

Mason School District

PUBLIC NOTICE

2009 Withdrawal Plan for the Mason School District From School Administrative Unit #63

July 7, 2009

Virginia M. Barry, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education
101 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301

Dear Commissioner Barry:

The 2009 Mason Withdrawal Committee respectfully submits this plan to become a stand alone school administrative unit in accordance with RSA 194-C. This plan includes a transitional allocation of services agreement between the Mason School District and School Administrative Unit #63 which has been carefully reviewed and signed by all chairpersons of the involved district. Care has been taken to include sections addressing any capital reserve, undesignated fund balances, and inventory items.

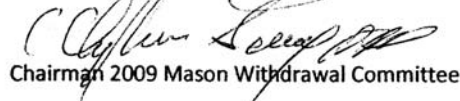
The financial section was prepared by School Administrative Unit #63 Business Manager, Dan Starr, to ensure that the interests and assets of all parties were conscientiously reviewed and accurately considered. Counsel for both parties, Norm Makecknie, attorney for School Administrative Unit #63 and Dean Eggert, attorney for the Mason School District, have worked collaboratively to provide assistance in crafting a plan that the parties believe is fair, equitable, and addresses the unique needs and differing forms of superintendent services required for these transitioning communities. Many thanks to Sarah Browning for her kind words and wise counsel.

The Mason Withdrawal Committee has worked both formally and informally for many months reviewing the requirements and responsibilities of becoming a stand alone school administrative unit. It has hired experienced and highly qualified staff to assist Mason in becoming a community of educational excellence. We hope the State Board of Education will approve this plan and allow the withdrawal process to continue to move forward.

Please note that all members of the Mason Withdrawal Committee recommended withdrawal as in the best interests of Mason students. The vote was 7 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 in absence by absence.

The Withdrawal Committee is grateful for the advice and support of Dr. Leo P. Corriveau (Non-voting, Superintendent Member of School Administrative Unit #63).

Dr. Chris Guiry



Chairman 2009 Mason Withdrawal Committee

PostScript: On August 28th the Mason Withdrawal Committee received Notice that its Withdrawal Plan has been Approved by the New Hampshire State Board of Education.

August 21, 2009

Dear Attorney Eggert and Makecknie:

At its August 12, 2009 meeting, the State Board of Education, voted to approve the Mason plan for withdrawal from SAU #63 for submission to Mason voters at a regular or special school district meeting; however, the Board of Education takes no position on local agreements regarding Transitional Agreements. Further, the State Board of Education voted that the plan be sent back to the voters in Mason with the Board's recommendation that the plan be adopted.

Sincerely,



John E. Lyons, Jr., Chairman
State Board of Education

2009 WITHDRAWAL PLAN Withdrawal Plan for the Mason School District From School Administrative Unit #63

Committee Members

Dr. Christopher Guiry	Public Member, Chairman
Mr. Paul Downey	Public Member
Mr. Jim Losee	Public Member
Mr. Pete McGinnity	Public Member
Mr. Joe McGuire	Public Member
Mr. Wolfgang Millbrandt	School Board Representative, Mason Chair
Dr. Donald Hodges	School Board Representative, Mason
Dr. Deborah Bemis	Mason Withdrawal Committee Consultant
Dr. Leo P. Corriveau	SAU #63, Superintendent, Non- Voting Superintendent Member

Committee Formation and Purpose

At the December 10, 2008 Mason School District Special Meeting, the townspeople from Mason voted to create a planning committee to study the feasibility of withdrawal from SAU 63 and the advisability of establishing a SAU in accordance with RSA 194-C. On May 4, 2009, the Mason SAU Withdrawal Committee (MSWC) formally appointed five of its members through the School District Moderator, Ms. Catherine Schwenk. As per statute (RSA 194-C:II. (a)), the Committee consists of two local school board members: Mr. Wolfgang Millbrandt, Chair and Dr. Donald Hodges; five public members representing the community at large: Dr. Christopher Guiry - chair, Mr. Paul Downey, Mr. Jim Losee, Mr. Pete McGinnity, and Mr. Joe McGuire; and Dr. Deborah Bemis, Mason Withdrawal Committee Consultant; and Dr. Leo P. Corriveau. SAU 63, Superintendent (Non-Voting Member). The Mason School District does not have a financial committee that makes recommendations concerning school budgets. Therefore, the number of community members was increased from four to five (RSA 194-C:2 II. (a)(2)).

Since May 2009, the Mason SAU Withdrawal Committee (MSWC) has met on a regular basis to gather details related to the responsibilities bestowed upon it in accordance with RSA 194-C:2 III:

The planning committee has:

- Studied the advisability of establishing a school administrative unit in accordance with this chapter, its organization, operation and control, and the advisability of constructing, maintaining, and operating a school or schools to serve the needs of such school administrative unit.
- Estimated the construction and operating costs of operating such school or schools.
- Investigated the methods of financing such school or schools, and any other matters pertaining to the organization and operation of a school administrative unit.
- Prepared an educational and fiscal analysis of the impact on all remaining districts and the disposition of school administrative assets.
- Submitted a report or reports of its findings and recommendation to the several school districts within the existing school administrative unit.

Committee Activities

The MSWC undertook the following activities as part of the study process:

- Discussed rationale for SAU Withdrawal Committee formation with current School Board members and Superintendent.
- Discussed current SAU status, pros and cons of withdrawal with Superintendent, Dr. Leo P. Corriveau and Mason Withdrawal Committee Consultant, Dr. Deborah A. Bemis.
- Reviewed the October 2007 Mascenic Regional School District SAU Withdrawal Study Committee Report previously submitted to the Department of Education.
- Analyzed the efficiency of SAU 63's support provided to the Mason School District.
- Analyzed the total and apportioned cost of services provided by the SAU to the Mason School District.
- Analyzed the financial and educational impact on the Mason School District by forming a standalone SAU.
- Analyzed the financial and educational impact on Lyndeborough, Wilton, and Wilton- Lyndeborough Cooperative School Districts if Mason were to withdraw from SAU 63.
- Reviewed and determined staffing requirements for a Mason standalone SAU.
- Collated relocation information to confirmed location availability and cost.
- Analyzed distribution of SAU 63 assets.

