

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

# HB349

# Bill as Introduced

HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED

2023 SESSION

23-0279  
10/08

HOUSE BILL           **349**

AN ACT               relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

SPONSORS:           Rep. Ladd, Graf. 5; Rep. Cordelli, Carr. 7; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Ward, Dist 8

COMMITTEE:          Education

---

ANALYSIS

This bill allows the establishment of a special purpose school district for the towns of Hebron, Bridgewater and Groton to form a new multi-town single school district.

---

Explanation:        Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
                          Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]  
                          Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three*

AN ACT                   relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1           1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

2           I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and  
3 maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the  
4 Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the  
5 towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding  
6 any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby  
7 authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school  
8 district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to  
9 formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194  
10 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school  
11 district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C.  
12 The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or  
13 such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. The  
14 creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3  
15 towns at their 2023 annual meeting, or such other annual meeting as is determined by the 3 towns  
16 under this act, adopting the provisions of this act; whereupon the effective operational date of this  
17 district shall be the first of July of the fiscal year subsequent to the adoption vote unless the annual  
18 meeting specifies a later fiscal year to be the effective operational date.

19           II. The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound  
20 Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special  
21 meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall  
22 be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3  
23 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns,  
24 approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of  
25 education, shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The  
26 commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary  
27 pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have  
28 the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may  
29 defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual  
30 meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first  
31 operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and

**HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED**

**- Page 2 -**

1 organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to  
2 carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one  
3 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
4 town of Groton.. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
5 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

6 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
7 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
8 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
9 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
10 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
11 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
12 RSA 197 and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
13 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
14 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
15 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

16 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
17 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
18 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
19 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
20 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
21 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
22 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
23 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
24 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
25 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
26 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

27 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
28 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
29 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
30 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
31 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
32 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
33 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
34 formula:

35 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
36 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

1 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
2 majority vote of the district meeting and approved by the state board of education.

3 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
4 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
5 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
6 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
7 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
8 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
9 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
10 with the Newfound Area School District to endeavor to continue its relationship as put forth in the  
11 existing contract between the Bridgewater-Hebron Village District and former district to offer  
12 parents school choice and to accommodate students already enrolled in the new district's school.

13 VII. Upon the adoption of this act by the 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron-  
14 Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal from the  
15 Newfound Area School District on July 1 of the calendar year one year subsequent to the date of the  
16 vote adopting this act unless the meeting specifies a later fiscal year to be effective operational date,  
17 subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27. The newly formed school board may enter into  
18 long and short-term tuition agreements with the Newfound Area School District or any other public  
19 school district, public academy or school pursuant to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those  
20 resident students in middle or high school who enroll in the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special  
21 Purpose School District and may also vote to build additions or a separate school. The term of office  
22 of the Newfound Area School District board members representing Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton  
23 shall terminate as of the July 1 effective operating date of the newly formed school district.

24 VIII. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
25 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
26 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
27 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
28 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
29 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
30 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30 immediately prior to the July 1,  
31 operating date in accord with the apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District  
32 budget for the prior fiscal year. The newly formed district may enter into agreements with  
33 Newfound Area School District regarding the disposition of school administrative unit assets and  
34 liabilities.

35 IX. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
36 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior  
37 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this

**HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED**

**- Page 4 -**

1 legislation they shall within 4 years from the effective date of this act, warn the question of adoption  
2 of this act at an annual meeting of the legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to  
3 adopt the provisions of this act and create the new school district. They shall call the meeting and  
4 give notice as town meetings are called and warned, excepting that the warrant shall be posted at 2  
5 or more public places in each of the towns comprising the proposed district.

6       2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

HB 349 - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

05/11/2023 1437s

2023 SESSION

23-0279

10/08

HOUSE BILL **349**

AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

SPONSORS: Rep. Ladd, Graf. 5; Rep. Cordelli, Carr. 7; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Ward, Dist 8

COMMITTEE: Education

---

ANALYSIS

This bill allows the establishment of a special purpose school district for the towns of Hebron, Bridgewater and Groton to form a new multi-town single school district.

---

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in *bold italics*.  
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through~~].  
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three*

AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

2 I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and  
 3 maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the  
 4 Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the  
 5 towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding  
 6 any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby  
 7 authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school  
 8 district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to  
 9 formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194  
 10 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school  
 11 district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C.  
 12 The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or  
 13 such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. The  
 14 creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3  
 15 towns at their 2024 annual meetings, adopting the provisions of this act; whereupon the effective  
 16 operational date of this district shall be July 1, 2025.

17 II. The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound  
 18 Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special  
 19 meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall  
 20 be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3  
 21 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns,  
 22 approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of  
 23 education, shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The  
 24 commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary  
 25 pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have  
 26 the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may  
 27 defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual  
 28 meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first  
 29 operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and  
 30 organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to  
 31 carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one

HB 349 - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

- Page 2 -

1 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
2 town of Groton. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
3 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

4 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
5 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
6 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
7 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
8 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
9 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
10 RSA 197 and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
11 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
12 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
13 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

14 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
15 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
16 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
17 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
18 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
19 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
20 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
21 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
22 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
23 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
24 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

25 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
26 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
27 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
28 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
29 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
30 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
31 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
32 formula:

33 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
34 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

35 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
36 majority vote of the district meeting and approved by the state board of education.

**HB 349 - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE**

**- Page 3 -**

1 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
2 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
3 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
4 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
5 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
6 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
7 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
8 with the Newfound Area School District to offer parents school choice and to accommodate students  
9 already enrolled in the new district's school.

10 VII. Upon the adoption of this act by all 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron-  
11 Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal from the  
12 Newfound Area School District on July 1, 2025, subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27.  
13 The newly formed school board may enter into long and short-term tuition agreements with the  
14 Newfound Area School District or any other public school district, public academy or school pursuant  
15 to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those resident students in middle or high school who enroll in  
16 the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District and may also vote to build additions  
17 or a separate school.

18 VIII. Upon adoption of this act by all 3 towns at their 2024 annual school meetings, the  
19 Newfound Area School District board members and budget committee members representing  
20 Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton may continue to serve until July 1, 2025. They may participate in  
21 matters involving the operation of the Newfound Area School District during the 2024-2025 fiscal  
22 year. However, such board members shall be disqualified from voting on any matters involving the  
23 proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, or any matters involving capital improvements to the  
24 Newfound Area School District or on any contractual agreements with other school districts or  
25 towns. Because the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District will be holding its  
26 own annual meeting, the voters of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall be disqualified from  
27 participating in the 2025 annual meeting of the Newfound Area School District. Likewise, upon the  
28 passage of this act, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall not be liable for subsequent  
29 borrowing by the Newfound Area School District unless they fail to adopt this act at their 2024  
30 annual meetings.

31 IX. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
32 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
33 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
34 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
35 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
36 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
37 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30, 2024 in accord with the

**HB 349 - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE**

**- Page 4 -**

1 apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District budget for the prior fiscal year.  
2 The newly formed district may enter into agreements with Newfound Area School District regarding  
3 the disposition of school administrative unit assets and liabilities.

4 X. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
5 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior  
6 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this  
7 legislation they shall warn the question of adoption of this act for the 2024 annual meeting of the  
8 legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to adopt the provisions of this act and create  
9 the new school district.

10 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

HB 349 - VERSION ADOPTED BY BOTH BODIES

05/11/2023 1437s

2023 SESSION

23-0279  
10/08

HOUSE BILL

**349**

AN ACT

relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

SPONSORS:

Rep. Ladd, Graf. 5; Rep. Cordelli, Carr. 7; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Ward, Dist 8

COMMITTEE:

Education

---

ANALYSIS

This bill allows the establishment of a special purpose school district for the towns of Hebron, Bridgewater and Groton to form a new multi-town single school district.

-----  
Explanation:

Matter added to current law appears in *bold italics*.

Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through.~~]

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three*

AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C. The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. The creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3 towns at their 2024 annual meetings, adopting the provisions of this act; whereupon the effective operational date of this district shall be July 1, 2025.

II. The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns, approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of education, shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one

**HB 349 - VERSION ADOPTED BY BOTH BODIES**

**- Page 2 -**

1 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
2 town of Groton. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
3 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

4 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
5 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
6 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
7 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
8 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
9 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
10 RSA 197 and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
11 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
12 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
13 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

14 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
15 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
16 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
17 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
18 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
19 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
20 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
21 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
22 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
23 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
24 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

25 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
26 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
27 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
28 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
29 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
30 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
31 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
32 formula:

33 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
34 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

35 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
36 majority vote of the district meeting and approved by the state board of education.

1 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
2 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
3 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
4 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
5 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
6 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
7 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
8 with the Newfound Area School District to offer parents school choice and to accommodate students  
9 already enrolled in the new district's school.

10 VII. Upon the adoption of this act by all 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron-  
11 Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal from the  
12 Newfound Area School District on July 1, 2025, subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27.  
13 The newly formed school board may enter into long and short-term tuition agreements with the  
14 Newfound Area School District or any other public school district, public academy or school pursuant  
15 to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those resident students in middle or high school who enroll in  
16 the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District and may also vote to build additions  
17 or a separate school.

18 VIII. Upon adoption of this act by all 3 towns at their 2024 annual school meetings, the  
19 Newfound Area School District board members and budget committee members representing  
20 Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton may continue to serve until July 1, 2025. They may participate in  
21 matters involving the operation of the Newfound Area School District during the 2024-2025 fiscal  
22 year. However, such board members shall be disqualified from voting on any matters involving the  
23 proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, or any matters involving capital improvements to the  
24 Newfound Area School District or on any contractual agreements with other school districts or  
25 towns. Because the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District will be holding its  
26 own annual meeting, the voters of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall be disqualified from  
27 participating in the 2025 annual meeting of the Newfound Area School District. Likewise, upon the  
28 passage of this act, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall not be liable for subsequent  
29 borrowing by the Newfound Area School District unless they fail to adopt this act at their 2024  
30 annual meetings.

31 IX. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
32 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
33 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
34 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
35 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
36 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
37 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30, 2024 in accord with the



**HB 349 - VERSION ADOPTED BY BOTH BODIES**

**- Page 4 -**

1 apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District budget for the prior fiscal year.  
2 The newly formed district may enter into agreements with Newfound Area School District regarding  
3 the disposition of school administrative unit assets and liabilities.

4 X. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
5 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior  
6 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this  
7 legislation they shall warn the question of adoption of this act for the 2024 annual meeting of the  
8 legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to adopt the provisions of this act and create  
9 the new school district.

