

HB 292 - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

26Mar2025... 1030h

2025 SESSION

25-0652

02/06

HOUSE BILL **292**

AN ACT establishing a commission to study school administrative unit consolidation.

SPONSORS: Rep. Ladd, Graf. 5

Committee: Education Policy and Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill creates a commission to study the issue of school administrative unit consolidation.

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 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.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

AN ACT establishing a commission to study school administrative unit consolidation.

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

1 1 Commission on School Administrative Unit (SAU) Consolidation Established. There is
2 established a commission to study and make recommendations related to school administrative unit
3 consolidation in New Hampshire.

4 2 Findings.

5 I. There are 107 school administrative districts (SAUs) in the State of New Hampshire;

6 II. The number of SAUs in New Hampshire has doubled since the 1980s, increasing from 53
7 to 107 school administrative units;

8 III. New Hampshire's spending per pupil for SAU general administration, excluding school
9 building principals, is ranked the second most costly in the United States;

10 IV. New Hampshire's financial costs related to education continue to rise while K-12 student
11 population declines;

12 V. SAU consolidation may produce cost advantages through the provision of shared services
13 (e.g., transportation, information technology, security, special education services, accounting and
14 food preparation) and greater economies-of-scale in the purchase of material.

15 3 Membership and Compensation.

16 I. The members of the commission shall be as follows:

17 (a) Five members of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house
18 of representatives;

19 (b) One member of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate;

20 (c) One member from the department of education, appointed by the commissioner of
21 education;

22 (d) Two superintendents, one from a single district and one from a co-op district, and
23 both appointed by the New Hampshire School Administrators Association;

24 (e) One member appointed by the School District Governance Association;

25 (f) One member appointed by the NH School Boards Association;

26 (g) One director of the New Hampshire Association of Special Education Administrators
27 or designee;

28 (h) One director of a career technical education center, appointed by the commissioner of
29 education;

30 (i) The chair of the state board of education, or designee; and

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1 (j) One member appointed by the New Hampshire Association of School Business
2 Officers;

3 II. Legislative members of the commission shall receive mileage at the legislative rate when
4 attending to the duties of the commission.

5 III. The commission shall be administratively attached to the department of education.
6 Staff support and technical assistance when requested by the chairperson shall be made available
7 from the department.

8 4 Duties. The commission shall study the issue of school administrative unit consolidation and
9 submit a proposed consolidation plan and report of findings. Such duties shall include the following:

10 I. Examine existing research and findings related to consolidation of school districts;

11 II. Study and identify findings related to financial feasibility and efficiencies of scale that
12 consolidation may or may not achieve;

13 III. Identify implementation challenges for consolidating school administrative units into
14 one per county, except for counties with populations exceeding 100,000 residents, and maintaining
15 individual school administrative units for the cities of Nashua and Manchester, as well as
16 establishing one local education agency (LEA) for the state;

17 IV. Review RSA 194-C:2 and assess the current processes and incentives for merging school
18 administrative units to determine and recommend any necessary amendments;

19 V. Solicit input from stakeholders to identify community perspectives regarding strengths
20 and weaknesses associated with SAU consolidation; and

21 VI. Propose a SAU consolidation plan that promotes administrative and operational
22 efficiencies and provides benefits to member school districts while ensuring that a reorganized SAU
23 offers member school districts efficient and sustainable administration and support services while
24 strengthening student learning opportunities.

25 5 Chairperson; Quorum. The members of the study commission shall elect a chairperson from
26 among the members. The first meeting of the commission shall be called by the commissioner of
27 education. The first meeting of the commission shall be held within 30 days of the effective date of
28 this section. Ten members of the commission shall constitute a quorum.

29 6 Report. The commission shall submit a proposed consolidation plan and report of findings and
30 any recommendations for proposed legislation to the speaker of the house of representatives, the
31 president of the senate, the house clerk, the senate clerk, the governor, and the state library on or
32 before November 1, 2026.

33 7 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.