FAQs

Will our programs dwindle over time after we separate?

That will be up to the new school board. If the town would like to keep programs then they will have to let the new school board know that they are willing to pay for certain programs.

Will our kids still have choice?

Our Kids have always had choice and will always have choice. That will not change unless a public hearing held and the town will have to vote to eliminate choice.

Will Windham High School still accept Raymond kids?

Windham High School has agreed to be the school of acceptance for Raymond kids. Per the withdrawal agreement, Raymond had to have a high school that would take our kids for up to 10 years. Raymond parents still have choice to send their kids to other high schools.

Will we have a Superintendent?

Yes. It is budgeted for a 3/5 Superintendent. This is what Raymond had before they consolidated.

Technology – how will the technology work after we separate? Will we be keeping it current? Do not want to put kids at a disadvantage.

The technology involving website, internet access and security, backup, etc. will be handled by the town technology department. The classroom laptops, software, minor repairs, etc, will be handled by a new hire. The grading, attendance, finances will be handled by the business office.

Will the kids still be bussed to Windham from Raymond?

Yes they will. They will continue to have the same meeting place at Mill Street Park.

Tuition – will we be spending more or less for tuition for our High Schoolers? What do we currently pay now for tuition? What will we be paying if we split?

The state tuition rate for 9-12 grades is 10,753.00 I have estimated for budget purposes that the state tuition rate will increase to 111,598.00.

That is the budget figure per student for 182 students. The choice differential has cost the Town of Raymond approximately 10,000 over the past two years and has been added to this cost center.

What were the reasons for withdrawal?

First started when Windham wanted to build a new middle school and not send kids to Raymond to utilize the schools we had in Raymond which were under utilized.  We would have had to pay for a portion of that new school.

Most of the options that the RSU Board were looking at included closing down JSMS.

The breakdown of the budget was 55% Windham/45% Raymond when we had less than 1/3 of the kids in school from Raymond

The School Board and the Selectboard got together and came up with a new agreement.  Raymond would pay a lower percentage of the school budget based on our numbers.  Also any new construction would be paid for by the town that adds the new construction.  For example, if a new school was built in Windham, then Windham would pay for it.  If JSMS needed a new roof or new boiler then it would be considered repairs/renovations and split and paid for by the percentage method.

But the agreement was not being upheld.

The RSU (Not Raymond) entered into an interlocal agreement with the TOWN of WINDHAM for a state of the art town garage.

The taxpayers of Raymond will have to pay for a percentage of this garage that is owned by THE TOWN OF WINDHAM (not the RSU)

The RSU purchased modulars to use for classroom/office space that could have been taken care of by the Raymond schools.

When the school board and their attorney were asked to sit down and talk to the Selectboard and answer questions to the public we were told NO.

Will we still have the same Nutrition program for our kids?

Yes. We have budgeted for the same program. In fact, it is budgeted for kids K-4 to receive free breakfasts and lunches.

What will Central Office look like? Superintendent, Special Ed. Director, Curriculum Coordinator, Math Coach, etc.

We are budgeting for a 3/5 Superintendent (010 license), a 5/5 Special Education Director (030) license), and a Business office manager. Each school has a principal and secretary.

If we stay with Windham, what will happen if they build a new middle school? Will JSMS possibly be shut down to save on costs?

That would be up to the RSU school board. In the past, closing JSMS was an option and bus all middle school kids to Windham. Windham is currently looking to build a new middle school and Windham would have to pay for that. But if the board feels like they need to make cuts due to the cost of the middle school, then they could look at consolidating buildings.

What are the costs of separating?

The costs estimated to occur between 11/20 and 06/30/21 are in the 600,000.00-area spread out over the seven month period. The majority of expenses are new hires, technology acquisitions, and board fees and insurances.

What about Title One funds and kids?

In the first year the funds will be transferred from the RSU14 to the new Raymond unit. The new school board will need to apply for subsequent year funds or fund them in the budget.

