

## Measures of Schools and Students in SAU 65 and Kearsarge Regional School District

April 2024

Inequitable education funding in New Hampshire affects far more than the property taxpayer. Students' educational experiences can be drastically different all over the state. Below is some helpful information about the schools in the Kearsarge Regional School District and how they compare to the rest of the state.

### Students and Student Characteristics

Students in SAU 65 span across seven different towns but all attend Kearsarge Regional for High School. SAU 65 Schools have grades from pre-school through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Table 1 shows enrollment in the October 2022- 2023 school year by grade.

Table 1

Kearsarge Regional Schools	Pre	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	PG	Totals
Kearsarge Reg. Elem. School at New London	0	43	48	58	56	75	57	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	337
Kearsarge Reg. Elementary School - Bradford	0	27	20	40	30	21	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	167
Kearsarge Regional High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	138	121	111	106	7	483
Kearsarge Regional Middle School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	146	131	127	0	0	0	0	0	404
Kearsarge Regional Preschool Bradford	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28
Kearsarge Regional Preschool New London	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
Simonds Elementary School	0	16	15	21	27	28	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	130
Sutton Central Elementary School	0	11	15	10	15	17	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1660</b>

Table 2

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black Non-Hispanic	White Non-Hispanic	Multi Race	Total
<b>Kearsarge Regional</b>	4	18	45	9	1554	30	1660
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>93.6%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
State Total	306	5,117	14,242	3,400	135,903	6,034	165,002
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>82.4%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2 displays racial enrollments for all students in SAU 65 Schools as of October 1, 2023.

White non-Hispanic students constituted 93.6%, a bit more than the average. SAU 65's population has less diversity than the New Hampshire State Average.

Table 3 lists the different communities in SAU 65 and their counts of Free and reduced-priced lunch-eligible students (meaning their family’s income was below 185% of the Federal Poverty Line<sup>1</sup>), students receiving Special Education Services, and students who are English language learners. As seen, SAU 65 has lower rates of students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch than the state average.

**Table 3**

Town	ADM	FRL	% FRL	SPED	% SPED	ELL	% ELL
Sutton	247	42	17.00%	30	12.15%	1	0.40%
Newbury	201	31	15.42%	29	14.43%	1	0.50%
Warner	340	75	22.06%	57	16.76%	2	0.59%
Wilmot	191	22	11.52%	29	15.18%	0	0.00%
Bradford	199	44	22.11%	38	19.10%	0	0.00%
New London	328	17	5.18%	30	9.15%	1	0.30%
Springfield	162	21	12.96%	28	17.28%	0	0.00%
Kearsarge Totals	1668	252	15.11%	241	14.45%	5	0.30%
State	157,406	41,660	26.47%	30,965	19.67%	5,126	3.26%

<sup>1</sup> In 2023, 185% of the Federal Poverty Line for a family of four was \$50,500 annually.

## What Sports Have Been Available to Kearsarge Regional High School Students?

*List of NHIAA Sports 2021*

Coed Unified Soccer  
Girls Volleyball  
Boys Volleyball  
Girls Ice Hockey  
Boys & Girls Nordic Skiing  
Ski Jumping  
Girls Gymnastics  
Boys Wrestling  
Ten-Pin Bowling  
Unified Track  
Boys Ice Hockey  
Bass Fishing  
Boys & Girls Cross Country  
Field Hockey  
Football  
Boys & Girls Golf  
Boys Soccer  
Girls Soccer  
Spirit  
Boys Basketball  
Girls Basketball  
Boys & Girls Indoor Track  
Boys & Girls Alpine Skiing  
Swimming & Diving  
Unified Basketball  
Baseball  
Softball  
Boys Lacrosse  
Girls Lacrosse  
Outdoor Track  
Girls Tennis  
Boys Tennis  
Unified Volleyball

The New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA) organizes high school sports competitions in New Hampshire.