10 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

CHAPTER 190  
HB 349 - FINAL VERSION

05/11/2023 1437s

2023 SESSION

23-0279  
10/08

HOUSE BILL           **349**

AN ACT               relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

SPONSORS:           Rep. Ladd, Graf. 5; Rep. Cordelli, Carr. 7; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Ward, Dist 8

COMMITTEE:          Education

---

ANALYSIS

This bill allows the establishment of a special purpose school district for the towns of Hebron, Bridgewater, and Groton to form a new multi-town single school district.

---

Explanation:        Matter added to current law appears in *bold italics*.  
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struck through]~~  
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

CHAPTER 190  
HB 349 - FINAL VERSION

05/11/2023 1437s

23-0279  
10/08

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three*

AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 190:1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

2 I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and  
3 maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the  
4 Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the  
5 towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding  
6 any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby  
7 authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school  
8 district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to  
9 formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194  
10 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school  
11 district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C.  
12 The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or  
13 such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. The  
14 creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3  
15 towns at their 2024 annual meetings, adopting the provisions of this act; whereupon the effective  
16 operational date of this district shall be July 1, 2025.

17 II. The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound  
18 Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special  
19 meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall  
20 be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3  
21 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns,  
22 approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of  
23 education, shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The  
24 commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary  
25 pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have  
26 the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may  
27 defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual  
28 meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first  
29 operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and  
30 organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to

**CHAPTER 190**  
**HB 349 - FINAL VERSION**  
**- Page 2 -**

1 carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one  
2 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
3 town of Groton. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
4 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

5 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
6 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
7 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
8 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
9 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
10 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
11 RSA 197, and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
12 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
13 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
14 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

15 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
16 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
17 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
18 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
19 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
20 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
21 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
22 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
23 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
24 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
25 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

26 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
27 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
28 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
29 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
30 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
31 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
32 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
33 formula:

34 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
35 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

36 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
37 majority vote of the district meeting, and approved by the state board of education.

**CHAPTER 190**  
**HB 349 - FINAL VERSION**  
**- Page 3 -**

1 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
2 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
3 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
4 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
5 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
6 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
7 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
8 with the Newfound Area School District to offer parents school choice and to accommodate students  
9 already enrolled in the new district's school.

10 VII. Upon the adoption of this act by all 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron-  
11 Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal from the  
12 Newfound Area School District on July 1, 2025, subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27.  
13 The newly formed school board may enter into long and short-term tuition agreements with the  
14 Newfound Area School District or any other public school district, public academy, or school  
15 pursuant to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those resident students in middle or high school who  
16 enroll in the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District and may also vote to build  
17 additions or a separate school.

18 VIII. Upon adoption of this act by all 3 towns at their 2024 annual school meetings, the  
19 Newfound Area School District board members and budget committee members representing  
20 Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may continue to serve until July 1, 2025. They may participate in  
21 matters involving the operation of the Newfound Area School District during the 2024-2025 fiscal  
22 year. However, such board members shall be disqualified from voting on any matters involving the  
23 proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, or any matters involving capital improvements to the  
24 Newfound Area School District, or on any contractual agreements with other school districts or  
25 towns. Because the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District will be holding its  
26 own annual meeting, the voters of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall be disqualified from  
27 participating in the 2025 annual meeting of the Newfound Area School District. Likewise, upon the  
28 passage of this act, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton shall not be liable for subsequent  
29 borrowing by the Newfound Area School District unless they fail to adopt this act at their 2024  
30 annual meetings.

31 IX. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
32 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
33 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
34 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
35 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
36 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
37 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30, 2024, in accord with the

**CHAPTER 190**  
**HB 349 - FINAL VERSION**  
**- Page 4 -**

1 apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District budget for the prior fiscal year.  
2 The newly formed district may enter into agreements with Newfound Area School District regarding  
3 the disposition of school administrative unit assets and liabilities.

4 X. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
5 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior  
6 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this  
7 legislation they shall warn the question of adoption of this act for the 2024 annual meeting of the  
8 legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to adopt the provisions of this act and create  
9 the new school district.

190:2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Approved: August 04, 2023  
Effective Date: August 04, 2023

# Amendments

Amendment to HB 349

1 Amend the bill by replacing section 1 with the following:

2  
3 1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

4 I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and  
5 maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the  
6 Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the  
7 towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding  
8 any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby  
9 authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school  
10 district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to  
11 formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194  
12 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school  
13 district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C.  
14 The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or  
15 such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. The  
16 creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3  
17 towns at their 2024 annual meetings, adopting the provisions of this act; whereupon the effective  
18 operational date of this district shall be July 1, 2025.

19 II. The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound  
20 Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special  
21 meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall  
22 be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3  
23 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns,  
24 approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of  
25 education; shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The  
26 commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary  
27 pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have  
28 the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may  
29 defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual  
30 meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first  
31 operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and  
32 organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to



Amendment to HB 349

- Page 2 -

1 carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one  
2 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
3 town of Groton. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
4 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

5 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
6 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
7 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
8 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
9 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
10 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
11 RSA 197 and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
12 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
13 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
14 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

15 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
16 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
17 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
18 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
19 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
20 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
21 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
22 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
23 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
24 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
25 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

26 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
27 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
28 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
29 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
30 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
31 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
32 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
33 formula:

34 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
35 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

36 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
37 majority vote of the district meeting and approved by the state board of education.

Amendment to HB 349

- Page 3 -

1 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
2 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
3 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
4 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
5 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
6 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
7 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
8 with the Newfound Area School District to offer parents school choice and to accommodate students  
9 already enrolled in the new district's school.

10 VII. Upon the adoption of this act by all 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron-  
11 Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal from the  
12 Newfound Area School District on July 1, 2025, subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27.  
13 The newly formed school board may enter into long and short-term tuition agreements with the  
14 Newfound Area School District or any other public school district, public academy or school pursuant  
15 to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those resident students in middle or high school who enroll in  
16 the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District and may also vote to build additions  
17 or a separate school.

18 VIII. Upon adoption of this act by all 3 towns at their 2024 annual school district meetings,  
19 the Newfound Area School District board members and budget committee members representing  
20 Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton may continue to serve until July 1, 2025. They may participate in  
21 matters involving the operation of the Newfound Area School District during the 2024-2025 fiscal  
22 year. However, such board members shall be disqualified from voting on any matters involving the  
23 proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, or any matters involving capital improvements to the  
24 Newfound Area School District, or on any contractual agreements with other school districts or  
25 towns. Because the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District will be holding its  
26 own annual meeting, the voters of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall be disqualified from  
27 participating in the 2025 annual meeting of the Newfound Area School District.

28 IX. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
29 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
30 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
31 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
32 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
33 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
34 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30, 2024 in accord with the  
35 apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District budget for the prior fiscal year.  
36 The newly formed district may enter into agreements with Newfound Area School District regarding  
37 the disposition of school administrative unit assets and liabilities.

Amendment to HB 349

- Page 4 -

1           X. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
2 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior  
3 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this  
4 legislation they shall warn the question of adoption of this act for the 2024 annual meeting of the  
5 legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to adopt the provisions of this act and create  
6 the new school district.

---

UNAPPROVED

Amendment to HB 349

1 Amend the bill by replacing section 1 with the following:

2

3 1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

4 I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and  
5 maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the  
6 Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the  
7 towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding  
8 any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby  
9 authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school  
10 district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to  
11 formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194  
12 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school  
13 district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C.  
14 The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or  
15 such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. The  
16 creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3  
17 towns at their 2024 annual meetings, adopting the provisions of this act; whereupon the effective  
18 operational date of this district shall be July 1, 2025.

19 II. The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound  
20 Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special  
21 meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall  
22 be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3  
23 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns,  
24 approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of  
25 education, shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The  
26 commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary  
27 pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have  
28 the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may  
29 defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual  
30 meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first  
31 operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and  
32 organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to

Amendment to HB 349

- Page 2 -

1 carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one  
2 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
3 town of Groton. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
4 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

5 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
6 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
7 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
8 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
9 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
10 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
11 RSA 197 and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
12 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
13 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
14 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

15 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
16 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
17 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
18 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
19 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
20 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
21 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
22 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
23 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
24 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
25 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

26 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
27 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
28 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
29 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
30 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
31 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
32 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
33 formula:

34 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
35 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

36 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
37 majority vote of the district meeting and approved by the state board of education.

Amendment to HB 349

- Page 3 -

1 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
2 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
3 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
4 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
5 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
6 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
7 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
8 with the Newfound Area School District to offer parents school choice and to accommodate students  
9 already enrolled in the new district's school.

10 VII. Upon the adoption of this act by all 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron-  
11 Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal from the  
12 Newfound Area School District on July 1, 2025, subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27.  
13 The newly formed school board may enter into long and short-term tuition agreements with the  
14 Newfound Area School District or any other public school district, public academy or school pursuant  
15 to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those resident students in middle or high school who enroll in  
16 the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District and may also vote to build additions  
17 or a separate school.

18 VIII. Upon adoption of this act by all 3 towns at their 2024 annual school meetings, the  
19 Newfound Area School District board members and budget committee members representing  
20 Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton may continue to serve until July 1, 2025. They may participate in  
21 matters involving the operation of the Newfound Area School District during the 2024-2025 fiscal  
22 year. However, such board members shall be disqualified from voting on any matters involving the  
23 proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, or any matters involving capital improvements to the  
24 Newfound Area School District, or on any contractual agreements with other school districts or  
25 towns. Because the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District will be holding its  
26 own annual meeting, the voters of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall be disqualified from  
27 participating in the 2025 annual meeting of the Newfound Area School District. Likewise, upon the  
28 passage of this act, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall not be liable for subsequent  
29 borrowing by the Newfound Area School District unless they fail to adopt this act at their 2024  
30 annual meetings.

31 IX. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
32 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
33 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
34 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
35 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
36 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
37 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30, 2024 in accord with the

1 apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District budget for the prior fiscal year.  
2 The newly formed district may enter into agreements with Newfound Area School District regarding  
3 the disposition of school administrative unit assets and liabilities.

4 X. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
5 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior  
6 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this  
7 legislation they shall warn the question of adoption of this act for the 2024 annual meeting of the  
8 legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to adopt the provisions of this act and create  
9 the new school district.

UNAPPROVED

Amendment to HB 349

1 Amend the bill by replacing section 1 with the following:

2

3 1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

4 I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and  
5 maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the  
6 Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the  
7 towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding  
8 any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby  
9 authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school  
10 district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to  
11 formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194  
12 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school  
13 district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C.  
14 The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or  
15 such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. The  
16 creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3  
17 towns at their 2024 annual meetings, adopting the provisions of this act; whereupon the effective  
18 operational date of this district shall be July 1, 2025.

