

**SAU 70
Dresden, Hanover and Norwich School Districts**



Dr. Jay Badams, Superintendent

41 Lebanon Street, Suite 2
Hanover, NH 03755

Contact: Public Information Officer
Phone: 603-643-6050
Email: pio@sau70.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Superintendent Badams to Retire

HANOVER, NH – At the March 2025 SAU 70 organizational meeting Dr. Badams announced to the Hanover, Norwich, Dresden, and SAU 70 School Boards (The Board) and the school community his decision to retire as Superintendent of Schools for the Hanover, Norwich, and Dresden schools (The School District). The moment was bittersweet for The Board. Those in attendance knew that Dr. Badams would eventually retire, but finally hearing the words “I’ve decided to retire” still felt unexpected. Dr. Badams provided The Board with his contractually required 12 month notice, setting his effective retirement as March 7, 2026.

In the days that followed the announcement, the board reflected on Dr. Badams’ extraordinary service and unwavering leadership of The School District and began to consider the process necessary to prepare for a new Superintendent of Schools.

In late April, Dr. Badams approached The Board with a request to modify his existing contract to shorten the notice requirement to six months, making his new retirement date September 6, 2025. In recognition of Dr. Badams’s excellent service and dedication to The School District, the Board wanted to work with him to honor his request, understanding that this shorter timeline presented the additional challenge of finding a new superintendent in a few months. As The Board considered Dr. Badam's request, the focus turned to Robin Steiner, The School District’s current Assistant Superintendent.

Ms. Steiner joined the SAU 70 as Assistant Superintendent just prior to the pandemic. By March of 2020 The School District was fully remote and dealing with the daily uncertainty of what would happen next. Ms. Steiner stepped into the role of Covid 19 Coordinator and, without missing a beat, helped guide The School District through one of the most difficult educational periods it has endured. Since then Ms. Steiner has led the School Districts’ curriculum work. She is in each of the schools on a daily basis meeting with principals, engaging with teachers and students in classrooms, and working closely with Dr. Badams. Dr. Badams strongly endorsed Ms. Steiner as the next leader of The School District.

The Board, along with most of the teachers and administrators throughout The School District, have worked with Ms. Steiner over the last several years and have been impressed with what she has accomplished since joining The School District. We are also keenly aware of the extraordinary

challenges The School District is likely to face over the next few years as both Vermont and New Hampshire consider significant educational reforms while the Federal Department of Education also faces an uncertain future. The School District needs a leader who is familiar with the complexities of The School District's interstate structure, who knows our community, and is strongly grounded in The School District's mission and vision. Ms. Steiner fits all of these qualifications, while providing continuity and stability. The Board met with Ms. Steiner to discuss her interest in and willingness to serve as the next superintendent. Her response was an emphatic "yes".

This then provided The Board with the assurance it needed to grant Dr. Badams' request to move up his retirement date. As part of this process, two additional contractual items will also be modified. In 2023 the board approved changes to the SAU benefits package. These changes should have been retroactively applied to Dr. Badam's contract; they were not. The applicable provision relates to the post-retirement benefit. The previous benefit package provided retiring employees who are at least 55 years old and have 15 years or more of combined credited service a payment of 132% of Track 4, Step 1. The change in 2023 increased the payment to 150% of Track 4, Step 1 – which represents an increase of \$18,787 for Dr. Badams, which will be spread over a 7 year retirement period, delayed by one year as it is not in the approved budget for next year.

In addition, The Board has agreed to pay Dr. Badams for 25 unused vacation days in accordance with his original contract, with an additional condition that he provide mentor and consulting services to Ms. Steiner for the first three months (up to a maximum of 32 hours per month) of her role of Superintendent. The cost of this provision is \$17,801.

Since joining The School District in 2017, Dr. Badams has provided steady, thoughtful, considerate and reasoned leadership. His leadership of the strategic plan, his focus on policy-driven leadership, his gifted communications and direct interactions with students, staff, family members and the community at large, and his genuine passion for curriculum and instruction leave us in a better position now than we were eight years ago. The Board is extremely grateful for his contributions to our district and he will be dearly missed.

And, at the same time, he has grown a team at SAU 70 that includes Ms. Steiner as well as additional administrative staff that are perfectly positioned and qualified to lead The School District through the next several years. We couldn't have asked for more.

After accepting Dr. Badams's accelerated timeline for his retirement as outlined above during the May 27th SAU 70 meeting, the Board has entered into discussions with Ms. Steiner around her contract as our next superintendent.

Thank you.

The SAU 70, Dresden, Hanover, and Norwich School Boards

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