Of the 33 sports listed by NHIAA for the school year 2019-20, only 9 were **NOT** available to students at Kearsarge Regional High School. Those sports were: Coed Unified Soccer, Girls Volleyball, Boys Volleyball, Ski Jumping, Girls Gymnastics, Ten-Pin Bowling, Unified Basketball, Unified Track and Unified Volleyball.

On average, schools with enrollments below 600 have at least 14 sports available to students.

Interscholastic sports available at any high school in any particular year will depend, of course, on the availability of coaches and whether enough students sign up.

## How Many Credits are Required to Graduate from Kearsarge Regional High School?

The State of New Hampshire sets 20 credits as the minimum that each student must accumulate before they are allowed to graduate. In 2021 those credits were distributed across multiple subjects as shown in Table 5.

Most school districts in New Hampshire have higher graduation requirements than the 20-unit minimum set by the state. A few require as many as 28 units to graduate. Kearsarge Regional requires that students successfully complete 23 credits to obtain their diploma. On average, New Hampshire public high schools require 24 credits to graduate with a high school diploma.

## What Has Been the High School Graduation Rate?

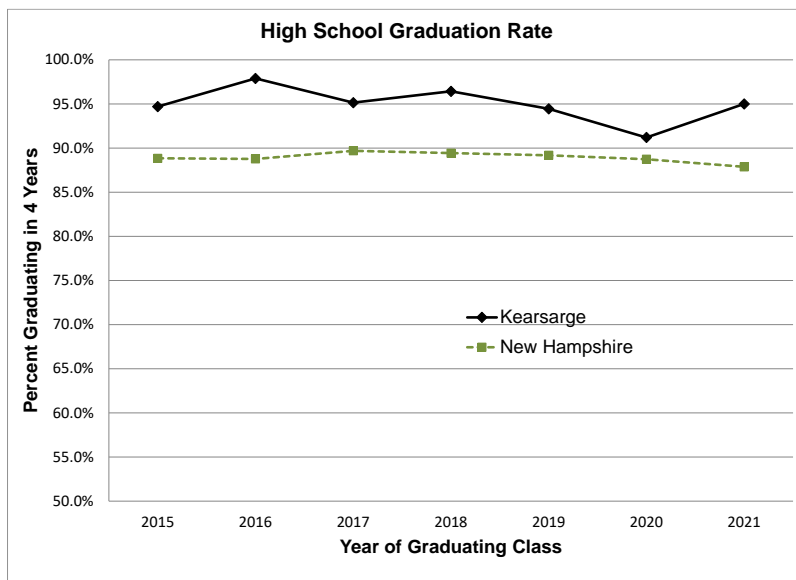
Kearsarge Regional graduated 900 students in graduating classes from 2015 through 2021. The graduation rate over those seven years averaged 95%. This was more than the state average of 88.9%.

Table 4

State Requirement	Units
Arts	0.5
Information & Communications	0.5
English	4.0
Mathematics	3.0
Physical Science	1.0
Biological Science	1.0
Other Science	
US/NH History	1.0
US/NH Government & Civics	0.5
Other Social Studies	
Economics	0.5
World History, Global Studies, Geography	0.5
Health	0.5
Physical Education	1.0
Electives	6.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20.0</b>

Ranking the 81 public high schools in New Hampshire with the highest graduation rate at (1) and the high school with the lowest graduation rate at (81), Kearsarge Regional ranked 13.

Figure 1



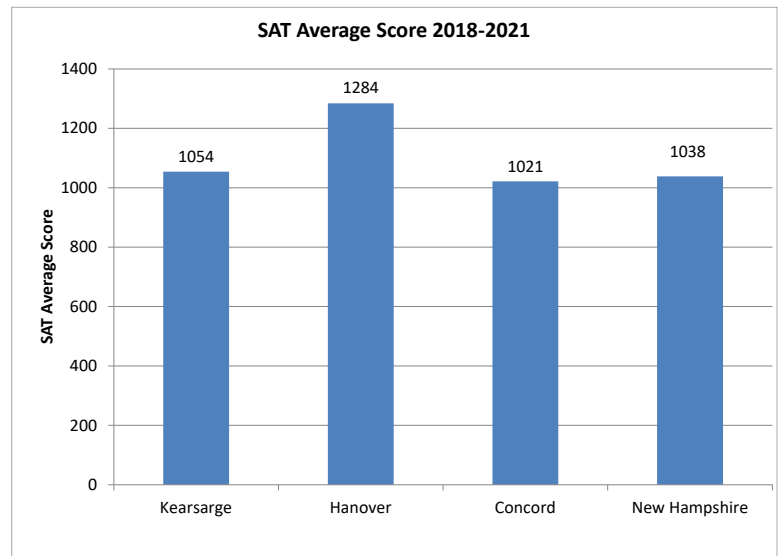
## How Well Have High School Students Done on the Annual SAT Exam?