SAU 63 Background Information & Summary of Withdrawal

Since the issuance of a certificate of withdrawal the Mason School District has been assigned to SAU 63. SAU 63 provides superintendent services, as delineated in RSA 194-C:4, to the four school districts of Lyndeborough, Wilton, Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative and Mascenic Regional. As of 1 July 2009 the Mascenic school district will no longer be a member of SAU 63. Within a short time the Wilton and Lyndeborough districts will consolidate. The consolidated SAU will serve approximately 900 students. Each of the other three districts is comprised of one building; Lyndeborough Central Elementary (grades 1-6); Wilton (grades K-6, Florence Rideout Elementary), and Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative (grades 7-12). The SAU 63 office is located in Wilton.

After the reformation of the Mason School District, the district has elected 3 school board members. It has raised and appropriated an interim budget. It conducted an annual district meeting and appropriated an operating budget and passed a 5 million dollar renovation and construction bond to implement the withdrawal plan from the Mascenic School District. There were several committees formed to plan for a new staff, curriculum, transportation and building. Concurrently, an unforeseen withdrawal of the Mascenic Regional School District from SAU 63 will become effective on 1 July 2009. The Mascenic Regional District comprised 58% of SAU 63 resources.

Having gone through the organization process, it was evident to the Mason School District forming a single district SAU would be an efficient method of insuring statutory oversight. Hiring several multidisciplinary individuals could constitute the new SAU. It should be noted the withdrawal plan from the Mascenic Regional School District provided for the tuitioning of Mason school grades six through twelve to the Milford School District. The plan specifically designates the Milford School District will provide the majority of student services for those students tuition to Milford.

At a special SAU meeting held on May 20, 2009, the superintendent in conjunction with SAU 63 counsel, and with the consent of the board authorized a conversation between the SAU 63 counsel and counsel for the Mason School District. Their task would be to construct an Allocation of Services Agreement between SAU 63 and The Mason School District outlining an interim framework to satisfy the statutory requirements as Mason goes through the formal SAU process. The Allocation of Services Agreement, attached as Appendix Exhibit A, will enable the Mason School District and SAU 63 to implement an orderly transition to a single district SAU. By allocation services, the Mason School District will gain the necessary operational experiences as a single district SAU. Similarly, SAU 63 will be able to free resources and focus its efforts on providing the superintendent services and administrative support that will be required by the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District. It is anticipated that this Agreement will greatly facilitate a seamless transition for both entities.

It is clear that there is willingness on the part of SAU 63 to support the disengagement of the Mason School District. This would represent a savings for SAU 63 in that there would be no need to establish accounts or possibly hire additional staff to service Mason. Further SAU 63 could focus on the future

configuration of the consolidated Wilton and Lyndeborough schools.

Summary of Concerns

The Mason School District has worked diligently over the past 18 months to establish itself as an independent community of learners. New staff has been hired, facilities are currently under renovation, and new curricular and technological supports are being integrated into student programs. Teachers have begun using Smart Board technology, K12 interactive software and other enhanced learning processes to reach students through multiple mediums. In its own unique way, the Mason School District has sought to fully implement No Child Left Behind requirements, embrace State curriculum standards and grade level expectations and use data to make decisions that will improve instruction and focus on student achievement. In order to continue these efforts, the committee believes the time has come to recommend the establishment of a standalone Mason School Administrative Unit to provide heightened central office administrative supervision and support. To accomplish these goals, the Mason School District has:

- Developed a distinct merit-based teacher compensation package which is not part of SAU #63's current collective bargaining systems;
 - Obtained Mason voter approval to renovate and expand school facilities and improve programs;
 - Reduced operating costs by hiring individuals whose competencies allow them to combine administrative services such as superintendent/special education director.
- Other factors facing Supervisory Administrative Unit 63 (SAU 63) requiring significant time and attention from the Superintendents and Program Directors of the SAU, which the committee noted in its recommendation relative to withdrawal included the following:
- SAU 63's future focus on the unification of the Wilton School District, Lyndeborough School District and Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative District
 - SAU 63's facilities issues with Wilton Elementary and Lyndeborough Elementary.
 - Mason's future focus on increasing curricular and program collaboration with the Milford Schools where Mason students grades 6 through 12 will be attending.
 - Mason's present involvement in its elementary building project which will require significant on-site administrative oversight and local community collaboration.
 - Educational philosophy and needs which differ from the concerns of the communities of Wilton & Lyndeborough as they continue to struggle with facility, AYP and special education compliance issues.

Mason and the newly re-formed SAU 63 communities of Wilton & Lyndeborough are educational communities with differing needs, which in turn require different forms of SAU services. For example, Mason will be administering a significant renovation/construction program and seeking to align its curriculum with the Milford High School. Wilton-Lyndeborough will be focusing on a future building project, a bond issue, and alignment with a different high school curriculum. SAU 63 will be required to focus on the Wilton-Lyndeborough Consolidation and state mandated program intervention specific to Wilton & Lyndeborough. Ultimately, the committee believes that the separation of these superintendent services will result in better and more focused superintendent services for students in both schools.

Options for Providing SAU Services

Based upon the size of SAU 63, issues identified in the Summary of Concerns and Mason Challenges (above), and costs associated with providing superintendent services, the Mason SAU 63 Withdrawal Committee identified three alternatives for consideration:

- Mason would remain in SAU 63.
- Mason withdrawal from SAU 63 and forming its own SAU.
- Mason withdrawal from SAU 63 and joining an existing SAU with another district or districts.