19 II. The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound  
20 Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special  
21 meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall  
22 be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3  
23 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns,  
24 approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of  
25 education, shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The  
26 commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary  
27 pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have  
28 the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may  
29 defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual  
30 meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first  
31 operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and  
32 organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to



Amendment to HB 349

- Page 2 -

1 carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one  
2 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
3 town of Groton. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
4 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

5 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
6 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
7 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
8 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
9 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
10 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
11 RSA 197 and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
12 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
13 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
14 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

15 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
16 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
17 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
18 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
19 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
20 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
21 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
22 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
23 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
24 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
25 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

26 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
27 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
28 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
29 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
30 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
31 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
32 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
33 formula:

34 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
35 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

36 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
37 majority vote of the district meeting and approved by the state board of education.

**Amendment to HB 349**

**- Page 3 -**

1 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
2 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
3 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
4 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
5 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
6 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
7 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
8 with the Newfound Area School District to offer parents school choice and to accommodate students  
9 already enrolled in the new district's school.

10 VII. Upon the adoption of this act by all 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron-  
11 Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal from the  
12 Newfound Area School District on July 1, 2025, subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27.  
13 The newly formed school board may enter into long and short-term tuition agreements with the  
14 Newfound Area School District or any other public school district, public academy or school pursuant  
15 to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those resident students in middle or high school who enroll in  
16 the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District and may also vote to build additions  
17 or a separate school.

18 VIII. Upon adoption of this act by all 3 towns at their 2024 annual school meetings, the  
19 Newfound Area School District board members and budget committee members representing  
20 Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton may continue to serve until July 1, 2025. They may participate in  
21 matters involving the operation of the Newfound Area School District during the 2024-2025 fiscal  
22 year. However, such board members shall be disqualified from voting on any matters involving the  
23 proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, or any matters involving capital improvements to the  
24 Newfound Area School District or on any contractual agreements with other school districts or  
25 towns. Because the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District will be holding its  
26 own annual meeting, the voters of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall be disqualified from  
27 participating in the 2025 annual meeting of the Newfound Area School District. Likewise, upon the  
28 passage of this act, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton shall not be liable for subsequent  
29 borrowing by the Newfound Area School District unless they fail to adopt this act at their 2024  
30 annual meetings.

31 IX. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
32 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
33 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
34 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
35 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
36 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
37 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30, 2024 in accord with the

**Amendment to HB 349**

**- Page 4 -**

1 apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District budget for the prior fiscal year.  
2 The newly formed district may enter into agreements with Newfound Area School District regarding  
3 the disposition of school administrative unit assets and liabilities.

4 X. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
5 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior  
6 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this  
7 legislation they shall warn the question of adoption of this act for the 2024 annual meeting of the  
8 legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to adopt the provisions of this act and create  
9 the new school district.

# Committee Minutes

# SENATE CALENDAR NOTICE

## Education

Sen Ruth Ward, Chair  
 Sen Carrie Gendreau, Vice Chair  
 Sen Timothy Lang, Member  
 Sen Suzanne Prentiss, Member  
 Sen Donovan Fenton, Member

Date: March 28, 2023

### HEARINGS

	Tuesday	04/04/2023
	(Day)	(Date)
Education		Legislative Office Building 101 9:00 a.m.
(Name of Committee)		(Time)
9:00 a.m.		Hearing on proposed Amendment #1225s, relative to the chartered public school joint legislative oversight committee, and relative to chartered public school use of unused district facilities., to <b>HB 536</b> , relative to the chartered public school joint legislative oversight committee.
9:15 a.m.	<b>HB 275-LOCAL</b>	relative to schools approved for a school tuition program by a school board.
9:30 a.m.	<b>HB 349</b>	relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.
9:45 a.m.	<b>HB 452</b>	relative to the department of education procedures for school building aid applications.
10:00	<b>HB 207-FN</b>	relative to school district unanticipated funds.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION MAY FOLLOW

**Sponsors:**

**HB 536**

Rep. Tanner  
 Rep. Telerski

Rep. Wallner

Rep. Luneau

Rep. Massimilla

**HB 275-LOCAL**

Rep. Ladd  
 Rep. Soti

Rep. Coulon  
 Rep. Hobson

Rep. Moffett  
 Sen. Ward

Rep. A. Lekas  
 Sen. Avard

**HB 349**

Rep. Ladd

Rep. Cordelli

Sen. Innis

Sen. Ward

**HB 452**

Rep. Ladd

Rep. Cordelli

Sen. Watters

**HB 207-FN**

Rep. Plett

Rep. Cushman

Peter Mulvey 271-4063

Ruth Ward  
 Chairman



- reason that the building itself was owned by the special village district.
- The building has been leased to the Newfound Area School District for one dollar annually.
- Teachers, staff, and curriculum management were provided by the Newfound Area School District.
- HB 349 was written to expand Hebron and Bridgewater's legal status as a village district and will explore the establishment of a three-town special purpose village district over a four-year period.
- The goal of HB 349 was to reconfigure and reconstruct the village district as a K-8 district. Traditionally, the district was a K-5 configuration.
- According to Rep. Ladd, the primary reason for HB 349 was that the people of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton were concerned about the academic achievement of their children.
- A reduction in middle school expenses coupled with SAU 4 gains in tuition and administrative revenue by HB 349 would result in little to no fiscal impact upon SAU 4 according to Rep. Ladd.
- In Rep. Ladd's district, some students would have bus rides as long as 2 ½ hours cumulatively. Rep. Ladd sought to reconfigure and reclassify the village district as a school district so it may tuition its students to Newfound Area, or Plymouth.
- The firm of Wadley, Stars, and Peters had stated that HB 349 applied to a local situation, where a separate municipality owned the building where students were educated. According to the law firm, the situation could not be replicated elsewhere and was representative of a truly unique set of facts.
- The former education commissioner, Virginia Barry, was in strong support of the legislation.
- Sen. Fenton asked Rep. Ladd to define what a special village district was.
  - Rep. Ladd said a special village district would be defined in statute.
- Sen. Fenton asked how many special village districts there were in the State.
  - Rep. Ladd said there was just one special village district in the State.
- Sen. Lang asked Rep. Ladd to speak to the timelines, which he was concerned about.
  - Rep. Ladd said there were individuals speaking later who could provide a better answer.
- Sen. Prentiss asked if the reconfiguration and reclassification of the district would preset greater expenses or fiscal burdens on the towns in question.
  - Rep. Ladd said HB 349 shouldn't present greater expenses and told Sen. Prentiss that there would be individuals offering testimony who could speak more intently on finances.

## **Terry Murphy**

### ***Selectman, Bridgewater***

- Mr. Murphy supported HB 349.
- The village district was separated, which allowed the construction of a new building following overcrowding.
  - The school building had been leased for a dollar annually for the last 22 years.
  - All capital upgrades were the responsibility of Bridgewater and Hebron.
- HB 349 established a four-year period to explore the reconfiguration and reclassification of the special village district, although Mr. Murphy suspected the process would in fact only take two years.
- The goal was to reconfigure the village district to become a dedicated K-8 School Administrative Unit (SAU).

- Studies had shown that the fewer transitions made before high school, the greater the academic outcomes among students.
- Reconfiguration to a K-8 model allowed even greater local control.
- The process of reconfiguration must not be rushed at the detriment of children's education.
- The special village district would cooperate with the Newfound Area School District, offering space-based reciprocal enrollments. Parents would be offered a choice between a traditional middle school, or a K-8 program.
- The Bridgewater-Hebron special village district sought a cooperative relationship with SAU 4.
- HB 349 provided a turn-key solution, in which the final plan, decided upon by the town's voters, would require State Board of Education approval.

## **Derry Riddle**

### ***Commissioner, Bridgewater-Hebron Village District***

- Ms. Riddle was elected as a commissioner for the special village district 25 years ago and had served ever since.
- Ms. Riddle read a letter from the former State Education Commissioner, Virginia Barry.
- Ms. Riddle shared that Ms. Barry supported HB 349.
  - According to Ms. Barry, New Hampshire was among the top five states in the country for educational success.
  - Ms. Barry believed the State's outcomes emanated from, and were the result of the school choice model, not exclusively the teachers, or the students.
  - Ms. Barry said that the special village district demonstrated the importance of having family values in school.
  - The special village district building was open to many community agencies and clubs.
  - The Hebron-Bridgewater school housed pre-k, kindergarten, and 1-5<sup>th</sup> grades.
  - The proposed legislation would not affect the enrollment of other schools.
  - Ms. Barry asserted that research had shown that a K-8 configuration provided numerable benefits, including improved social emotional skills, more positive attitudes, and reduced emotional distress or conduct problems.

## **John Rescigno**

### ***Chairman, Selectboard, Groton***

- Mr. Rescigno spoke in support of HB 349.
- Groton was situated equal distance from Bristol and Plymouth school districts.
- 48 Groton students were enrolled in Newfound area's K-12.
  - 22 Groton students attended the K-5 Bridgewater-Hebron special village district school.
  - Parent involvement was very high across the district.
- Mr. Rescigno believed that smaller might be better; establishment of a three-town district and reconfiguration to k-8 would enable more effective local control, and less transition for students.
  - There was a growing trend towards alternative educational models, particularly the K-8 model.
  - Children spent several hours on the bus daily, passing the village district school on



their way to middle school.

## **Patrick Moriarty**

### ***Selectboard, Hebron***

- Mr. Moriarty shared that the people of Hebron were in favor of the bill.
- All services within the Hebron-Bridgewater school were provided without any external financial support.
- The school served in a multipurpose capacity for the area. The school was used as an emergency shelter and was even home to bicycle safety training course.
- Mr. Moriarty said the people of Hebron were aware that reconfiguration would result in greater costs, and further said that full cooperation with SAU 4 was expected.
- SAU 4 covered 225 square miles and encompassed seven towns.
  - The remaining four towns of SAU 4, which were excluded from HB 349, would be well suited for consolidation according to Mr. Moriarty.
- The goal of HB 349 was to improve educational outcomes according to Mr. Moriarty.
- Sen. Gendreau asked if teachers would be flexible enough to instruct higher levels, or if the school district would need to hire more teachers.
  - Mr. Moriarty said since he was not an educator, he could not offer the best answer, but nonetheless suspected there would need to be new teachers.
- Sen. Gendreau asked Mr. Moriarty what his concerns or reservations for HB 349 were.
  - Mr. Moriarty said there were details to be worked out with SAU 4, yet seemed optimistic that there would be suitable cooperation to work any details or concerns out.
- Sen. Prentiss said the selectboard warned that expansion from a K-6 model to a K-8 model would require more teachers and support staff to be hired. Sen. Prentiss asked Mr. Moriarty if he knew what the projected cost would be for each town.
  - Mr. Moriarty said he did not know but said that the people knew there would be some additional costs. Mr. Moriarty said he did not want to frame the proposal as a cost-savings or cost efficiency issue to the town as he felt that was not appropriate.

