

From: David Martin <david.martin@trsu.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 7:58 PM
To: Samuelson, Jennifer <Jennifer.Samuelson@vermont.gov>
Subject: Expeditionary School at Black River

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Dear Ms. Samuelson,

My name is David Martin. I am on the board of the Ludlow Mount Holly Unified Union School District. Our district was created following Act 46 when both towns agreed to close the Black River High School we had shared for decades and offer graduates of our two elementary schools the choice of high schools to attend. That was a difficult decision for the two communities to accept and they did so because of the promise that a new independent school would be created on the site and that the new school would be an alternative to the two public high schools a half hour or more away.

Many local residents worked together to create the new Expeditionary School at Black River (ESBR) and it has made wonderful progress. The school's unique model has challenged two types of students and enabled them to thrive. It reaches both students who would have had difficulty in larger traditional schools and those who are bright and motivated and might be bored at a more traditional school.

I understand that new legislation has put a moratorium on approval of new independent schools in Vermont after July 1. Accordingly it is vital that your board immediately give at least temporary approval of the school so that it can begin receiving tuition from our district and other choice districts near by. Residents of our towns have reluctantly accepted the merger forced on us by Act 46 but they view the State Agency of Education as distant and out of touch. If you fail to approve their school they will be furious.

I hope you will recognize the amazing progress that the leaders of this new school have made over the past three years and grant the approval they need to enable them to build on their success to date. Thank you for your consideration,

David Martin
Board Member
Ludlow Mount Holly Unified Union School District