During the process, it was determined that the Mason SAU 63 Withdrawal Committee would stop considering either the formation or joining of another district or districts options based primarily on the concern that Mason would be required to partially cede voting control over issues concerning the children of the District. These options also created a risk that the quantum of superintendent services afforded Mason would be diluted, insufficient or less responsive than single district services.

At that point, Mason remaining in SAU 63 or forming its own SAU became the primary focus of the Mason SAU Withdrawal Committee consideration. After review of RSA 194-C:4, Required Superintendent Services, the Mason SAU Withdrawal Committee determined that based on the efficiency and expense of administrative and curriculum services provided in the current SAU structure, that both the remaining districts in SAU 63 and the Mason District would be better served by Mason becoming a single district SAU. (Additional considerations are provided in the Summary of Concerns).

Location

The Mason School District is in the process of renovating 10,000 s/f of its existing building space and adding 10,000 s/f of additional space.

During Construction Phase I, which includes SAU Administrative Offices as shown in the Chart below, administrative staff will be housed in a Temporary Building Module on-site at the Mason Elementary School. Temporary Module contains 800 s/f of Office Space and will be available on July 1, 2009. File/Server and common space will continue to be housed in the Mason Elementary School at their present location which will not be undergoing renovation during Phase I.

Phase I of construction renovation will commence on July 1st with completion of staff office space completed prior to the opening of school on or about September 1, 2009.

Staffing levels and required office space are listed below:

Superintendent/Sped Director	170 sq ft	Room 104
Conference Room	170 sq ft	Room 104
Admin Asst.	120 sq ft	Room 102
Business Manager	170 sq ft	Room 103
Accounting Clerk/Payroll Position	120 sq ft	Room 103
Files/Server	130 sq ft	Current Location (MES)
Storage & Common space	240 sq ft	Current Location (MES)
1120 sq ft estimated total space needed		

There will be no rental, or lease expenses associated with the relocation of Mason SAU Office space. One-time transition costs that include start-up expenses such as computer network set-up, purchases of computer software and licenses, a phone system, office furniture/shelving and supplies, Mason SAU stationery, and moving expenses are estimated at \$20,000.00 and included in the 2009-2010 Mason School District operating budget.

SAU Operation Budget Options

A major component of the withdrawal study process involved evaluating the financial implications associated with the options being explored.

2009 - 20010	Mason Projected	Mason Projected
% Cost	\$ Cost	
Mason, Lyndeborough, Wilton SAU	14.17%	140,258
Mason standalone SAU	100%	174,986

The chart above demonstrates:

- Mason projected cost as part of SAU 63 versus a standalone SAU is comparable.
- As a standalone SAU, Mason would fund and receive 100% of the services.
- Mason will be able to fund its SAU Administrative costs within its proposed local operating budget by hiring individuals with certifications in multiple disciplines. This is common practice in North Country districts where student populations are relatively small and educational administrators have aptly demonstrated versatility and resourcefulness to the benefit of their students and local communities.

Budget sheets to support the information presented above are attached in the following appendices:

- The 2009-2010 SAU 63 voted operating budget is attached in Appendix 1.
- The 2009-2010 apportionment for Districts in SAU 63 is attached in Appendix 2.
- The voted budget for a standalone Mason SAU is attached in Appendix 3.

Plan for Providing SAU Services –

The Mason staffing plan for providing superintendent services in compliance with RSA 194-C:4 would require:

- Superintendent/SPED Director
- Administrative Assistant
- Business Manager
- Accounting Clerk/Payroll Position

Educational and Fiscal Impact on Remaining Districts

The Mason School District was formed 22 APR 2008 and its contribution to SAU 63 has been via the Mascenic Regional School District. Thus the Mason School District history with SAU 63 has been through that cooperative district. The three remaining districts of Lyndeborough, Wilton, and Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative, after the Mason Withdrawal, should sustain a net positive educational impact at both the district and SAU level. The three remaining districts have collaborated on curriculum, planning, professional development activities and school improvement initiatives for a number of years, since Florence Rideout Elementary School (K-6) and Lyndeborough Central Elementary Schools (K-6) are feeder schools to Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Middle-High School (7-12). The remaining schools each have separate individual teacher, support staff and administration contracts, and their own transportation contractor, independent of Mason. Consolidation should serve to strengthen the cooperation of Wilton, Lyndeborough, and Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative in these matters and permit SAU 63 to focus superintendent services on the common needs of those districts.

Fiscal Impact

It should be noted that all financial costs referenced in this plan are based on the premise that the Mason School District was withdrawing today.

The SAU 63 Business Manager prepared the separate assessment reports. Those reports can be found on page 11 & 12. The first evaluation is based on the 2009-2010 SAU operations budget. It does not include capital expenditures as these are addressed at the district level for each of the individual districts currently assigned to SAU 63. The second evaluation shows the effect on the SAU budget should Mason withdraw.

Finally, the Mason School District includes its own operational budget approved by the voters in March, 2009. It demonstrates the ability of the Mason School District to fiscally provide the SAU services required pursuant to RSA 194-C:4.

The impact of the withdrawal will have a \$55,938.00 increase to the Wilton School District, a \$16,233.00 increase to the Lyndeborough School District, and a \$68,087.00 increase to the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District. Overall, these increases are manageable within the current 2009-2010 SAU budget.

The current superintendent has been hired at approximately \$20,000 a year less than the previous hire; facilities lease and space has been reduced by approximately \$16,000. There are certainly other efficiencies that can be considered if there has been discussion at the Board level of eliminating a central office position amounting to approximately \$36,000 a year; with reduced need for providing special education services at Mason, a building coordinator position in the amount of approximately \$59,000 could also be eliminated to reduce SAU administrative overhead. (Please refer to Allocation of Services document.)

School Administrative Unit No. 63 Apportionment Based on the Voted 09-10 Budget

Basis for Apportionment of Costs Among School Districts - RSA 194-C:9:

The apportionment shall be based 1/2 on the average membership in attendance for the previous school year and 1/2 on the most recently available equalized valuation of each school district as of June 30 of the preceding school year.

