

# Windham Southwest Supervisory Union

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

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Stantford    Searsburg    Southern Valley Unified Union SD    Twin Valley Unified Union SD

September 8, 2020

John Carroll, Chair  
Vermont State Board of Education  
1 National Life Drive, Davis 5  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Re: Halifax Withdrawal from the Southern Valley Unified Union School District (SVUUSD), Response

Dear Mr. Carroll,

Thank you for your response to the request and voter approval by both the Town's of Halifax and Readsboro to withdraw from the SVUUSD. I understand the process and requests made by the Vermont State Board of Education, and have provided responses below to support these questions raised.

1. During the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years, grades K-8 operated at the Halifax School.
2. For the 2020-2021 school year, Halifax will continue to operate a school, grades K-8.
3. Enrollment numbers for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 are stated below.
4. Enrollment numbers for 2020-2021 are stated below.

| 2018-2019    |           |  | 2019-2020    |           |  | 2020-2021    |           |
|--------------|-----------|--|--------------|-----------|--|--------------|-----------|
| K            | 13        |  | K            | 10        |  | K            | 7         |
| Gr1          | 8         |  | Gr1          | 13        |  | Gr1          | 10        |
| Gr2          | 7         |  | Gr2          | 7         |  | Gr2          | 13        |
| Gr3          | 4         |  | Gr3          | 7         |  | Gr3          | 7         |
| Gr4          | 8         |  | Gr4          | 5         |  | Gr4          | 8         |
| Gr5          | 11        |  | Gr5          | 4         |  | Gr5          | 6         |
| Gr6          | 5         |  | Gr6          | 11        |  | Gr6          | 4         |
| Gr7          | 10        |  | Gr7          | 6         |  | Gr7          | 12        |
|              |           |  |              |           |  | Gr 8         | 7         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>70</b> |  | <b>Total</b> | <b>70</b> |  | <b>Total</b> | <b>74</b> |

5. If approved by the Vermont State Board of Education, it is the intention that the Halifax Town School District be reconstituted and continue to operate a K-8 school in Halifax, and continue to pay tuition for resident 9-12 grade students.
6. As previously stated, there is no intent to change from current grades offered at the Halifax School.

7. (A) Currently there are (3) schools within a "reasonable " driving distance for students living in Halifax.
- **Marlboro Elementary**, a Pre-K - 8 school, that would be able to be accessed by most Halifax residents. The most direct route would be back dirt roads, which are not always accessible at 10-15 miles, and the main road, from the farthest corner of the town, would be a 20 mile trip .
  - Twin Valley Schools, **Twin Valley Elementary**, a Pre-K-5 school, by the main roads, is an approximately a 10-18 mile trip from Halifax to Twin Valley Elementary for the farthest corner of the town. **Twin Valley Middle High**, grades6-12, is a much more reasonable distance from Halifax, with school to school distance of 6 miles, with many student travel times to be much less.

(B) Of the above-namedschools, the Twin Valley Schools are the only ones th at could potentially accommodate the students of Halifax if the town voted to close the Halifax School.

Thank you in advance for the invitation to appear before the State Board of Education on September 16 to answer any further questions regarding the withdrawal request and process. I look forward to receiving the meeting agenda and call-in information.

Sincerely,

(J) S

Homer Sumner, Chair  
Southern Valley Unified Union School District  
Board of School Directors

Cc: (electronically)  
Suzanne Sprague  
Maureen Gaidys  
Barbara Anne Komons-Montroll, Superintendent