One of the standardized exams used by New Hampshire to measure student achievement in high school is the SAT of the College Board. There are two parts: Mathematics and Evidence-Based Reading and Writing. The possible range of combined scores is 400 to 1600.

Over the four years from 2018 through 2021, 470 Kearsarge Regional High School students took the SAT exams in the spring of their junior year. The average score of those students was 1054 while the New Hampshire average was 1038.

Figure 2

Ranking the 79 public high schools for which data were available, the school with the highest average score was (1) and the lowest was (79), Kearsarge Regional ranked 20th, Hanover ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, and Concord ranked 38<sup>th</sup>.



The total October enrollment of juniors in Kearsarge Regional High School over the 4 years totaled 509. As a percentage of enrollment, 7.7% of juniors were not tested. The percentage of untested juniors statewide was also 12.2%.

## What Courses are Available for High School Students in Kearsarge Regional?

Course availability is an important measure of a student’s educational opportunity. The Course of Studies documents for 2021-22 were collected from NH’s public high schools. Counts of courses available in each subject area were compiled. Table 4 shows that Kearsarge Regional High School offers more courses in most subject areas as compared to the state average.

Table 5

	World Languages	Advanced Placement	English Electives	Math courses	Social Study Electives	Computer Technologies	Career Tech	Arts / Performing Arts	Science Elective
<b>Kearsarge</b>	21	14	22	17	11	8	24	22	14
<b>State Average</b>	14	9	11	17	10	6	26	23	13

The availability of courses is tied to several factors. The size of a school plays a large role. Larger schools have economies of scale, more teachers, and a student population with more diverse interests. Other factors include transportation and teacher licensure.

## What Have Advanced Placement Results Been in Kearsarge Regional?

The College Board offers Advanced Placement (AP) exams in 38 subjects every May. The exams are the culmination of students' participation in Advanced Placement courses in their high school. Those courses follow a standard syllabus and use nationally standard materials. There is no requirement for New Hampshire high schools to offer any AP courses, for students to take an AP course, or for those who do to take the associated exam at the end of the year.

One purpose of the courses and the exams is to allow students to get college credit in advance of entering college, thus potentially skipping certain introductory college courses. Among students who desire to attend a four-year college after graduation, there is considerable incentive to take AP courses and their associated exams.

The College Board grades each test on a scale from 1 to 5. Most colleges grant advanced credit to students whose score is a 3, 4, or 5. A few highly selective colleges may not accept scores of 3 or 4.

Table 5 lists the results of AP tests over the three years 2018-2021.

Table 6

	3 Year Exam Takers	3 Year Exams	3 Year Scores of 3,4, or 5	Takers as % of Enrollment	Exams per Taker	Scored 3+ as % of Exams	Scored 3+ per 100 enrollment
Kearsarge	297	489	287	19.1%	1.65	58.70%	18.50
State	22,966	36,355	25,108	10.62%	1.58	69.06%	11.61

Participation in Advanced Placement tests by the College Board is higher among students at Kearsarge Regional than the state average.

## How Likely Have Students from Kearsarge Regional Been to Apply, Earn Admittance, and Enroll at The University of New Hampshire?

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) is one of New Hampshire's public higher education institutions. The school is often popular with many NH students graduating from public high schools.