## **William Luti**

### ***Adjunct Fellow, National Security and Defense, Hudson Institute***

- Mr. Luti spoke in support of HB 349.
- The village district commissioners had asked their legal advisor on whether HB 349 constituted a lawful act of the legislature.
- Mr. Dean Eggert, the legal advisor, wrote a letter, which was read into the record.
  - Mr. Eggert asserted that HB 349 was lawful.
    - The legislature retained authority over the formation of school districts.
    - School districts were political subdivisions of the State.
    - Over the past thirty years, the legislature had voluntarily subordinated its authority to local control. The legislature had passed enabling legislation that had made the adoption of matters related to HB 349 the responsibility of the local school authority.
    - HB 349 repaired a unique flaw in the cooperative withdrawal statutes.
    - HB 349 provided a pathway for the towns to normalize their relationship

with the village district, and to create their own district.

- HB 349 did not modify statutes pertaining to the operation of other cooperative school districts in the state.

## **Jennifer Larochelle**

### ***Vice Chair, School Budget Committee, Hebron***

- Ms. Larochelle supported HB 349.
- Mr. Larochelle said that she had seen tremendous changes in her years in the classroom, many of which were seemingly imperceptible to outsiders.
- CDC data was referenced which detailed that from 2016 to 2020, 5.8m students were diagnosed with anxiety and an additional 2.7m were diagnosed with depression.
- Mr. Larochelle believed that reconfiguration to a K-8 model would mitigate concerns regarding youth mental health.
- Harvard studies had shown that reading and writing scores declined during the transition into middle school.
- Fewer transitions and continued parental engagement supported the notion that the K-8 model was best for teachers, students, and parents.
- Sen. Gendreau asked what the consensus among parents was.
  - Ms. Larochelle said there seemed to be an overwhelming desire to pass HB 349, despite some difficult questions from some parents at the most recent school board meeting.

## **Eric Piper**

### ***Budget Committee, Bridgewater***

- Mr. Piper was in support of HB 349.
- Mr. Piper suggested that HB 349 did not increase costs to the newfound area school district.
  - Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton accounted for 15% of the student body, and the corresponding budget contribution was roughly the same.
  - Tuition and service agreements could provide revenues for the district.
- Mr. Piper believed that HB 349 would not adversely affect district jobs, as the district would need to hire several additional teachers. HB 349 also contained a provision to offer transfer of pay and benefits for teachers and staff.
  - Mr. Piper shared that the town was aware that there were considerable components such as financing supplies and facilities.
  - If established, the new SAU would seek outsource functions when required.
  - According to Mr. Piper, the potential need for outsourcing was why the bill included a four-year timeline.
- Sen. Lang asked Mr. Piper to walk him through how he envisioned the voting process would transpire.
  - Mr. Piper said a study committee would be assembled to analyze downstream effects, then there would be initial engagement with SAU 4 or Plymouth School District. Subsequently, a substantive, tangible proposal would be brought towards voters. If that were to occur, by the next annual town meetings, the citizens would approve or reject the proposal in question.
  - Mr. Piper maintained that while the entire process could be done in two to three

years, something dramatic could always happen.

- Sen. Lang asked if the goal would be to hold a vote as soon as practically possible, so an implementation timeline could be established.
  - Mr. Piper confirmed Sen. Lang's speculation and emphasized the need for caution and delicacy in the process considering how it affected so many young lives.
- Sen. Gendreau asked if the student population had been consistent.
  - Mr. Piper said the student population followed the general trendlines of a decreasing student body, and further said the district was shrinking at a 1% annual rate. Elementary schools peak and valley, although the enrollment had been generally consistent.
  - If a K-8 were established, it would be the only one in the region, and Mr. Piper said the district would certainly be open for other students and communities in the state.

### **Tracy Steenbergen**

#### ***Town Clerk, Hebron***

- Ms. Steenbergen was in support of HB 349
- Ms. Steenbergen's grandson, Ben, a third grader with autism and reading disabilities, was enrolled in a small classroom setting in Hebron.
- Ben would've benefit enormously from remaining in the small classroom environment cultivated by the Hebron-Bridgewater village school.
- The small school village environment had helped Ben by providing for his education in a warm, nurturing environment.

### **Sara Smith**

#### ***Administrative Assistant, Selectboard, Groton***

- Ms. Smith supported HB 349.
- Ms. Smith lived about 45 minutes south of Groton and her children attended the Groton schools until the upper levels.
- Ms. Smith's son Caleb was transferred into the Hebron village school district.
  - The Hebron-Bridgewater village district provided comfort, the best possible education, and was where Caleb felt most supported by teachers and staff.
  - Caleb would have benefit even more had he stayed with the district even longer. After fifth grade students must leave, but elimination of that transition would make those years much easier.
- The Hebron-Bridgewater school was far closer than the other middle schools and high schools.
- Groton middle schoolers rode on the bus for an hour, and the high schoolers had an even longer commute.

## **Ned Gordon**

### ***Town Moderator, Bristol***

- Mr. Gordon was in support of HB 349.
- Mr. Gordon was concerned regarding how HB 349 affected other towns. Mr. Gordon likened the bill to a divorce.
- Mr. Gordon was in contention with the fact that the three towns of Groton, Hebron and Bridgewater were given four years to go about separating from SAU 4.
  - There needed to be a specific due date. Otherwise, the other four towns comprising SAU 4 would be left in limbo.
- Mr. Gordon proposed an amendment to provide for one year to plan and propose decoupling from the district.
  - Bridgewater would have until the beginning of fiscal year 2025 to start their own school district.
- The other four towns that were in the district were considering the construction of four new schools, which would be negatively impacted by the four-year timeline originally included in HB 349.
- Mr. Gordon believed that those serving on the school board from the three towns wishing to separate ought to retain their function as board members until their schools depart from the district. Those contemplating departure, however, shall not vote on capital budgets, or other policies and agreements which would affect the remaining towns.
- Sen. Gendreau asked if there must be a simple majority, or a plurality to determine reclassification and reconfiguration.
  - Mr. Gordon said that his amendment did not change the vote requirement.
- Sen. Lang asked how much time the board ought to have to vote, considering they would require significant instruction to determine reclassification and reconfiguration.
  - Mr. Gordon said that assuming the vote would take place in 2024, the school board would have to begin by July of 2023, and students would begin attending school in September of 2025. Mr. Gordon said that would accommodate roughly 2 ½ years of preparation and planning for the school board.

## **Bryan Richardson**

### ***Chairman, Planning Board, Alexandria***

- Mr. Richardson supported Mr. Gordon's amendment.
- Mr. Richardson did not support HB 349 as stand-alone legislation.
- According to Mr. Richardson, Alexandria was a family friendly town; not many rules precluded families from moving in, such as ten-acre minimum lot sizes.
- Alexandria had significantly more students than most of the towns in their district.
- It pained Mr. Richardson that the district was being discussed in a Senate Committee and believed that it ought to remain a locally decided issue.
- Mr. Richardson asked the committee to vote against HB 349, although asked the committee to adopt the offered amendment in the event they vote in favor of HB 349.

## **Pierre Couture**

### ***Superintendent, Newfound Area District***

- Mr. Couture provided copies of an amendment which was similar to Mr. Gordon's amendment.
- Mr. Couture shared similar concerns about the timeline as Sen. Lang.
- Newfound Area District was amid establishing a building committee.
  - Newfound had planned for a 2024 bond vote.
  - Out of fairness, it was important that Mr. Couture's amendment was adopted for the sake of the decision-making process.
- Mr. Couture was ultimately against HB 349 and believed it would limit opportunities.
  - Regional districts were made to share opportunities, share costs, and improve accessibility.

## **Fran Wendelboe**

### ***Resident, New Hampton***

- Ms. Wendelboe was a tenured former State Legislator.
- Ms. Wendelboe shared that New Hampton had an ongoing enrollment study which would be conducted through 2032.
  - The district shrank from 1600 students down to 1150, with a sustained downward trend.
- Bridgewater residents never approached the Newfound Area School Board with this initiative. There was no formal request to reconfigure.
- Bridgewater had 3/7 board members despite just 15% of enrolled students being from Bridgewater.
- Ms. Wendelboe said the State had also financed construction of the school, not just Bridgewater.
- Ms. Wendelboe said that New Hampton paid \$2.5m annually for operating costs of the Bridgewater-Hebron school.
- Ms. Wendelboe recommended that the amendments modifying the timeline of HB 349 refrain from prescribing a specific date, but rather encourage expediency and an early conclusion.

## **Don Milbrand**

### ***Vice Chair, Capital Improvements Program Committee, Bristol***

- Mr. Milbrand served 12 years on the Bristol selectboard.
- Mr. Milbrand was in opposition to HB 349.
- Mr. Milbrand believed HB 349 circumvented the rights of other towns in SAU 4.
- RSA 195:25 already had a set procedure for these circumstances, much of the RSA's verbiage appeared in HB 349.
- Mr. Milbrand did not believe the situation was special enough to warrant a dedicated law when a well thought out representation of all parties involved was contained in RSA 195:25.
- Mr. Milbrand asked the committee to consider what changed that would necessitate separate legislation as opposed to utilizing the procedure outlined in RSA 195:25.

## **Melissa Suckling**

### ***Chair, Newfound Area School Board***

- Spoke independently in opposition to HB 349.
- Ms. Suckling encouraged the committee to adopt the proposed amendments in the event they chose to pass HB 349.
- In Newfound, maintenance had been furloughed for so long.
- Facilities and building committees had to move forward according to Ms. Suckling.
- The school board was not made aware in time for the house committee hearing on HB 349.
- Sen. Ward asked Ms. Suckling was speaking to the amendment which shortened the timeline of HB 349.
  - Ms. Suckling confirmed that the amendment she was referring to was the amendment which shortened the timeline of HB 349.

## **Kimberly Bliss**

### ***Budget Committee, Newfound Area School Board.***

- Ms. Bliss spoke independently in opposition to HB 349 as written yet indicated that she would be supportive of the amendment from Ned Gordon.
- Ms. Bliss believed the extended timeline established by HB 349 had a negative implication for facilities planning and the children of the district.
- Ms. Bliss shared that her primary concern was the potential uncertainty felt among the children regarding their school placement.