What is the High School that will take our kids?

Windham is the agreed upon High School but Parents have CHOICE to send their kids to any high school.

How will the needs of kids that need a little extra be fulfilled? If we separate, will we have enough money to fulfill those needs?

The Special Education department is left totally intact from the RSU14 V9 budget. In addition, a new Special Education Director and an Ed Tech I position has been added. The Pre-K program will also be able to have assistance in this area.

What happens to the kids that are coming to Raymond schools from Windham if we withdrawal and vice versa?

They will have a one year agreement that everything as it is now stays in place. If a parent would like to continue with their child in that particular school, then they can do a superintendent’s agreement.

What about Federal Funding? How much will Raymond get on a stand alone basis.

Other than Maine State reimbursement for Special Education, possible Title 1 funding, and federal aid for nutrition, we are not looking at any further monies. Raymond is a real estate wealthy community and does not fall within the necessary guidelines to qualify for any state subsidies.

If we separate, what happens with the staff that are working in both towns?

There has been enough money put into the budget to support those individuals if they should so choose to become full time in Raymond. If not, then the salary line is there to allow a new hire for those positions.

How did we come to the numbers of positions on the board for each town? Can it be changed?

The number of board members from each town is based on population.

Because of the pandemic, there have been a lot of vacancies that need to be filled? How will that work if we withdrawal?

As we all know this situation evolves almost daily. We cannot anticipate vacancies as they occur for any reason, and the new school board/ superintendent will handle that situation accordingly.

If we withdrawal, when will it become effective?

July 1, 2021

If we withdrawal, will Raymond be using a bussing company and not using our current bus drivers? What are the subcontracting costs under that line item?

There never has been any plan to use any other system than that is in place now. The current employees are being carried forward.

Will the buses fit in Raymond’s garage? Who will be maintaining them? Do we have proper staff to maintain the buses?

The public works building size is currently of adequate size to service any of the buses. This has been measured and verified.

Can we push the vote out due to the pandemic?

The process has been ongoing for quite a while, the DOE has given timelines for the process. The vote needs to have a minimum number of voters cast votes for the result to be validated either way and that number can only be guaranteed at a presidential or gubernatorial election. Additionally, it would not be desirable for the RSU14 to drag it out so they can do their forward planning.

What does the budget look like regarding Superintendent? PT? OT? Speech therapists? Math Coach? Curriculum coach? Special Ed Director? Sharing staff?

The budget includes all the above-mentioned positions. They are either in the Superintendent, Special Education, or the RES or JSMS budgets.

When can we see the entire budget?

The entire budget is available on the website.

How is Raymond going to recruit for vacancies?

That will be the responsibility of the new Superintendent. If a vacancy occurs prior to separation, then the RSU has the responsibility to fill the position as they see fit.

How is Raymond/Board going to put the information out there for people to be informed?

Through the web site and informational meetings.

Will a part-time Superintendent work?

We had a 3/5 Superintendent before we consolidated and it worked then.

Why is this with the school board (the meeting tonight).

It is one of the 22 steps. The school board has to host a public hearing regarding the withdrawal agreement. The school board will open it but the Withdrawal Committee will discuss the agreement.

Where is all this information the budget and when will there be meetings in Raymond? How is this information being distributed to the families of Raymond? If voting is beginning soon and we have little information I don’t think the vote can be legitimate?!

The budget was developed from the V9 RSU14 budget a copy of which is on the web site. The summary sheets show the totals for the functions and the major budget point sheet explains and additions or deletions

With the exact same services being provided to students now?

The budget process was aimed at insuring that no changes due to financial reasons would occur.

When would this go into effect if it passes? How would it affect high school kids?

It will not affect High School kids because they will be the school of choice that we have to have a contract with to take our kids if they choose to go there. Raymond still has choice. If passed it will go into effect July 1 of 2021. There will be one year that will stay the same so kids can get situated and then there will be a new Raymond only school board. We would have an election for board members.

