

3/19/2026

Dear Withdrawal Committee,

As a Buckfield resident with a sibling who attends Buckfield Jr/Sr High, I am writing today to share my firm position against the withdrawal of our schools from RSU #10 at this moment in time.

I have worked in school administration for the last 4.5 years, first at a college out of state and now in a neighboring Maine school district. There are certainly differences between the two (college/pre-K-12, out of state/in Maine), but the fundamentals remain the same. So, I have expertise in this field, and an understanding of how the finances work in the operation of school systems, including local school systems.

I understand the potential benefits for Buckfield, Hartford, and Sumner having our own RSU, and the frustration that we've all felt as other schools in RSU #10 have been prioritized over ours. While I think the creation of our own RSU could potentially be a good solution *one day*, I do not think now is the time. I believe much more planning and alternative funding sources need to be set in place before we would be ready to make such a large, impactful transition. I also think it's worth mentioning that now that the new school in Mexico is up and running, it is more likely that our schools will be higher up on the priority list for RSU #10 this coming year and in the following years.

I can also tell you that it's hard enough as it is to keep the current RSU's fully staffed in critical areas such as transportation and ed techs. To be starting from scratch, with an entirely new (and therefore unstable) RSU and having to hire an entirely new slate of staff seems to me to be an enormous obstacle unless (or even if) there was enough funding to pay competitive rates. It would be a major loss to our schools to lose our current staff and teachers, of which the likelihood would be high if we move forward with withdrawal. It is not fair to the students, who would lose teachers and staff they are fond of, nor is it fair to cause disturbance in our current staff's and teachers' careers and

3/19/2026

financial stability – many of whom are a part of our community and whose taxes would be going toward the new RSU that cost them their jobs!

Above all, we need to remember who is at the heart of this issue: the students and the taxpayers. The withdrawal process would cause major disruption in the students' lives, schooling, and extracurriculars; the instability of a brand new RSU couldn't possibly lend itself to an enriching environment for them, not if it's being done on frustrated whims. In order to do this properly, we would need to take the time (quite probably several years) to put together a well thought out plan and accumulate funding, without the primary source of funds being taxpayers' money. Of all the moments in time to put such a heavy financial burden on our community, now should not be the time – not when the price of everything, particularly the essentials needed to survive (food, gas, heating oil, rent/mortgages, car payments) are skyrocketing. The cost of living has arguably never been this high, and our community's taxpayers are not particularly well off financially, generally speaking. If/when we decide to move forward with withdrawal, I highly recommend applying for state and/or federal grants rather than heavily relying on taxpayers.

I am ultimately of the strong opinion that we should table the discussion of withdrawal from RSU #10 for the time being. I am comfortable with the committee remaining active and continuing to build upon this idea for when there is a better time economically to consider taking action. However, that is the extent of the movement that I think should be taken at this time.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of my input.

Warmly,

Emma Knadle