## **Representative John Sellers**

### ***Grafton – District 18***

- Rep. Sellers expressed neutrality regarding HB 349.
- Rep. Sellers said Ned Gordon's amendment was more thorough than the underlying legislation.
- Rep. Sellers estimated 70%-80% of his constituents supported reconfiguration of the district in question.
- Rep. Sellers served on the budget committee for the Bridgewater-Hebron special village district school.

# Speakers

# Senate Education Committee

## SIGN-IN SHEET

Date: Tuesday, April 4th, 2023      Time: 9:30 a.m.

HB 349      AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

Name/Representing (please print neatly)

Name/Representing	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Speaking?	Yes	No
✓ Terran Murphy 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Ed Piper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Ned Gordon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Tony Albert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
✓ John Rescigno 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Sara Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Jennifer Larochelle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Derry Riddle 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Tracey Steenbergen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Joseph Hogan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
✓ Rep Rick Ladd Sponsor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ William Luti 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donna Luti	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Senate Education Committee

## SIGN-IN SHEET

Date: Tuesday, April 4th, 2023      Time: 9:30 a.m.

HB 349      AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

Name/Representing (please print neatly)

	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Speaking?	Yes	No
DEAN CASADEN <i>left</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Bryan L. Richardson Sr.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Pierre Couture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
→ Deb Phelps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Richard James	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
✓ Patrick Moriarty 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
→ Robin Taber	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
✓ Fran Wendelboe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ DON MILBRAND	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓ Melissa Suckling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Debrah Houes <i>left</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
→ Amy Cunningham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
→ Sue S. Williams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

# Senate Education Committee SIGN-IN SHEET

**Date:** Tuesday, April 4th, 2023      **Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**HB 349**      AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

**Name/Representing (please print neatly)**

	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Speaking?	Yes	No
✓ Kimberly Bliss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Seales?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Senate Remote Testify

## Education Committee Testify List for Bill HB349 on 2023-04-04

Support: 293 Oppose: 9

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Position</u></b>
Bigelow, Bruce	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Segalas, Christine	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Jeness, Maurice	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
Taylor, Ashley	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
DONOVAN, JOHN	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Divelbiss, Christina	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Small, Steven	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bicknell, Kent	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Divelbiss, John Gary	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Pack, Paul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Coscia, Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Cashman, Dennis	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Thompson, Amy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Piper, Erick	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
Piper, Cormac	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Piper, Conner	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Davis, Rachel	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
McHugh, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Piper, Tracey	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Gilpatric, Lisa	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Binder, Richard	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bowe, Gerald	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Laux, Chris	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
McPhee, Bruce	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Nelson, Scott	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bowe, Eleanor	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Nelson, Ingrid	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bears, Carol	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Wolstenholme, Solveig	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bartlett, Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Boivin, Daniel	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Woods, Robin	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Boivin, Karen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Morrison, Allison	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Howell, Gail	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
York, Alison	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
York, William	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Dessert, Donald	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Gilchrist, Stephen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
burton, michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Reardon, Rob	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Roumeliotis, Diane	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Stickney, Andrea	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Roumeliotis, Chris	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
SMITH, PETER	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Mobbs, Betty	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
MacDougall, Madeleine	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support

MacDougall, Bruce	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Adams, Barbara	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Keppelman, Christopher	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Fleury, Pamela	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
McKinnon, Donna	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Fleury, Roger	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Cormier, Jason	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Mckinnon, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Falzarano, Paul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lynch, Thomas	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Pawlicki, Vincent	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Griffin, Parker	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Joel, Christopher	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
O'Connor, Mary Ellen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
West, Dian	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Boln, George	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Boln, Nancy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Williams, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
LaVecchia, Victoria	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Gilpatric, Eleanor	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Erickson, Jill	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Snook, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Koch, Jim	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lahey, Joyce	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bharucha, Camille	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lawrence, Rich	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bivona, Jim	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Dunklee, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Riddle, Doris	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
O'Malley, Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Dolben, Donald	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Goodman, Lawrence	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hughes, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Goodman, Deborah	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Van Schaick, Gillian	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hall, Craig	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Millett, Ruth	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
Hall, Holly	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Small, Kelley	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Small, Norman	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Wolstenholme, Marc	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Smith, Robin	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bissonnette, Judith	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hogan, Joseph	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lahey, Garry	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Setser, Ellen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hogan, Voss	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
YOUNG, MAYNARD	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Murphy, Kieran	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Murphy, Terence	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
Barry, Virginia	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kelly, Barbara	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hayes, Scott	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Luti, William	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Riddle, Derry	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
Rescigno, John	An Elected Official	Myself	Support

Smith, Julie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Capsalis, Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Weisberg, Tabitha	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Capsalis, Mara	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Derochea, Stephen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Binder, Carole	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Steenbergen, Tracey	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Cunningham, Amy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Williams, Rose	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bouchard, James	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Van Schaick, James	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Gilpatric, William	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
KOHOUT, BARBARA	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Robertson, Elizabeth	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Robertson, Douglas	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Nadeau, Pauline	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kohout, Frederick	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Converse, Julie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Converse, Chuck	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hess, Leslie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Benziger, Carol	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
LaCarte, John	A Member of the Public	John LaCarte	Support
LaCarte, Lisa	A Member of the Public	Lisa LaCarte	Support
23 Hemlock Lane, Audrey	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Larochelle, Roger	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Larochelle, Jennifer	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
P, Ellis, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Spoerl, Patricia	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
James, Richard	An Elected Official	The Select Board	Support
Hilson, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Braconier, Karl	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Wirth, Linda	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Mills, Trish	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Anderson, Carl	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Cummings, Sandra	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Cummings, Arthur	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Stephens, Scott	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Stephens, Bernadette	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Riess, Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Riess, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Joyce, Ann	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Spoerl, James	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
DeLuca, Maureen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
DeLuca, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Baker, Janis	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Joyce, James	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Mills, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Graves, Donna	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Graves, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Twombly, Martha	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Flynn, Roberta	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
Roach, Patrick	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Johnson, Linda	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bassett, Amy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bagan, Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bagan, Gabriele	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support

Quinchia, Barbara	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Barnard, Janice	A Member of the Public	Myself Janice Barnard	Support
Wirth, Peter	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Albert, Tony	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Moriarty, Patrick	An Elected Official	Myself	Support
Brennecke, Thomas	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Walsh, Mary	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Wilson, Paul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Laquerre, Lu Ann	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kaminski, Marie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
mallette, Ronald	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kaminski, Joseph	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kraus, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
McMahon, Steve	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kraus, Eileen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
McDermod, Stephen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Camejo, Raul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Aguiar, Paul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Raposa, Jacqueline	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Raposa, Leonard	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Weidman Jr, William	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Erickson, John S.	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Cashman, Linda	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Conley, Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bouchard, Constance	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Martens, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Smith, Suzanne	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Martens, Susan	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lowney, Dennis	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Henderson, Judy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Henderson, Walt	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Rose, Debbie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Rose, Joseph	A Member of the Public	Joseph Rose	Support
Hagerman, George	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hagerman, Audrey	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
M Shulman, Carolyn	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Boyce, Ruby	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Naimie, Joanne	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Naimie, Matthew	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Shaw, Brackley	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Balise, Stanley & Janet	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Drew, Christopher	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Coscia, Deborah	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Aaronson, Beth & Michael	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Ward, Daniel	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
O'Neill, Paul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Marshall, Larkin	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Rader, Elissa	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
McChesney, Judith	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Nagy, Richard	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Nagy, Mary Kathleen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Parmenter, Wendy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Luti, Donna	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hart, Jane	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hendrickson, Ray	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Finney, Timothy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support

Finney, Barbara	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Barnard, Virginia	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Marshall, Eric	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Steenbergen, Andrew	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Steenbergen, Jason	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Jenness, Myrna	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Ilyadis, Nicholas	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lerner, Lori	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
bull, david	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lerner, James	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
souperon, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Tucker, Daniel	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Faro, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Jones, Thomas	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Paradis, Paul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Finnegan, Glenn	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Mills Jr, Everett	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Boisvert, Gail	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Roy, Sandra	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Roy, Christopher	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Lloyd, Jennifer	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Dunn, Brett	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Boisvert, Philip	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Latulippe, Anita	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Stickney, Jay	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bradford, Lorraine	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bradford, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Weber, Marion	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Weber, Edwin	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Thompson, Jane	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Beyer, Richard	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Dobbins, Joan	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Dobbins, John	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Collins, Ronald	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
LaFontaine, Roger & Carol	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
BARNARD, ALAN	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Phelps, Kirk	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Mosher, Dale	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Nedder, George	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
NEDDER, DEBRA	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Smith, Sara	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Coutu, Russell	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Moores, Caleb	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kowalski, Matthew	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Kowalski, Linda A	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Carey, Peter	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Monusky, Mary-Jo	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Macleod, Dorothy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Alexander, Reed	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hardy, David	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Jurisson, Doris	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Sanborn, Karen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Caskie, Bruce	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
Quinchia, Ivan	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bank, Eugene	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Sherman, Robert	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support

Saros, Ileana	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
EASTMAN, GARVIN	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Devost, Scott	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
DeVost, Lori	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Dineen, Nancy M	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Murphy, Natalie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Neutral
Dineen, Nancy	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Hogan, Lindsay	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Phelps, Deb	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
Gickas, Kathi	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Suckling, David	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
Flynn, Gerard	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Eibye, Donna	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Bliss, Kimberly	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
Phelps, Sharon	A Member of the Public	Myself and my children	Support
Monk, Scott	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Wilkas, Joe	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Barnard, Bridget	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Torsey, Dana	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Freedman, Aubrey	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Haynes, Brenda	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
Ladd, Brenda	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Belmonte, Angela	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
Belmonte, Matthew	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
giannone, Marjorie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
PETERSEN, ANICE	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
ferraro, Carolyn	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose
ferraro, paul	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Tewksbury, Colleen	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
franz, thomas	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
VanDuzer, Rachel	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support
Apra, Leslie	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support



# Testimony

**Senate Education Testimony – HB 349 – April 4 – Representative Rick Ladd**

**Chairman Ward and Members of Senate Education**

1. In 1997, the New Hampshire General Court passed HB436 that allowed the establishment of a special village district for the towns of Hebron and Bridgewater to construct, own, and maintain a public school facility with three elected commissioners to oversee the school facility and grounds.
2. The village district then constructed and continues to own, debt free, the Bridgewater-Hebron Village school building, surrounding athletic fields and furnishings. It leases the school to the Newfound Area School District for \$1.00 per year. Teachers, staff, and curriculum management are provided by the Newfound Area School District.
3. HB349 is designed to expand Bridgewater's and Hebron's legal status as a village district, and explore, over a 4 year period, the establishment of a three-town special purpose school district. This is a VERY unique situation as Bridgewater and Hebron is the ONLY village district that owns its own district, but is not a school district. The goal of this bill is to reconfigure and structure the village district as a K-8 school district.
4. Currently, the village school's education performance is outstanding and ranked among the top K-5 schools in the state. The current student count of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton accounts for about 15% of the Newfound School District student body and the corresponding budget contribution is roughly 16%.
5. It is estimated that the reduction in middle school expenses coupled with SAU4 gains in tuition and administrative revenue by the special village district also becoming a school district would result in little to NO fiscal impact to SAU4.
6. It should also be noted that Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton are located on the extreme northwest corner of the Newfound School District area. This results in students having to ride on a school bus 2.5 hours per day, an excessively long daily bus journey. This bill will rectify that situation.
7. The firm of Wadleigh, Starr, and Peters (Manchester Attorneys of Law) have stated that HB349 applies to a local situation where a separate municipality

owns the building in which the children are educated; it is not capable of repetition elsewhere in the state and represents a truly unique set of facts.