Parent question and comments regarding SRO

The budget allows for an SRO. The decision to contract for the SRO will belong to the new board.

Any thoughts on the addition or a SRO for RES and JSMS?

As above.

I know that there has been added that WMS and JSMS will be sharing.

We do not believe that the SRO in Windham will also be in Raymond. Their’s is a Windham Police Department staff member and Raymond would rely on the Cumberland County Sheriff to supply the RSO.

I think it is a good idea and great way to build relationship with students. They can be another resource for students if you find the right person and enable additional programming that is free for students.

We agree and have budgeted for that expense.

Would they use a Cumberland county officer? Have they been approached? I think they’re already pretty short staffed. It seems like a FT officer is a little overkill for 2 tiny schools.

Cumberland County has jurisdiction over Raymond. They have been approached and we have received a quote for services. In many other school systems, the SRO will assist in other duties such as DARE programs, after school activities, etc.

Sports/Co-Curriculur

That is something that either parents have to approach the school to see if they can get some new sports going and how to do it. Or, the Principal can start programs possibly in the middle school.

Would students be able to participate in certain sports in other districts if Raymond didn’t have a certain sport? Like it used to be way back in the day.

Unsure of this answer. If Windham has full teams then no. This is something that the Superintendent would have to check into.

Would students with Special Education services change for the better?

I believe that Raymond enjoys a high-quality Special Education staff. With the addition of hiring a Special Education Director that will fit with the team, they have the potential to grow.

I don’t see how we have access to so many more things and staff being combined. My concern is we may lose some of the staff which in my opinion has gotten drastically better in the last few years

There is always the potential to lose staff. That can happen if we are in the RSU or not. People leave for many different reasons including retirement or deciding to go to a different school or other personal reasons.

Will the school be downsizing in staff if Raymond withdraws?

In the contract the staff will be the same. No downsizing from our part. There will be a new school board and if they choose to do any downsizing it will be up to the citizens to tell them no that isn’t what you want for our schools. Keep in mind that the RSU can reduce (downsize) at any time if the student population decreases. Throughout the history of RES and JSMS there have been increases and decreases depending on student population.

I have children that will be going into high school in the next couple years, what are our options for high schools? And will transportation be provided? I know years ago we got to choose between surrounding schools and transportation was provided.

Raymond has choice. Currently any child going to high school can go to any high school they want except for religious schools. But I did see something in the news that that may be changing. So if you want your child to go to Hebron, Portland, Westbrook, etc they can. Unfortunately there is only transportation with Windham.

Why will there only be transportation to Windham? Why not GNG or Poland?

We used to have it but after we consolidated then they stopped sending over a bus. I don’t think they feel there are enough students going to their schools to send a bus. That may be a discussion that can be had with those school districts.

For high school there needs to be a Superintendents’ agreement for a student to attend. Where we will not have our own superintendent how will that work?

We have choice so a student can sign up if they have space. Also we will have a superintendent here in Raymond.

Would Raymond be signing a contract with surrounding high schools if our children would want to go there?

We don’t need to. If the school has openings, then they are usually happy to take the kids because they get the state funds. There has only been one time that I can remember and that was Poland was not taking any kids outside of their town because they were full.

It takes a special person to do the SRO job and due to the demographics of the schools I as a parent would want extensive programming offered by the SRO. I have been one for over 10 years and our district would be a dream job in my opinion.

This has been presented to me as a new hire specific to this position. I would assume that the Sheriff would promote from within and hire to fill the created vacancy. That would give us an experienced SRO..we should ask for experienced personnel...

Does Raymond not have a DARE program?

Not that I know of. They came to the Selectboard for a presentation. I was told that the SRO could not come into the Raymond schools because he was employed by the Town of Windham.

Will we still have shared Employees?

No. Money has been put into the budget to hire the shared employees on full time.