2009-2010 Apportionment of Districts

District	2006-2007		latest(06-07)		Average	2009-10
	Eq.Valuation	Val. Ratio	ADM In Attend	ADM-A Ratio	Ratio	
Net Budget						
Wilton	234,040,103	28.16%	286.2	35.83%	31.99%	183,457
Lyndeborough	74,316,346	8.94%	81.2	10.17%	9.57%	54,881
WL Coop	340,505,676	40.97%	380.1	47.59%	44.27%	253,879
Mason	182,230,428	21.93%	51.2	6.41%	14.17%	81,262
	831,092,553	100.00%	798.7	100.00%	100.00%	573,480

Special Education Apportionment of Costs Based on Number of Students Served as of October 1, 2008:

District	Students	2009-10 Ratio	2009-10 Budget
Wilton	67	36.80%	125,030
Lyndeborough	16	8.80%	29,898
WL Coop	71	39.01%	132,539
MRSD - Mason	28	15.39%	52,288
	182	100.00%	339,755

District Apportionment Totals from Voted Budget Proportional Share by District

% Share	District	SAU	SPED	Speech	OT	Total
37%	Wilton	183,457	125,030	10,894	11,119	330,500
9%	Lyndeborough	54,881	29,898	2,641	4,864	92,284
40%	WL Coop	253,879	132,539	2,972	0	389,390
14%	MRSD - Mason	81,262	52,288	4,623	2,085	140,258
100%	Sub Totals	573,479	339,755	21,130	18,068	
				Total Voted Budget		952,432

Based on the Voted 09-10 Budget Proportional Share to Remaining Districts After Mason Withdrawal

Basis for Apportionment of Costs Among School Districts - RSA 194-C:9: The apportionment shall be based 1/2 on the average membership in attendance for the previous school year and 1/2 on the most recently available equalized valuation of each school district as of June 30 of the preceding school year.

2009-2010 Apportionment of Districts

District	2006-2007		latest(06-07)		Average	2009-10 Net Budget
	Eq.Valuation	Val. Ratio	ADM In Attend	ADM-A Ratio	Ratio	
Wilton	234,040,103	36.07%	286.2	38.29%	37.17%	213,163
Lyndeborough	74,316,346	11.45%	81.2	10.86%	11.17%	64,057
WL Coop	340,505,676	52.48%	380.1	50.85%	51.66%	296,260
	648,862,125	100.00%	747.5	100.00%	100.00%	573,480

Special Education Apportionment of Costs Based on Number of Students Served as of October 1, 2008:

District	Students	2009-10 Ratio	2009-10 Budget
Wilton	67	43.50%	147,794
L Lyndeborough	16	10.40%	35,335
WL Coop	71	46.10%	156,626
154	100.00%	339,755	

District Apportionment Totals from Voted Budget Proportional Share After Mason Withdrawal

% Share	District	SAU	SPED	Speech	OT	Total
41%	Wilton	213,163	147,794	13,667	11,814	386,438
11%	Lyndeborough	64,057	35,335	3,566	5,559	108,517
48%	WL Coop	296,260	156,626	3,897	694	457,477
	Sub Totals	573,480	339,755	21,130	18,067	
			Total Voted Budget			952,432

Proposed Fiscal Plan for Mason Withdrawal

The Town of Mason, at its March 12, 2009 annual district meeting, received unanimous voter support for its local operating budget. The budget includes sufficient funding to support the hiring of District administrative staff to provide superintendent services including a superintendent and business manager. All key staff have been hired and are on board to establish an appropriate governance and organizational structure to provide for the needs of Mason students.

Mason and the SAU have entered into a Transitional Allocation of Services Agreement that will permit a transition of responsibility for services from SAU 63 to Mason and a fair allocation of costs for those reduced services over the course of the fiscal year 2010. The Allocation of Services Agreement will enable the State Board to issue a certificated approving immediate withdrawal by Mason from SAU 63 without working any hardship on either Mason or SAU 63 and its remaining districts. The Withdrawal Committee respectfully asks the State Board of Education to approve this plan and upon favorable vote of the citizens, promptly issue its certification in accord with NH RSA 194-C:2. The Committee requests approval of a fair and reasonable allocation of financial assets, including a return of those sums not expended for superintendent services (\$70,258) to the Mason School District as a single district SAU. (Please refer to "Allocation of Services" document.)

Budget - School District of MASON Fiscal Year 2009-10

Acct.#	PURPOSE OF APPROPRIATIONS (RSA 32:3,V)	Total Amount	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
		Actually Voted Ensuing Fiscal Year	SCHOOL BREAKDOWN	JUNIOR HIGH BREAKDOWN	SCHOOL BREAKDOWN
1100-1199	Regular Programs	1,089,625	503,025	315,000	271,600
1200-1299	Special Programs	268,890	63,838	79,928	125,124
1400-1499	Other Programs	1			
2000-2199	Student Support Services	81,279	81,279		
2200-2299	Instructional Staff Services	24,380	24,380		
2310-2399	Other School Board	33,909	33,909		
2320-312	SAU Other Administration Services	82,211	82,211		
2322-319	SAU Other Administration	51,258	51,258		
2159/61-323	SAU SPED Apportionment	6,707	6,707		
2290-112*	Superintendent Services*	122,986	40,995	40,996	40,995
2322-319*	Business Management Services.**	52,000	17,333	17,334	17,333
2400-2499	School Administration Service	114,330	114,330		
2600-2699	Operation & Maintenance of Plant	82,166	82,166		
2700-2799	Student Transportation	218,151	68,000	60,000	90,150
2800-2999	Information Management Services	35,260	35,260		
5120	Debt Service - Interest	5,387	5,387		
5220-5221	To Food Service	55,000	55,000		
	TOTAL VOTED	2,323,540	1,229,818	513,258	545,202

***As evidenced above, the differential between Mason providing its own Executive Administration and paying a 4 district SAU in the process of consolidating its remaining 3 districts is minimal (Approx. 34K). The Committee believes that the quality of superintendent services it will receive from school administrators dedicated to the specific needs of the Mason Community more than offset this minimal investment in professional services.

