you have any questions and are unable to attend the forum, please reach out to your school board representatives via the emails available at www.sau104.org.