



Greetings to the Redistricting Task Force:

The Thetford Academy Board of Trustees would like to recognize the difficult task that the redistricting task force is undertaking. We are submitting this letter with the hope that it will help inform your decision making, and that the final proposed map will allow Thetford Academy (TA) to continue to thrive as the designated secondary school for the town of Thetford and serve as a valued and sought after option for sending towns without their own secondary schools.

To give you a short introduction to the school, Thetford Academy:

- Is the oldest Secondary School in Vermont, private or public, founded in 1819.
- Has an enrollment of 336 students in grades 7-12, of which 324 or 96% percent are publicly funded from Vermont or New Hampshire town tuition.
- Is the designated middle and secondary school for the Town of Thetford and has open enrollment for all other students.
- Has the capacity to serve up to 400 students and has done so in the past with a smaller physical plant.
- Is governed by a board of no larger than 21 trustees, which includes an elective representative from the Town of Thetford. All board meetings are open to the public and follow open meeting laws.
- Presents at the Thetford Town School District Annual Meeting.
- Follows Education Quality Standards for the State of Vermont.
- Provides a strong spectrum of support for students who have Individualized Education Plans.
- Protects students from dismissal without cause and enforces consistent discipline policies.
- Employs faculty who are certified teachers and are members of the Vermont-National Education Association.

Thetford Academy sees stellar results, in both academic and extracurricular programs. Upon graduation, TA students go on to attend top colleges and universities or land impressive professional job placements thanks to strong vocational partnerships. Additionally, our top-notch robotics team qualifies for the World Championships every year, and our track and baseball teams won state championships just this past spring. In short, Thetford Academy delivers.

However, we are concerned that the school faces a potential existential threat through the redistricting process. Thetford Academy would not be able to sustain our current robust program without students coming from choice towns. Currently, the enrollment from the town of Thetford stands at only 162 students, the lowest in our modern history. This is not due to Thetford students attending school elsewhere, but a result of the town's shifting demographics.

We hope those on this committee recognize that supervisory unions and choice are integral to keeping Vermont's historic academies open and able to thrive. Additionally, the historic academies serve a mostly rural population and have relationships with their sending towns going back 150+ years. These schools really are viewed as the public schools for their respective towns. In fact, Thetford Academy defines itself as an independent school with a public purpose.

In summary, while we understand there is a need to rethink education in Vermont, we hope the redistricting committee will include Thetford Academy's survival as part of the vision. We want to be part of an equitable solution to education in Vermont as we have been since our founding. To assist with your redistricting process, attached to this letter is a map of our sending towns as well as a list of enrollment by town. Please bear this in mind as you continue with your important work.

Thank You,

Thetford Academy Board of Trustees

SENDING TOWN MAP



THETFORD
ACADEMY

VERMONT

Town Tuition Student Population

Thetford- 162
Corinth - 45
Chelsea- 38
Strafford- 24
Topsham - 21
Lyme, NH - 8
Tunbridge- 7
Washington - 5
Orange - 5
Sharon - 4
Weathersfield- 2
Piermont, NH- 2
Stockbridge-1

Private Pay and Staff
Children - 10

Brownsville

Weathersfield

Hartland

Thetford

Lyme, NH

Piermont, NH



NEW HAMPSHIRE