Distribution of SAU Assets -

With respect to the distribution of assets, it seems feasible that the most equitable approach would be to inventory the fixed assets and conduct an appraisal of their value. Historically, Mason has contributed approximately 14%-21% of funds to the equitable assets of the SAU. In an effort to simplify the distribution process, the committee feels that a 14% - 86% split of assets would be appropriate. A plan for distribution of tangible assets would be prepared with input from all parties.

Division of assets includes documentation from the SAU Business Office describing the items of inventory, and the designated dollar amount of equitable assets allowed to Mason. The total monetary value of these items was estimated at approximately \$2,500.00. (See Inventory Attachment).

There are presently no Capital Reserve assets between the Mason School District (withdrawing school district) and Wilton, Lyndeborough and Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative (SAU 63).

In March, 2009 an Undesignated Fund balance report was issued by the SAU Business Office to the districts that indicated there was an available remaining balance of approximately \$46,876.74. To the extent that undesignated funds remain in SAU 63 which Mason has a proportional claim to, the Mason School District asserts that claim for remaining Undesignated Fund accounts. (See Attached Undesignated Fund Report).

Public Hearing

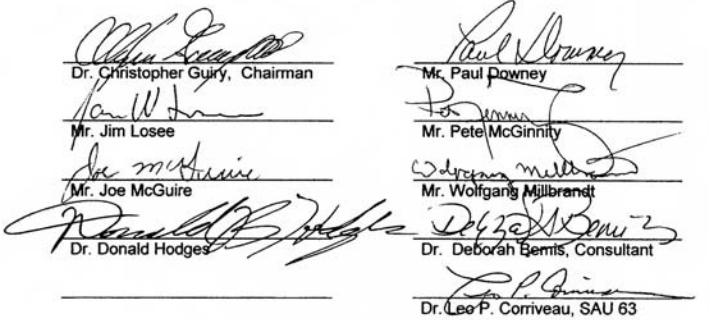
On June 29, 2009 at 7:00 pm, a Public Hearing was held at the Mann House, 16 Darling Hill Road, Mason, New Hampshire to present the Plan of Withdrawal from SAU 63.

Report Distribution

On June 22, 2009, copies of the MWSC report were distributed to the SAU 63 Board and to the school boards of Lyndeborough, Wilton, and Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative. Copies were also made available at the Wilton, Mason and Lyndeborough Post Offices and/or respective Town Offices and the SAU 63 Office.

MWSC Recommendation

The Mason Withdrawal Committee believes that it is in the best interest of the Mason School District to form its own School Administrative Unit. Based on its research and findings, the MWSC members voted on June 1, 2009 to recommend withdrawing from SAU 63 effective July 1, 2009. The vote was 7 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstention by absence.



Plan for Superintendent Services:

IV. (a) If planning committee recommends the withdrawal from the school administrative unit, it shall prepare a plan for providing superintendent services for the proposed school administrative unit which meets the requirements set forth in RSA 194-C:4 and is signed by at least a majority of the membership of the planning committee.

194-C: 4 Superintendent Services: Each school administrative unit shall provide the following superintendent services:

I. An educational mission which indicates how the interests of pupils will be served under the administrative structure:

The Superintendent shall provide leadership in communicating with parents and other members of the public the needs, direction and operation of the school administrative unit.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Mason School Administrative Unit is to educate all children by providing a safe, stimulating, respectful environment which promotes cognitive, social, emotional, artistic, and physical growth. Our schools will prepare children to have a positive attitude towards learning, to be responsible members of the community and to accept individual differences.

Belief Statements: We believe that.....

- Students, staff, families, and the larger community all play a vital role in the education of our children.
- An effective school embraces cultural diversity in an atmosphere of acceptance.
- Respect, cooperation, and communication are necessary among staff members, students, parents, and the community to create a positive learning environment.
- All children have the right to feel safe in school, and this is the responsibility of the school community.
- A safe and caring environment maximizes learning.
- Students need to come to school prepared and ready to take an active role in their learning.
- Children learn at different rates and in different ways.
- A variety of teaching strategies, methods, and materials are necessary to promote academic success for all students.
- All students need to be given frequent opportunities to think critically, make appropriate choices, and grow in their ability to express themselves in creative ways.
- Fair and consistent discipline prepares students to become responsible citizens.
- Students can begin to understand their relationship to the greater community by sharing their interests, time, and talents.
- High expectations lead to high achievement for all.

II. Governance and organizational structure and delivery of administrative services including, but not limited to: services enumerated in sections (a) through (r).

(a) Payroll, cash flow, bills, records and files, accounts, reporting requirements, funds management audits, and coordination with the treasurer, and advisory boards on policies necessary for compliance with all state and federal laws regarding purchasing.

The Superintendent will coordinate and manage fiscal policies as adopted by the Board so that the school organization operates smoothly and efficiently.

Process:

The fund accounting software system being used in Mason is DataTeam Systems Inc., Fund Accounting.² This comprehensive software suite is comprised of three modules: Budgetary General Ledger, Accounts Payable (includes purchase orders) and Payroll. The accounts listed appear in the approved budget and are governed by the "New Hampshire Financial Accounting Handbook for Local Education Agencies." Additionally, accounts have been set up to track receipts and disbursements from bond proceeds. Purchase order requisitions are accepted and processed online via software provided by DataTeam. Appropriate "approval trees" have been established.

No invoices are paid without prior existence and approval of purchase orders, which are posted to the encumbrance column of the monthly Expense Budget Report. Invoices from vendors are first reviewed by district personnel, initialed for payment and sent to the business office for processing.