8. Lastly, in a letter received by the education committee from Virginia Berry (former Commissioner of NH Department of Education, 2009-2017) states that she STRONGLY supports the establishment of a special-purpose school district as proposed by the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rep Rick Ladd, Chairman, House Education

Attached documentation:

- HB 436–FN-Local, 12 March 1997
- Photo: Bridgewater – Hebron – Village School
- House of Representatives – Online Testimony Submissions
- Letter Submitted from Virginia Barry, Ph.D., NH Education Commissioner

CHAPTER 320

HB 436-FN-LOCAL - FINAL VERSION

12mar97....0460h

5/20/97 1383s

10june97.....0016 CofC

10june97....0064 EBA

1997 SESSION

97-0642

04/02

HOUSE BILL **436-FN-LOCAL**

AN ACT establishing restrictions in building aid for conversions of area schools to cooperative school districts, increasing or decreasing grades in cooperative school districts, establishing a special village district for the towns of Bridgewater and Hebron, and relative to special reserve funds for the Exeter school district.

SPONSORS: Rep. McKinley, Straf 2; Rep. Champagne, Ches 19; Rep. Thulander, Hills 6; Sen. Rubens, Dist 5

COMMITTEE: Education

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill:

I. Establishes restrictions in building aid for conversions of area schools to cooperative school districts.

II. Provides that an increase or decrease in grades being offered by a cooperative school district may be accomplished by amending its arrangement or articles of agreement.

III. Allows the establishment of a special village district for the towns of Hebron and Bridgewater to construct, own, and maintain a public school facility.

IV. Authorizes the Exeter school district to create special funds to be used to offset taxpayers' share of the Exeter region cooperative school district's bond payments for a new middle level cooperative school building and the capital improvements to the Exeter region cooperative school district buildings. The bill ratifies votes taken at the 1997 Exeter school district meeting to establish and make appropriations to these funds and authorizes additional appropriations to, and withdrawals from, these funds.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - ONLINE TESTIMONY  
SUBMISSIONS

- HOUSE EDUCATION – HB-349 relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton

**Support: 256 | Oppose: 4 | Neutral: 0**

---

**Testimony letter for the record – Virginia Barry – former New Hampshire Education Commissioner**

February 6, 2023

Dear Chairman Ladd,

I strongly support the establishment of a special-purpose school district as proposed by the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton. As the former Commissioner of Education for the State of New Hampshire (2009-2017), I had the pleasure of visiting many excellent schools in our state. The State of New Hampshire has much to be proud of with its continued ranking in the nation's top five states for educational success. As Commissioner, I was often asked to explain our success to the public. Of course, we have many outstanding teachers and leaders committed to our children, families, and communities. However, there is another critical factor in our state's national achievements. The movement of school choice options available to nearly 320,000 children through bi-partisan leadership has helped define our state as one that supports parent choice. Currently is one of the only states that support traditional public schools, public charter schools, public magnet schools, private schools, online academies, and homeschooling. All these choices are available to families to choose what is in the best interest of their child's needs, family values, and sustainable communities.

New Hampshire places great value on our small towns and their role in the stability critical to the economic health of our state. Citizens of New Hampshire have a voice, whether it's water quality, access to nature, housing choices, transportation, and many other components of infrastructure. Our residents know that our governmental structure cares what they have to say. The heart of our great state remains focused on our communities and their needs, including recognizing that times have changed. Our small towns' safety, vibrancy, and sustainability should remain a commitment in our governing structure. Recognition of the changing times refers to helping towns meet the community's educational, health, and safety needs. The towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton have demonstrated their deep devotion to quality education and the desire to have a school that reflects an understanding of the importance of family values in their schools. A sense of pride and conservation of small-town togetherness in daily life. The school these community members envision is another example of choice in our state, with a serious commitment to a "sense" of the future and everyday safety and fellowship so needed in our society.

This perseverance is especially evident when in 1999, the communities of Bridgewater and Hebron joined to construct a modern school building open to all towns in the Newfound Area school district. The building was separate from their existing cooperative school district obligations, and since 2000, the towns leased the facility to the school district for \$1.00 per year. The maintenance and building upgrade costs are the sole responsibilities of the

Bridgewater-Hebron Village District. Concurrently, the facility is open to many local agencies for community activities to support extracurricular sports and boys' and girls' community clubs. The school presently houses a Pre-K, full-day kindergarten program, and grades first through fifth. Children from other towns in the cooperative school district currently constitute 55% of the Bridgewater-Hebron school enrollment. The proposed legislation will not impact other community's enrollment if the K-8 expansion is approved. Fiscal constraints in the SAU4 prevent the adoption of this enhanced program configuration.

Recent research focusing on Pre-K and K-8 school configuration has continued to grow, focusing on the importance of children's social-emotional (SEL) needs in our current society. Intuitive leaders in our state might consider looking at the multiple benefits for K-8 students in the same school setting. The benefits include improved student social-emotional skills, positive attitudes about self and others, connection to school and town, academic performance, and reduced conduct problems and emotional distress. It's hard to imagine the minds of children when bombarded with social media focused on violence every day throughout our country. A school with community support and a belief that citizens "own" the school with an intense commitment to success and a healthy mindset is the best we can offer our children.

The proposal seeks to promote a community K-8 school to enhance learning and social-emotional competence based on the three towns' choices to support the critical years of development K-8. The K-8 structure provides a positive learning environment that promotes trust, initiative, and autonomy. A K-8 school program has proven to improve academic performance and greater community involvement when parent choice is acknowledged.

In closing, this proposal supports the spirit of New Hampshire's history, encouraging choice, community connectedness, and success for all citizens. I urge the House Education Committee to consider this forward-thinking proposal. The potential outcomes of success for the students and recognition of the people's desire to protect and educate their children only strengthen our state.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts on this worthy proposal. Despite the challenges facing our nation, I believe that New Hampshire will continue to lead the country in educational success and promote and safeguard our children and communities,

Respectfully submitted,

*Virginia M. Barry*

Virginia M. Barry, Ph.D.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about HB349**

### **1- What does this bill do?**

This Bill authorizes the Towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton to vote whether to form a special K through 12 school district. It addresses the unique circumstances arising from the fact that the elementary students from Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton are already educated in a school owned by the Bridgewater-Hebron Village District. This bill does not create a new school district, but instead allows the citizens to vote to create a school district. Upon an affirmative vote by the three towns, they will be withdrawn from the Newfound Area School District (NASD) and SAU4 and as of the established operating date, they will become a separate school district.

### **2- How does creation of the new school district take place?**

The bill gives the three towns up to four (4) years in which to study and plan for the potential creation of a new school district known as the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

The Select Boards are authorized to appoint committees and to study and plan for the creation of the new district prior to bringing the matter to a vote. Upon a majority vote, an operating date shall be set for the new district. At a subsequent annual meeting the citizens will then adopt an operating budget, elect district officers and a school board. The District will commence to function as of its effective date of operation.

### **3- How will children be educated?**

Elementary age children will continue to be educated in their local elementary school. Middle and high school children will be educated pursuant to negotiated tuition agreements, either with the Newfound Area School District or another School District, such as the Plymouth School District. In addition, the new district will have the prerogative to expand its facility to add middle school at the local village district school.

### **4. What are the benefits of the creation of this new school district?**

The creation of this new school district will benefit the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton by providing local control over education. It will also relieve the towns and their taxpayers of the continued risk of inequitable apportionment of NASD operating costs. The new school district also presents revenue opportunities to the Newfound Area School District. If NASD is willing to enter into a fair tuition agreement, it will have the benefit of a revenue stream that will allow it to move forward with its desired capital projects.



**5. What Problems does this bill solve?**

This bill ensures that elementary and potentially middle school education is both local and locally controlled. It allows for a greater local focus on educational quality.

By right-sizing the two resulting school districts it allows for an equitable apportionment of district operating costs in both districts. It potentially will strengthen the Newfound Area School District by allowing for tuition revenue as a potential offset to taxes incurred by the remaining towns.

**6. Does this bill mean that we are withdrawn from the Newfound Area School District?**

No. This bill authorizes a unique opportunity for the three towns to vote to create a school district. This is truly unique due to the fact that two of the three towns share a village district that owns the elementary school building. Whether or not the three towns decide to create the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District will require a majority vote in each of the three towns to create the school district.

**7. Won't this bill require that we hire new administrators?**

Not necessarily. Other school districts have successfully negotiated contracts with a neighboring SAU to provide superintendent services, and that is an option for the new school district. There is a significant likelihood that the cost of these services will be equal to or less than the current portion that the three towns pay toward the SAU budget.

**8. Will this bill be detrimental to the Newfound Area School District?**

No. In this case, the infrastructure for providing local elementary education is already in place, and that operational cost will be shifted from NASD to the new district which will benefit from that infrastructure. If anything, the bill will generate new revenue for the remaining district by way of tuition agreements, while enhancing more local control for the Newfound Area School District as well.

**9. Is this bill detrimental to other cooperative school districts?**

No. This bill deals with a very unique set of facts where the students who comprise the District will be educated in a school that is already owned by two of the three towns through the Bridgewater-Hebron Village District. No other towns in New Hampshire have such a situation, and this bill does not apply to any other cooperative school district.

**HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO**

**HB 349**

HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED

23-0279  
10/08

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three*

AN ACT relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 Establishment of Special Purpose School District.