The UNH Admissions Office provided counts of applications, admissions, and enrollments from each New Hampshire public high school for freshman years 2017 through 2021. By aggregating data over five years, the need to suppress small numbers was greatly reduced, and year-to-year variations were smoothed, especially for smaller high schools. For comparisons among high schools of greatly varying sizes, senior year enrollments are used as the base for calculating what percentage of a school's students have applied, been admitted, and finally enrolled at UNH.

Students who plan to attend college after graduating from high school often apply to as many as 8 to 10 colleges. Thus, even when accepted to UNH, a vast majority of students will choose to go elsewhere, and a much smaller number will enroll. Understanding this, UNH (and other colleges and universities) offer admission to many more applicants than they could accept.

On average, based on the years 2017-2021, 27% of New Hampshire’s public school senior class applied to UNH. At Kearsarge Regional High School, 28.7% applied. Statewide, of the 18,455 who applied, UNH admitted 83.9%. Among the 183 Kearsarge Regional students who applied, 85.8% were admitted. Eventually enrolling for freshman year at UNH were 7.5% of all New Hampshire high school seniors and 7.5% of Kearsarge Regional seniors.

Table 7

	2017-2021 UNH Applications	2017-2021 UNH Admissions	2017-2021 UNH Enrollment	Applications as % of Enrollment	Admissions as % of Applications	Enrollment as % of 5 Year Senior Enrollment
Kearsarge	183	157	48	28.7%	85.8%	7.5%
State	18,455	15,653	5,101	27.1%	83.9%	7.5%

### What Does Kearsarge (Sutton for this example) Spend on Public Schools? How Does It Compare to Other Communities?

Figure 3

The 1998-99 school year was the last school year before the State of New Hampshire, in response to the Supreme Court’s *Claremont* rulings, increased the amount of aid it provides to pay for an “adequate” education. That year, Kearsarge Sutton spent \$7,068 per elementary school student or 119 percent of the typical (or median) town’s spending. In the school year 2022-23, Kearsarge Sutton spent \$23,775 per elementary pupil, which was 105 percent of the NH Median.

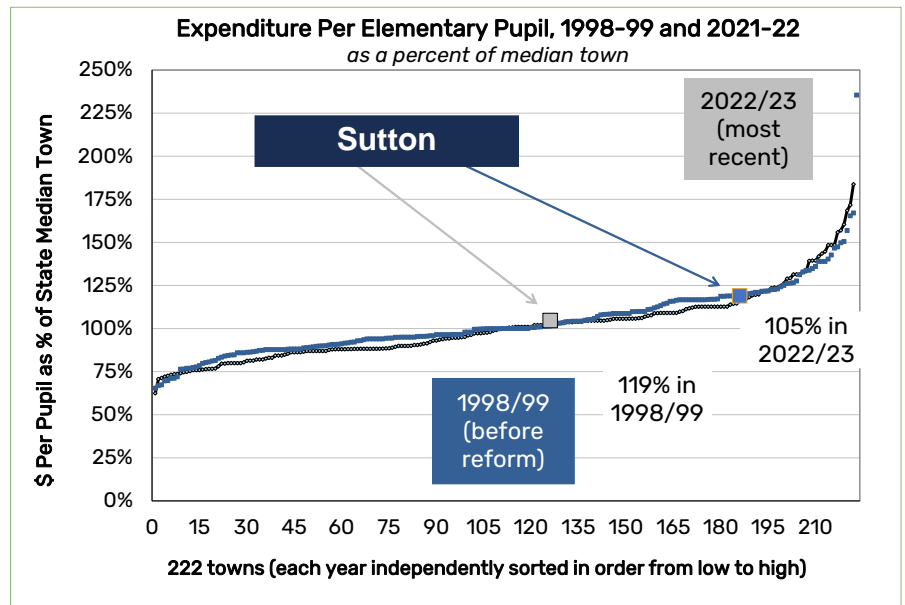


Figure 2 compares spending per elementary pupil in Kearsarge Sutton and the state average for the past fifteen years. It shows that spending in Kearsarge has remained above the state average and was \$3,452 above the state average in 2023. Smaller school districts typically have higher spending per pupil than the average because they lack efficiency of scale.