It is the responsibility of the Treasurer and a quorum of the School Board to sign checks. The Business Manager will reconcile the accounting system's cash records with the monthly Treasurer's report. Deposits are received and recorded through the business office and deposited in a designated Mason School Administrative Unit bank account.

Checks and manifests are prepared by the business office; checks are signed by the Treasurer and School Board. Manifests are reviewed and then signed by the School Board Chair.

The Business Office retains signed copies of all employee contracts and provides the necessary forms for insurance and other withholdings, establishes payroll cycles every two weeks, received signed authorized timesheets for all hourly employees and issues paychecks (direct deposit is also an option) and prepare the quarterly Social Security and Federal Tax withholdings, etc.

Payroll Procedures:

An accounting clerk/payroll specialist will assist the Business Manager in processing payroll, tracking invoices and purchase orders and developing financial reports as required.

The Mason School Administrative Unit has enrolled as an employer with New Hampshire Retirement. An account number has been established for teachers and another for employees. A Federal Tax ID number has been obtained to set up the payroll. A specific bank account has been established for the same.

Health, dental and life and LTD insurance information has been collected to pay the summer invoice for insurance coverage to Primex, USI New England, and SchoolCare.

Payroll data has been entered into the system. Only administrative and administrative support staff are normally paid during the months of July and August. These positions are based on 26 pay periods. Teachers generally have the option of being paid either 21 or 26 pays. This means that their salary is 21 equal checks or if they chose 26 pays, they receive their salary in 20 equal checks and the last check (balloon check) being 6 checks in one. Teachers may use this option to carry them through the summer.

Health and dental insurance information is collected and kept on file in the Business Office. During summer months, these two insurances are paid in full by the Mason School Administrative Unit for the Months of July, August, and September. Once September arrives, the monies that are withheld from the employees pays October's bill. Any amount that the employee pays out over twenty pays once the school year starts. The life and LTD insurance is also paid in the same fashion.

Employees have the option of having their checks direct deposited and the copy e-mailed to them.

The tax monies (Social Security, Medicare and Federal Tax withholding) are transferred through EFTPS. Enrollment can be done through www.eftps.gov.

At the end of the month the NH Retirement files that are created through payroll will need to be uploaded by the middle of the next month to avoid paying penalties. At this time payments that are created by payroll are also paid. These are health, dental, life and LTD insurance, and Mass tax if Mass. Residents are employed by the School Administrative Unit.

Quarterly reports are sent to the NH Unemployment file and 941 report filings. Also, Mass. tax quarterly report if there are Mass. residents employed.

(b) Recruitment, supervision and evaluation of staff; labor contract negotiation support and the processing of grievances; arrangement for mediation, fact finding or arbitration; and management of all employee benefits and procedural requirements.

The Superintendent will make all recommendations for employment of certified and classified staff.

After discussion with the Board, the Superintendent will make personnel assignments, reassignments and transfers in the best interest of educational programs.

The Superintendent will arrange for the evaluation of each staff member and identify appropriate opportunities for continued professional development.

The Superintendent will hear complaints against the schools and resolve controversies between employees or between employees and students or parents/guardians.

If mediation is required, the Superintendent together with the Board will seek advice of school counsel in determining fair, impartial, and appropriate intervention pursuant to state and federal law.

The Superintendent together with the Business Manager will identify processes and procedures for maintaining employee benefits and for securing reliable government and insurance program providers to ensure the health and well-being of school staff.

Staff:

Mason currently employs five (5) full-time teachers, grades 1 - 5; one (1) full-time special education teacher; (1) one part-time pre-school teacher; and a (1) teaching principal who instructs kindergarten.

Specialist teachers include one (1) part-time music teacher; one (1) part-time art teacher; one (1) part-time physical education teacher.

Instructional support staff include two (2) part-time general classroom aides; one (1) part-time special education aide; one (1) part-time pre-school aide; one (1) part-time kindergarten aide.

Other building support staff include one (1) part-time janitor; one (1) part-time nurse; one (1) part-time guidance counselor and one (1) part-time cook.

Employee Benefits:

All full-time teaching staff are enrolled in the New Hampshire Retirement System with pre-tax shelter applicable pursuant to RSA 100-A: 16, I (e).

All full-time employees are entitled to participate in medical health benefits through SchoolCare, a program of the New Hampshire School Health Care Coalition.

All full-time employees are entitled to participate in dental benefits, through USI New England Insurance Company.

All full-time employees are covered by long-term disability and life insurance as provided through USI New England Insurance Company.

All employees, regardless of assignment, length of assignment, and/or hours worked per day are covered by worker's compensation and unemployment compensation as provided through Primex.

Supervision & Evaluation of Staff:

Mason teaching staff participate in a performance based evaluation system known as the Mason Career Ladder Program (CLP). CLP is designed to positively impact student academic achievement by attracting and retaining highly effective educators. All teachers, by contract, must hold certifications in the area of instruction for which they are employed. Through CLP, teachers submit a professional development plan that includes components defining instructional performance, student academic progress, and higher level instructional responsibilities. Increased teacher compensation is earned through

the requirements of the position. demonstrated mastery of specific, measurable goals provided in advance by the Mason School Board. Evaluation is provided by school administration and a panel of professional educators. There is no collective bargaining unit.

Grievance, Mediation, Fact-Finding:

Grievances will be handled expeditiously in accordance with procedures approved by the Board. In General, the Board recognized that honest differences do arise, and that fair and peaceful resolution of such differences are in the best interests of the Mason School Administrative Unit.

The Superintendent will be responsible for investigating issues of grievance, and when appropriate, resolving controversy through mediation.

(c) Development, review and evaluation of curriculum, coordination of the implementation of various curricula, provisions of staff training & staff development, and development and recommendation of policies necessary for compliance with curriculum and instruction.