2 I. Having established by law in 1997 a special purpose village district to construct, own and  
3 maintain a public school facility; and having already built and owned outright with no debt the  
4 Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (K-5) whose maintenance and capital costs are paid for by the  
5 towns of Bridgewater and Hebron and overseen by 3 elected commissioners; and notwithstanding  
6 any other provision of law to the contrary, the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton are hereby  
7 authorized to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and establish a public school  
8 district comprised of the geographical limits of the aforementioned 3 towns. Subsequent to  
9 formation, the school district shall operate in accordance with the provisions contained in RSA 194  
10 and except as modified herein, the laws pertaining to operating a newly formed cooperative school  
11 district as set forth in RSA 195 and operating school administrative units as set forth in RSA 194-C.  
12 The new district shall be named the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, or  
13 such other name as is subsequently approved by the elected school board of the district. ~~The~~  
14 ~~creation of this new public school district shall be contingent upon a majority vote in each of the 3~~  
15 ~~towns at their 2023 annual meeting, or such other annual meeting as is determined by the 3 towns~~  
16 ~~under this act, adopting the provisions of this act, whereupon the effective operational date of this~~  
17 ~~district shall be the first of July of the fiscal year subsequent to the adoption vote unless the annual~~

18 ~~meeting specifies a later fiscal year to be the effective operational date.~~ **Within 180 days of the**  
19 **effective date of this act, the three towns shall have established a study committee and**  
20 **completed a feasibility study of the withdrawal of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton from**  
21 **the Newfound Area School District and SAU 4. The committee shall consist of the current**  
22 **Newfound Area School Board members from each of the three towns, one member of the**  
23 **Board of Selectmen from each of the three towns, and such three other members appointed**  
24 **by the committee one from each town. The feasibility study shall include a plan for the**  
25 **education of all students in K-12 in Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton and shall detail the**  
26 **proposed assignment of students including any tuition arrangements or contracts. Said**  
27 **plan shall also analyze the provision of special education services for students and shall**  
28 **contain an analysis of operating an independent single district SAU for administrative**  
29 **services. The plan shall also detail the liability of the withdrawing town's/pre-existing**  
30 **districts of any outstanding indebtedness of the Newfound Area School District as**  
31 **required by RSA 195:27. If, after completing the study, the committee decides to move**  
32 **forward to propose a withdrawal, the plan for withdrawal shall be submitted to the**

Formatted: Left, Indent: Left: 0.08", Hanging: 0.4", Space Before: 6 pt, Tab stops: 6.74", Left

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED

residents of the three towns in warrant articles at the town meetings in March 2024, in each of the three towns.

- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold
- Formatted: Font: 10 pt, Bold

19 II. **If each of the three withdrawing towns votes by majority vote in each town to approve the warrant article to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District and SAU 4 the three towns will withdraw from SAU 4 and the Newfound Area School District effective on the operational date of the new district which shall be July 1, 2025. The voters from Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton will not be allowed to vote on SAU 4 warrant articles in March 2025. The withdrawing towns/pre-exiting districts will forfeit any equity in all Newfound Area School District facilities. In addition, a special** ~~The state board of education shall issue a certificate of withdrawal from the Newfound~~

20 Area School District after the initial vote by the towns to adopt the provisions of this act. A special  
2114 meeting of the voters in the withdrawing district for the election of board members and officers shall  
2215 be held at a time set by the state board of education after consultation with the selectmen of the 3  
2316 towns. The warrant for this special meeting shall be proposed by the selectmen of the 3 towns,  
2417 approved by the state board of education and signed by the commissioner of the department of  
2518 education, shall provide for the election of officers in the newly created school district. The  
2619 commissioner of education shall have authority to appoint such officers pro tem as may be necessary  
2720 pending the district special meeting held to elect officers. In addition, the special meeting shall have  
2821 the same power and authority as an annual meeting to raise and appropriate money, but it may  
2922 defer the process of adopting a budget for the first operational fiscal year until the next annual  
3023 meeting or such annual meeting as may be appropriate for adoption of a budget for the first  
3124 operational fiscal year. The school district officers elected at said meeting shall take office and

**HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED**

**- Page 2 -**

1 organize promptly such that they carry out the duties of their office and take any action necessary to  
2 carry out the provisions of this law. The initial board shall consist of 3 elected members, with one  
3 member from the town of Bridgewater, one member from the town of Hebron, one member from the  
4 town of Groton.. The initial term of the member from Bridgewater shall be for a 2-year term, with  
5 the other initial members and all subsequent members serving 3-year terms.

6 III. The elected school board for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
7 District shall have the responsibility and authority granted to a school board of a cooperative school  
8 district. It shall have the responsibility to effectuate plans and policies for the ensuing operation of  
9 the district, hold the necessary budgetary hearings and if not adopted at the special meeting,  
10 propose the initial operating budget to the legislative body of the created district at an annual  
11 meeting of the district to be held in the same manner as an operating school district under RSA 195,  
12 RSA 197 and RSA 198 for adoption of an operating budget for the fiscal year commencing on the  
13 effective date of operation. This annual meeting shall have the same power and authority as the  
14 annual meeting of a fully operating school district including, but not limited to the raising or  
15 appropriating money for the ensuing fiscal year.

16 IV. The school district may rent or lease a facility from the Bridgewater-Hebron Village  
17 District and notwithstanding any law to the contrary, may, subject to any state design, safety, and  
18 space requirements, vote to expand the grades served by a school within the district up to twelfth  
19 grade. The Bridgewater-Hebron Village District shall give priority in any lease or rental agreement  
20 to the students within the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District. The school  
21 district may educate students in grades 9 and above outside the district pursuant to tuition  
22 agreements. The school district may make all other contracts necessary to carry out the purposes of  
23 a public school district, and may exercise any other power conferred upon single school districts  
24 under RSA 194:2, RSA 194:3 and any other applicable laws. The department of education shall work  
25 collaboratively with the new district to ensure that grant funds and adequacy aid are properly  
26 allocated to the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.

27 V. On and after its establishment, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
28 District shall be deemed to be a duly organized school district for purposes of its eligibility to apply  
29 for and receive all forms of aid, grants, and guarantees with respect to the school building including,  
30 but not limited to, school building aid under RSA 198 and the state guarantee of bonds or notes  
31 under RSA 195-C. The amount of school building aid shall be based on the calculations applicable to  
32 a cooperative school district comprised of the 3 towns. The operating costs and any capital outlay  
33 costs for the district shall be apportioned between the 3 towns in accordance with the following  
34 formula:

35 (a) One hundred percent of all such costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the  
36 average daily membership from each town for the preceding year; or

HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED

- Page 3 -

1 (b) Such other formula as is recommended and proposed by the school, adopted by  
2 majority vote of the district meeting and approved by the state board of education.

3 VI. This act shall be construed to authorize such school district to staff and operate such  
4 school district, to otherwise provide public education to any pupil, to exercise any other power  
5 reserved to school districts. The district is granted such powers as are expressly stated in this act or  
6 necessary by implication to effectuate the purposes authorized by this section. In addition, the  
7 Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall seek to offer employment  
8 opportunities to the existing public school staff and faculty in the same manner as the pre-existing  
9 district. Further, the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District shall work closely  
10 with the Newfound Area School District to endeavor to continue its relationship as put forth in the  
11 existing contract between the Bridgewater-Hebron Village District and former district to offer  
12 parents school choice and to accommodate students already enrolled in the new district's school.

13 ~~VII. Upon the adoption of this act by the 3 towns, the towns in the Bridgewater-Hebron~~  
14 ~~Groton Special Purpose School District shall be deemed to have effectuated withdrawal~~  
15 ~~from the~~

16 ~~Newfound Area School District on July 1 of the calendar year one year subsequent to the date~~  
17 ~~of the~~

18 ~~vote adopting this act unless the meeting specifies a later fiscal year to be effective~~  
19 ~~operational date,~~

20 ~~subject to any obligations set forth in RSA 195:27.~~

21 The newly formed school board may enter into

22 long and short-term tuition agreements with the Newfound Area School District or any other public  
23 school district, public academy or school pursuant to RSA 193:3, VI for the education of those  
24 resident students in middle or high school who enroll in the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special  
25 Purpose School District and may also vote to build additions or a separate school. The term of office  
26 of the Newfound Area School District board members representing Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton  
27 shall terminate as of the July 1 effective operating date of the newly formed school district.

28 VIII. Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 195:30 and RSA 194-C:2, the newly formed  
29 district shall be deemed to have withdrawn from School Administrative Unit Number 4, as of the  
30 specified effective operational date of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School  
31 District, and shall be its own school administrative unit with a number assigned by the department  
32 of education and may provide for superintendent services in accord with those options available to  
33 single school districts, including contracting for such services. The unassigned fund balance of the  
34 SAU shall be allocated between the two districts as of June 30 immediately prior to the July 1,  
35 operating date in accord with the apportionment percentages of the Newfound Area School District  
36 budget for the prior fiscal year. The newly formed district may enter into agreements with  
37 Newfound Area School District regarding the disposition of school administrative unit assets and  
38 liabilities.

39 IX. The select boards of the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton may appoint such  
40 committees and engage in such study as they deem appropriate in planning for the new district prior

Formatted: Left, Indent: Left: 0.08", Hanging: 0.9", Tab stops: 0.99", Left + 0.99", Left + Not at 0.49" + 0.49"

Formatted: Not Expanded by / Condensed by

Formatted: Left, Indent: Left: 0.08", Hanging: 0.9", Space Before: 6.05 pt, Tab stops: 0.99", Left + 0.99", Left + Not at 0.49" + 0.49"

**HB 349 - AS INTRODUCED**

**- Page 4 -**

~~3732 to the adoption vote. However, if the select boards of the 3 towns wish to proceed further with this~~

~~1 legislation they shall within 4 years from the effective date of this act, warn the question of adoption~~

~~2 of this act at an annual meeting of the legal voters residing in the towns to see if they will vote to~~

~~3 adopt the provisions of this act and create the new school district. They shall call the meeting and~~

~~4 give notice as town meetings are called and warned, excepting that the warrant shall be posted at 2~~

~~5 or more public places in each of the towns comprising the proposed district.~~

~~61~~ 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Bill: HB349 (SUPPORTING)

Committee: Education

Thoughts from: Aubrey Freedman (private citizen)

Date: April 3, 2023

- This bill will expand educational options for parents by offering a K-8 option to the traditional middle school model. This option will extend not only to residents of the 3 towns but also to families in the other 4 towns in the current school district. More options are always better for everyone. <https://www.fatherly.com/health-science/middle-schools-k-8-difference-reading-level>
- This bill will allow an opt-out option from a centralized bureaucracy for taxpayers and parents seeking better control of their educational dollars in a smaller, more decentralized environment.
- If the 3 towns are allowed to withdraw from the bigger school district and form their own local school district, this will serve as a template for other towns throughout the entire state to do the same thing and achieve better outcomes for parents and taxpayers (with the condition they can provide their own school building, as Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton can).
- There is nothing in this bill that legislates any special action; it simply ALLOWS the three towns to consider withdrawing from the school district if and only if a majority of voters in the 3 towns vote to withdraw.
- Bridgewater-Hebron must be doing something right because of the 4 elementary schools in the current school district, the Bridgewater-Hebron school has notably higher proficiency scores than the other 3 schools.
- If the new school district is allowed to be formed, it will work with the current school district to ensure that the withdrawal causes minimal educational disruption to families in all 7 towns (see Section VI).
- It would have been good to have tailored this bill so it could apply to all the towns in New Hampshire, but with Bridgewater and Hebron actually owning its own school building, this is a completely unique situation in the entire state and thus had to be written just for the 3 towns.