Figure 4

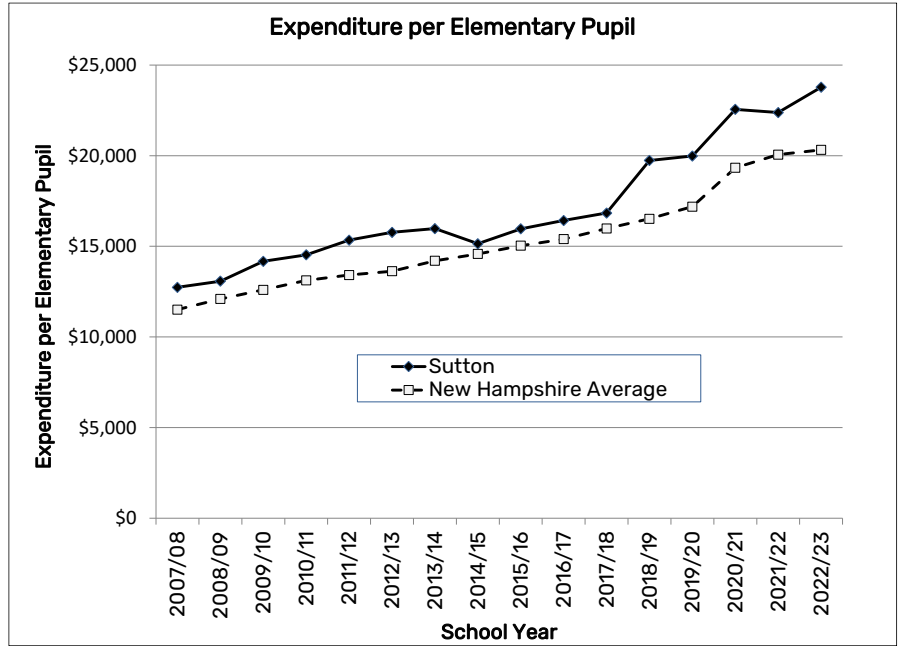


Table 8

New Hampshire’s public school districts spent \$3.80 billion during the 2022-23 school year. Of that amount, 39 percent was dedicated to regular classroom instruction, 19 percent to special education, 11 percent to administration, 9 percent to building operations, and the remainder was devoted to transportation, food services, and other purposes.

As shown in Table 1, the proportion of Kearsarge School District’s spending on regular instruction was higher than the average while spending on Instructional support staff, special programs, and student support was lower.

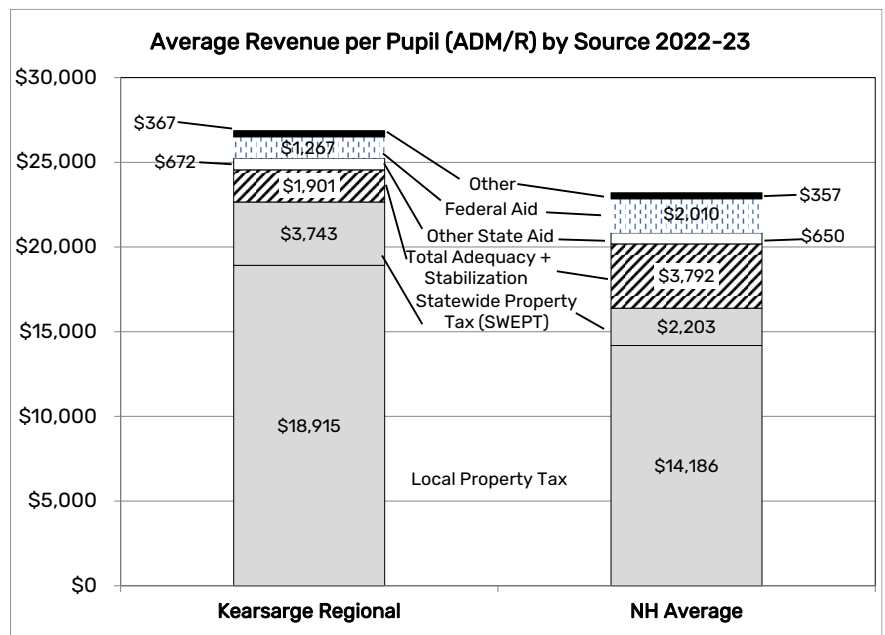
Spending by Type	Percentage	
	Kearsarge	NH Average
Regular Instruction	43%	39%
Special Programs	17%	19%
Vocational Programs	0%	1%
Other Instructional Programs	1%	2%
Student Support Services	4%	8%
Instructional Support Staff	2%	4%
Administration	11%	11%
Plant Operations	13%	9%
Pupil Transportation	5%	5%
Food Services	1%	1%
Bond & Note Interest	2%	1%
Other Expenses	0%	0%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### How Does Kearsarge Pay for Public Schools?