Together with staff, the Superintendent will study the curriculum and make recommendations to the Board regarding the course of study, major changes in material and time schedules, and innovative programs.

The Superintendent, together with staff, will establish a quality curriculum sequenced grades PK-5 for each subject area, containing instructional goals and student outcomes.

The Superintendent, together with staff, and in conjunction with the Milford School system, will implement a [curricular] transition plan for students graduating Grade 5 from Mason Elementary School and entering Grade 6 at Milford Middle School.

The Superintendent, together with staff, will establish and maintain quality instruction to meet curricular guidelines.

The Superintendent, together with staff, will establish a system of evaluating student progress toward the state instructional goals.

The Superintendent will keep informed of current progress, law and trends in education. Attend educational meetings at the state and national level. Provide for other members of the school staff to attend educational conferences and workshops. Promote growth and improvement in self and all staff members.

The Superintendent will maintain professional development by reading and course work, attending conferences, working on professional committees, visiting other districts, and meeting with other Superintendents.

(d) Compliance with laws, regulations, and rules regarding special education, Title IX, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), home education, minimum standards, student records, sexual harassment, and other matters as may from time to time occur.

The Superintendent shall provide special education services for the School Administrative Unit. At the special education level, increased supervision of Mason students' programs at tuition sites, as well as the attendance of a certified special education administrator at all tuition-site special education meetings is an important educational commitment of the community. The Superintendent will fulfill the legal requirements of LEA in authorizing programming and supports for students with disabilities throughout the School Administrative Unit.

The Superintendent will oversight the establishment and ongoing special education program concerns of the Mason Integrated Pre-School Program.

The Superintendent will designate an appropriate staff person to be the School Administrative Unit's liaison for students, staff, or other persons entitled to protections under Title IX or ADA.

The Superintendent will designate an appropriate staff person to be the School Administrative Unit's liaison for homeless students and their families.

The Superintendent will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual harassment or sexual violence and to discipline any student or employee who sexually harasses or is sexually violent to a student or employee of the School Administrative Unit.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for maintaining student records and making reports on minimum standards and other areas of student progress as required by the State Board of Education and the Board.

(e) Pupil achievement assessment through grading and state and national assessment procedures and the methods of assessment to be used.

The Superintendent, together with the principal, will establish assessment procedures and methods of assessment for implementing and reviewing student data compiled through pupil assessment. Testing currently administered to Mason pupils at various grade levels in their educational program include but are not limited to: NCLB, NECAP, NWEA, SAT, PSAT.

(f) The on-going assessment of district needs relating to student population, program facilities and regulations.

The Superintendent will research census data, State regulatory commissions reports and other legislative bodies publications to obtain information related to population trends and other demographics impacting program needs, facilities regulations, etc.

The Superintendent may, with Board approval, distribute/collect survey data to community members as necessary to assess district needs related to student population shifts or other factors related to program facilities and regulations.

(g) Writing, receiving, disbursement, and the meeting of compliance requirements.

The Superintendent will address compliance requirements as the Board's representative in addressing all educational requirements as defined through state and federal agencies.

The Superintendent shall advise the Board on the need for new and/or revised policies and suggest draft policies to meet those needs.

The Superintendent shall ensure the enforcement of all provisions of law, rules and regulations, and Board policy relating to the management of the schools and other educational, social and recreational activities.

The Superintendent shall interpret for the staff all Board policies and applicable laws and regulations.

The Superintendent shall advise the Board, in conjunction with the Board-designated negotiator(s), in any collective bargaining matters should such issues arise.

The Superintendent shall supervise the public relations activities of the School Administrative Unit; keep the public informed about the policies, practices, and problems in the schools, and provide leadership in changing attitudes and practices for the future.

The Superintendent shall develop friendly and cooperative relationships with the news media.

(h) Insurance, hearings, litigation, and court issues.

The Superintendent, together with legal, business management, or other professional consultants, will address the needs of the School Administrative Unit as they pertain to legal liability and court related issues.

The Superintendent will contract will insurance carriers to provide insurance coverage for the School Administrative Unit upon approval of the Board. Property & Liability Insurance is currently provided through a membership agreement with New Hampshire Public Risk Management Exchange (Primex).

(i) School board operations & the relationship between the board & district administration

The Superintendent is the Board's chief executive officer and the administrative head of the School Administrative Unit. It is the superintendent's duty to implement the policies of the Board and provide leadership for the schools. The superintendent is the professional consultant to the Board and in this capacity makes recommendations to the Board for revisions in Board policies and the educational programs.

The Superintendent attends all meetings of the Board, prepares the agenda in conjunction with the Board Chair, reviews and revises minutes of Board meetings to reflect proper procedure and recording, handles Board correspondence, and maintains all Board records, contracts, securities and other documents.

The Superintendent shall provide, develop, and implement the procedures to achieve educational objectives within the School Administrative Unit.

In performance of these duties, the Superintendent shall be directly responsible to the State Board of Education through its Commissioner, and the Board of the School Administrative Unit.

The Superintendent may be supported by one or more assistants such as Assistant Superintendent, Business Administrators, and Teacher Consultants. The Superintendent shall delegate such of the duties as are necessary and desirable for the efficient completion of

the requirements of the position.

(j) The daily administration and provisions of educational services to students at the school facility including, but not limited to, fiscal affairs, staff, student, parent, safety and building issues; and for dealing with citizens at large.

The Superintendent is responsible for the efficient day to day operation of the schools.

The Superintendent provides for proper instruction, supervision, control, suspension, and promotion of all students. Maintains all necessary personnel, student and business records.

The Superintendent prepares the annual budget, expected revenues and expenditures, for submission to the Board. Acts as the purchasing agent for the Board. Establishes procedures to control all purchases, personnel costs and fund expenditures to maintain budget integrity and full accountability to the Board.

The Superintendent holds administrative and employee meetings as necessary.

The Superintendent prepares an annual calendar.