To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you in favor of Bill HB349.

My husband and I have been residents/homeowners in Groton NH for over ten years, I have been an employee of SAU 4 (I have my Masters Degree in Elementary Education), I have two young children, and recently I have been speaking out against the new curriculum being used in our district.

A lot has transpired since August 2022 with curriculum issues and there is currently a curriculum committee that I am participating in to create more transparency between school and home.

In this letter I would like to focus on Bill HB349.

Some reasons why I would like Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton to form their own district:

- 1) Location- living on the outskirts of Groton takes me 45 minutes to get to the high school. I would never put my children on a school bus for that long and bearing sole responsibility for transportation would impact us financially and professionally. I don't know why people are shocked at this proposal, because many other towns do this; have their own elementary school(s) and tuition into neighboring high schools. Just like Hill already does with SAU 4!
- 2) Quality- I think having a smaller district with quality leadership provides the best educational opportunities possible for students. There is a lot of research out there showing the benefits of smaller school districts and class sizes.
- 3) Choice- I don't think any parent would complain about giving their child more options for education, especially since it's not a one size fits all solution.

Are there bigger questions that need to be answered? Yes, I have tons! I am looking forward to learning more.

Thank you for your time.

Rick and Katlin Simula of Groton

Good Morning.

My name is Sara Smith, I'm a Groton Resident, I work for the Town of Groton but more importantly I'm here as a parent. I am here to fully support House Bill 349 for many reasons.

My son Caleb attended Bridgewater-Hebron Village School (BHVS), Newfound Memorial Middle School, Newfound Regional High School and graduated from there in 2022. Prior to attending the Newfound Area School District, we lived about 45 minutes south and attended the school district in the town we were living in. We liked that school district for elementary school but had some concerns because the upper grade levels were experiencing difficulties receiving accreditation.

As a parent wanting my child to receive the best education he can, this was a huge concern for me. Life happened and we found ourselves living in Groton and I transferred Caleb out of his current elementary school to Bridgewater Hebron Village School. As with any transfer we had concerns. Concerns about the education he would receive, how the teachers would be, making new friends and feeling supported.

It didn't take long at Bridgewater Hebron Village School to relieve us of these concerns, especially the concern about him receiving the best education he can. This is where Caleb received the best education, where he felt most comfortable, where he made some of his best friends and felt the most supported by our incredible teachers and staff.

One of the main reasons I support this bill is that, as I did with Caleb, I want all students to receive a better education. I feel Caleb would have benefited even more from staying at Bridgewater Hebron Village School longer. K-8 models have been proven to be beneficial and have many advantages. Currently, our students leave the Bridgewater Hebron Village School after 5<sup>th</sup> grade and attend the Middle School from 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. A K-8 model would eliminate the transition and allow them to stay where they are comfortable for a few more years. The age that they attend middle school is an awkward time for these kids. Physically, mentally and emotionally they are going through so many changes.

When they leave Bridgewater-Hebron Village School they are transitioning from being the older students at the school to the younger students at the middle school. All of this can be very tough on all kids and can lead to challenges while they are in middle school.

We live in a rural community and Bridgewater Hebron Village School is closer to our town than the Middle School and High School is. Our Groton students are on the bus for about an hour to the middle school and longer to the High School. This is too long for kids age K-8 to be on a bus. Creating K-8 this would eliminate that extra time on the bus. Then when they are older and going to the high school, they will be able to better handle the longer ride.

Caleb would have benefited from being able to choose which High School he attended. There are high schools that are closer to Groton. In high school, our kids get their licenses which is a very scary time for parents. Where we live, the weather is also a concern. If we were able to choose the high school he attended, we would have been able to choose one that was closer with less travel time for him, spending less gas money, and less time worrying during bad weather. Caleb doesn't play sports but he jumped into the work force quickly. He would travel from school to work each day. If he could have chosen a high school close to where he works, it would have been more convenient and saved money on travel.

~~I no longer have children in school but I am still advocating for all of the other children.~~ We had an amazing experience at Bridgewater Hebron Village School and I wish the K-8 model was in effect when Caleb was in school.

Thank you for listening and I respectfully urge you to pass this bill so that all of our students can receive the best education they deserve.

Sara Smith

# Voting Sheets

# Senate Education Committee

## EXECUTIVE SESSION RECORD

### 2023-2024 Session

Bill # HB 349

Hearing date: 4/4

Executive Session date: 4/18

Motion of: OTF Vote: 5-0

Committee Member	Present	Made by	Second	Yes	No
Sen. Ward, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Gendreau, Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Lang	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Prentiss	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Fenton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion of: Amendment 1392s Vote: 5-0

Committee Member	Present	Made by	Second	Yes	No
Sen. Ward, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Gendreau, Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Lang	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Prentiss	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Fenton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion of: Consent Vote: 5-0

Committee Member	Present	Made by	Second	Yes	No
Sen. Ward, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Gendreau, Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Lang	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Prentiss	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Fenton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reported out by: Sen. Prentiss

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# Committee Report

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SENATE

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE  
FOR THE CONSENT CALENDAR

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

THE COMMITTEE ON Education

to which was referred **HB 349**

AN ACT

relative to a special purpose school district for  
Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.

Having considered the same, the committee recommends that the Bill

OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT

BY A VOTE OF: 5-0

AMENDMENT # 1437s

Senator Suzanne Prentiss  
For the Committee

House Bill 349 is limited legislation, seeking to uniquely enable the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton to begin to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District, for the purpose of establishing a Special Purpose School District for the three towns. Further, the Special Purpose School District would have an expanded configuration from that of a K-5 to a K-8 district.

Peter Mulvey 271-4063

FOR THE CONSENT CALENDAR

**EDUCATION**

**HB 349**, relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.  
Ought to Pass with Amendment, Vote 5-0.

Senator Suzanne Prentiss for the committee.

House Bill 349 is limited legislation, seeking to uniquely enable the towns of Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton to begin to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District, for the purpose of establishing a Special Purpose School District for the three towns. Further, the Special Purpose School District would have an expanded configuration from that of a K-5 to a K-8 district.



## General Court of New Hampshire - Bill Status System

**Docket of HB349**

Docket Abbreviations

**Bill Title:** relative to a special purpose school district for Bridgewater, Hebron, and Groton.*Official Docket of HB349.:*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Body</b>	<b>Description</b>
1/9/2023	H	<b>Introduced</b> (in recess of) 01/05/2023 and referred to Education <b>HJ 3 P. 12</b>
1/31/2023	H	Public Hearing: 02/10/2023 10:15 am LOB 205-207
3/1/2023	H	Executive Session: 03/08/2023 09:30 am LOB 205-207
3/16/2023	H	Committee Report: Ought to Pass 03/08/2023 ( <b>Vote 18-2; CC</b> ) <b>HC 16 P. 7</b>
3/22/2023	H	<b>Ought to Pass:</b> MA VV 03/22/2023 <b>HJ 10 P. 9</b>
3/24/2023	S	Introduced 03/23/2023 and Referred to Education; <b>SJ 12</b>
3/28/2023	S	<b>Hearing:</b> 04/04/2023, Room 101, LOB, 09:30 am; <b>SC 16</b>
4/19/2023	S	Committee Report: Ought to Pass with Amendment <b>#2023-1437s</b> , 05/11/2023; Vote 5-0; CC; <b>SC 21</b>
5/11/2023	S	Committee Amendment <b>#2023-1437s</b> , AA, VV; 05/11/2023; <b>SJ 14</b>
5/11/2023	S	<b>Ought to Pass with Amendment</b> 2023-1437s, MA, VV; OT3rdg; 05/11/2023; <b>SJ 14</b>
6/15/2023	H	House Concurs with Senate Amendment 2023-1437s (Rep. Ladd): MA VV 06/15/2023 <b>HJ 16 P. 2</b>
7/18/2023	S	Enrolled Adopted, VV, (In recess 06/29/2023); <b>SJ 20</b>
7/19/2023	H	Enrolled (in recess of) 06/29/2023 <b>HJ 17 P. 18</b>
8/9/2023	H	Signed by Governor Sununu 08/04/2023; Chapter 190; eff: 08/04/2023 <b>HJ 17</b>

NH House

NH Senate

# Other Referrals

## Senate Inventory Checklist for Archives

Bill Number: HB 349

Senate Committee: EDU

Please include all documents in the order listed below and indicate the documents which have been included with an "X" beside

Final docket found on Bill Status

### Bill Hearing Documents: {Legislative Aides}

- Bill version as it came to the committee
- All Calendar Notices
- Hearing Sign-up sheet(s)
- Prepared testimony, presentations, & other submissions handed in at the public hearing
- Hearing Report
- Revised/Amended Fiscal Notes provided by the Senate Clerk's Office

### Committee Action Documents: {Legislative Aides}

All amendments considered in committee (including those not adopted):

- amendment # 1366       - amendment # 1437
- amendment # 1398      \_\_\_\_\_ - amendment # \_\_\_\_\_
- Executive Session Sheet
- Committee Report

### Floor Action Documents: {Clerk's Office}

All floor amendments considered by the body during session (only if they are offered to the senate):

- \_\_\_\_\_ - amendment # \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ - amendment # \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ - amendment # \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ - amendment # \_\_\_\_\_

### Post Floor Action: (if applicable) {Clerk's Office}

- \_\_\_\_\_ Committee of Conference Report (if signed off by all members. Include any new language proposed by the committee of conference):
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enrolled Bill Amendment(s)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Governor's Veto Message

### All available versions of the bill: {Clerk's Office}

- as amended by the senate      \_\_\_\_\_ as amended by the house
- final version

Completed Committee Report File Delivered to the Senate Clerk's Office By:

[Signature]  
Committee Aide

7-31-23  
Date

Senate Clerk's Office AK