Figure 3 shows all the various revenue sources that Kearsarge uses to pay for its students’ education, measuring them on a per-pupil basis. It also compares Kearsarge’s revenue sources to the New Hampshire average. As this figure makes clear, local property taxes are the major source of revenue for public schools across the state.

Figure 5

During the 2022-23 school year, Kearsarge School District’s total school revenue was \$26,865 per pupil, a bit more than the state average of \$23,198. Property taxes (local plus statewide) provided \$22,658 per pupil or 84 percent of the overall amount, more than the state average of 71 percent. Kearsarge received \$1,901 in total state “adequacy grant” per pupil. The state average such aid was \$3,792.



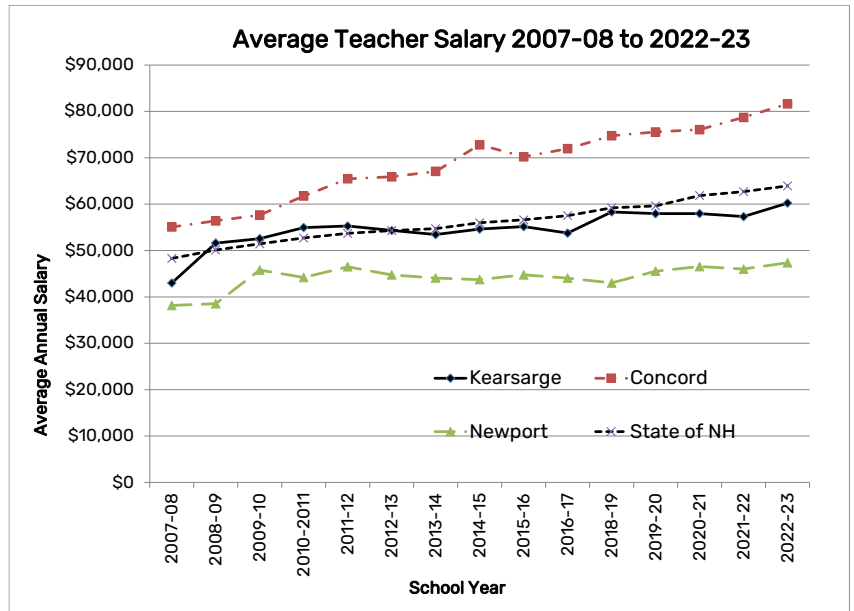
### How Much Do Teachers Earn in Kearsarge?

In 2007-08 there were 79 teachers in Kearsarge. In 2022-23 there were 52 teachers.

In 2022-23 the average teacher salary in Kearsarge was \$60,232. This was a bit less than the state average of \$63,926. Kearsarge's average teacher salary has remained below the state average since 2012.

Kearsarge's average teacher salary increased by 17 percent from 2007-08 to 2022-23. At the same time, the Consumer Price Index increased by 42 percent. During the same period, the average salary in Concord increased by 45 percent.