The Superintendent closes or delays opening of the school in response to emergencies of weather, illness or facilities.

The Superintendent makes, communicates and enforces reasonable rules and regulations to govern routine matters.

The Superintendent informs the public of school activities, needs and successes.

Acts as liaison between the Board and the community. Encourages staff and community input toward administrative decisions. Represents the schools before the public.

The Superintendent performs other duties as the Board may require and, in the absence of Board policy or advice, assume the authority to act on own discretion to meet the demands of presently unforeseen health and/or safety situations. Report such matters to the Board as soon as practical for additional policy consideration.

(k) Assignment, usage, and maintenance of administrative and school facilities.

The Superintendent will make recommendations to the Board regarding the maintenance, safety, improvement and/or expansion of school facilities, sites, and equipment and transportation services.

The Superintendent will evaluate plant needs and recommend to the Board improvements, alternations, and changes in the buildings and equipment of the schools.

The Superintendent will supervise operations, maintenance, alterations and repair to buildings and grounds, insisting on competent and efficient performance.

The Superintendent will govern the use and care of all school property, buildings, grounds and equipment.

(l) Designation of number, grade or age levels and, as applicable, other information about students to be served.

The Superintendent shall issue age and schooling certificates.

The Superintendent shall grant excuses from attendance for children of compulsory school age under the conditions prescribed by statutes.

The Superintendent shall forward information to the Superintendent of a district to which a child moves from the district of withdrawal.

The Superintendent shall certify to the New Hampshire Department of Education the average daily membership figures to be used in calculating school findings; maintain school records; report separately the average daily membership of all school residents of the School Administrative Unit and whose attendance in the School Administrative Unit has not previously been provided by contract or who are not otherwise lawfully in attendance in the School Administrative Unit.

The Superintendent shall transmit to the Board a written statement that each teacher employed by such Board has filed with the School Administrative Unit a legal certification or certificate of eligibility to teach the subject of grades taught, with the dates of its validity.

(m) Pupil governance and discipline, including age-appropriate due process procedures.

The Superintendent shares authority in the discipline of students with the principals of schools. The Superintendent or a principal may suspend a student from school for not more than New Hampshire Code permits. Only the Superintendent, however, may expel a pupil from school. The procedures to be followed in suspension or expulsion of a student are set out in the statutes.

The School Administrative Unit's disciplinary rules will provide due process in all matters of student misconduct, and specifically for the enforcement of RSA 193-D relative to disciplinary action for misconduct by a pupil in a safe school zone, including possession of a firearm or any other dangerous weapon, and RSA 193: 13 relative to suspension and expulsion of students.

These rules also link discipline and due process in safe school zones to the requirements of ED 1109 relative to special needs students.

(n) Administrative staffing.

The Superintendent will provide recommendations for the employment of administrative officers, supervisors, and special teachers. After discussion with the Board, the Superintendent will make management personnel assignments, reassignments and transfers in the best interests of the educational programs.

The Superintendent will provide written definitions of the duties and responsibilities of all job classifications, both certified and non-certified. These records will be kept on file in the administrative offices.

(o) Pupil transportation.

The Superintendent will make recommendations to the Board regarding transportation services. In years when transportation contracts are available for bid; the Superintendent will place invitations to bid for school services. Bids for transportation will be reviewed and discussed with the Board for selection and approval of the service contract.

Pupil transportation will be provided by First Student Transportation for the school years inclusive of: (2009-2010; 2010-2011; 2011-2012). Special Education transportation will be provided by The Provider Transportation for the school years inclusive of: (2009-2010; 2010-2011; 2011-2012).

(p) Annual budget, inclusive of all sources of funding.

The Superintendent, together with the Business Manager, will identify and incorporate sources of income and other funding streams including but not limited to: local town and state revenues, federal funding allocations, special warrant articles, and other fund or grant opportunities.

The Superintendent, in collaboration with the Board, will assure appropriate implementation of the approved budget through monthly expense reports; board meeting discussion and presentation; yearly or periodic fund audit.

(q) School calendar arrangements and the number and duration of days pupils are to be served pursuant to RSA 189:1.

The Superintendent shall develop the school calendar for approval by the Board. To the extent possible, the calendar will be coordinated with the school calendar of the Milford Schools where Mason's students grades 6 - 12 are tuition to complete their public education programs.

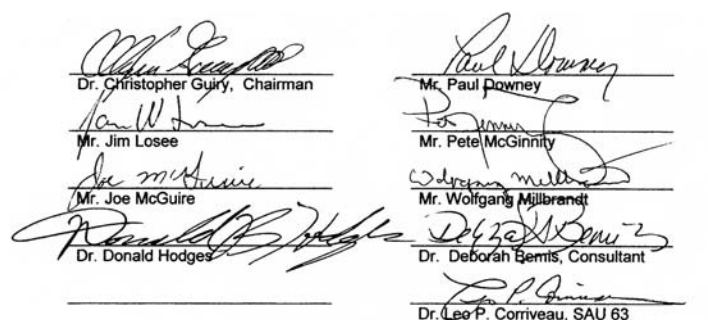
The school year shall provide 180 days of instructional days for students and additional days for teaching staff.

Any days that the schools are closed for emergency reasons will be made up at the end of the school year or during recess periods, as approved by the Board upon the Superintendent's recommendation.

(r) Identification of consultants to be used for various services.

The Superintendent will identify and recommend to the Board, educational consultants to provide various services as required by Mason students.

In the current school year, the School Administrative Unit has engaged consultants to provide student services in the areas of: speech language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and behavior consultancy.


Dr. Christopher Guiry, Chairman
Mr. Jim Losee
Mr. Joe McGuire
Dr. Donald Hodges
Mr. Paul Downey
Mr. Pete McGinnity
Mr. Wolfgang Millbrandt
Dr. Deborah Bernis, Consultant
Dr. Leo P. Corriveau, SAU 63