

HB 1644 - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-3024

12/06

HOUSE BILL **1644**

AN ACT permitting towns to unilaterally withdraw from a cooperative school district.

SPONSORS: Rep. D. McGuire, Merr. 14; Rep. Spilsbury, Sull. 3; Rep. McFarlane, Graf. 18; Rep. Mary Murphy, Hills. 27; Sen. Ward, Dist 8

COMMITTEE: Education Policy and Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill:

I. Permits a single district or town within a cooperative school district to initiate the procedure for review for withdrawal from the cooperative school district.

II. Amends the current procedure for review by removing the step for committee determination of the withdrawal plan.

III. Removes the ability of a 3/5 supermajority of voters in the entire cooperative school district from preventing a single district or town's withdrawal.

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Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.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

AN ACT permitting towns to unilaterally withdraw from a cooperative school district.

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

1 1 Cooperative School Districts; Procedure for Review. Amend RSA 195:25 to read as follows:
2 195:25 Procedure for Review.

3 I. After the tenth anniversary of the date of operating responsibility, the school board of a
4 cooperative school district may initiate a review of the feasibility and suitability of the withdrawal of
5 one or more member districts from the cooperative district. A similar review shall be initiated if,
6 after the tenth anniversary of the date of operating responsibility, a ~~[pre-existing district]~~ **member**
7 **district or town intending to withdraw from the cooperative school district** shall, by a **3/5**
8 majority vote on a warrant article at a regular or special town meeting, direct the school board of a
9 cooperative school district to initiate such a review. In either case, the review shall be conducted by
10 a committee composed of one member of the school board from each of the pre-existing districts, one
11 member of the board of selectmen from each town within the cooperative school district, and such
12 other members as may be appointed by the committee. The committee shall have its first meeting
13 no later 60 days following its creation or by the vote at the annual meeting which established the
14 committee.

15 II. Within 180 days after the committee's first meeting, the committee shall report its
16 findings to the state board of education. The committee shall submit a report to the school board of
17 the cooperative school district. The report shall indicate whether the withdrawal of one or more
18 towns from the cooperative school district is recommended, not recommended, or whether more time
19 and information are needed to make a determination. ***The report shall also include any***
20 ***minority reports which differ from the committee's report in the recommendation for***
21 ***withdrawal of one or more towns.***

22 ***III. The committee shall develop a withdrawal plan in accordance with RSA 195:26.***
23 ***The plan shall be submitted to the state board of education no later than November 1.***

24 ~~[III. If the committee finds that the withdrawal of one or more towns from the cooperative~~
25 ~~school district is recommended, the committee shall develop a withdrawal plan in accordance with~~
26 ~~RSA 195:26. The plan shall be submitted to the state board of education no later than November 1.~~
27 ~~Members of the committee who voted against recommending withdrawal may file a minority report~~
28 ~~with the state board of education no later than November 1.~~

29 ~~IV. If the committee finds that the withdrawal of one or more towns from the cooperative~~
30 ~~school districts is not recommended, the committee shall file a report with the school board of the~~
31 ~~cooperative school district and the committee shall be dissolved. Members of the committee who~~

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1 ~~voted to recommend the withdrawal of one or more towns from the cooperative school district may~~
2 ~~file a minority report with the school board of the cooperative school district.~~

3 ~~V. If the committee finds that more time and information are needed to make a~~
4 ~~determination, the committee shall reconvene within 30 days of filing its initial report and continue~~
5 ~~its work. In such a case, the committee shall, within 180 of filing its initial report, file a subsequent~~
6 ~~report with the school board of the cooperative school district indicating whether the withdraw of one~~
7 ~~or more towns from the cooperative school district is recommended or not recommended. If the~~
8 ~~committee finds that the withdrawal of one or more towns from the cooperative school district is not~~
9 ~~recommended, members of the committee who voted to recommend the withdrawal of one or more~~
10 ~~towns from the cooperative school district may file a minority report with the school board of the~~
11 ~~cooperative school district. If the committee finds that the withdrawal of one or more towns from the~~
12 ~~cooperative school district is recommended, the committee shall develop a withdrawal plan in~~
13 ~~accordance with RSA 195:26. The plan shall be submitted to the state board of education no later~~
14 ~~than November 1. Members of the committee who voted against the withdrawal plan and its~~
15 ~~recommendations may file a minority report with the state board of education no later than~~
16 ~~November 1.~~

17 ~~VI.] IV.~~ If the state board approves the withdrawal plan~~], whether submitted by the~~
18 ~~committee or by minority report,]~~ the plan shall be submitted to the voters of the cooperative school
19 district in accordance with RSA 195:29.

20 2 Cooperative School Districts; Vote on Withdrawal; Single Town or District Vote. Amend RSA
21 195:29, III to read as follows:

22 III. If a 3/5 supermajority of the voters present and voting in the withdrawing preexisting
23 district vote in the affirmative, in favor of the withdrawal, the clerk of the cooperative school district
24 shall forthwith send to the state board of education a certified copy of the warrant, certificate of
25 posting, evidence of publication, and minutes of the meeting ~~[unless a 3/5 supermajority of the voters~~
26 ~~present and voting in the entire cooperative district vote in the negative, against withdrawal].~~

27 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.