Figure 6



Average teacher salary is affected by two things: the actual salary schedule of a district and the number of years of teaching experience among the teachers. Teacher salary schedules generally increase salaries as teachers gain experience through years on the job. It is therefore possible for two districts that have identical salary schedules to have different average salaries. The salary of a newly recruited first year teacher depends on the district's salary schedule, not on the average teacher's salary.

Figure 7

On the other hand, starting salaries show us what a recent college graduate (Bachelor's degree) could earn as a first-time teacher in a district. This is important for hiring and retaining quality teachers over the long term. The starting salaries for teachers with a bachelor's degree in New Hampshire ranged from \$31,712 to \$64,007 in the 2022-23 school year.

Kearsarge School District had a starting salary for first-year teachers (with a BA degree) of \$41,016 for the 2022-23 school year. Kearsarge's starting salary for teachers was 3% lower than the unweighted state average of \$42,560.

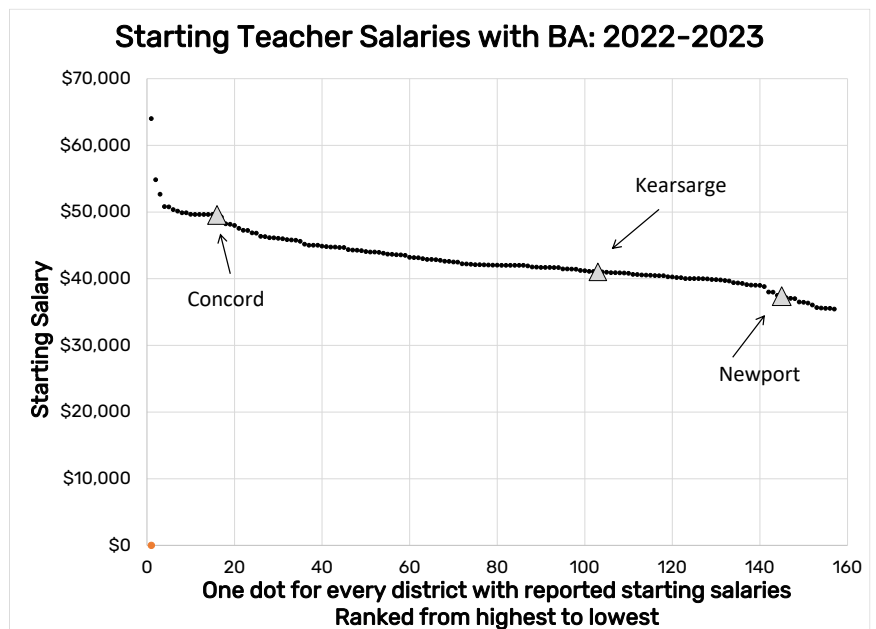


Figure 7 shows Kearsarge, Newport, and Concord’s starting salaries in comparison to all others in the state. As seen, Kearsarge falls toward the lower end.

### What Does Kearsarge Spend on Special Education?

Under federal and state law students with physical, mental, or learning disabilities require special additional services to support their learning. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is created for each such student. The cost of these services is tracked within the overall spending of each district.

As shown in the table below, in 2022-23 Kearsarge reported spending \$8,623,511.25 for these additional services.

Function	Amount
Instruction	\$7,681,347.14
Instruction Related	\$40,531.67
Administration	\$745,236.64
Legal	\$12,313.10
Transportation	\$144,082.70
TOTAL	\$8,623,511.25

During that year, Kearsarge had 241 students with IEPs. On average, this was \$35,782 for each such student. In the state overall there were 30,965 such students and the total cost was \$915,220,911. The statewide average was \$29,557. The average cost for extra services for each student with an IEP in Kearsarge was more than the average throughout the state.

These costs *are in addition to* the share of non-special education costs that are shared among all students. While \$29,557 was the average extra cost, for some students with considerable disability, the cost can be much higher than the average while for others it may be only a few hundred dollars.

*Note: Data used in this report are taken from reports and spreadsheets of the NH Department of Education (Equalized Valuation per Pupil, Cost Per Pupil by District, Average Daily Membership Based Upon Attendance and Residence (ADM), Average Class Size by School, and DoE25 Extract for State Profile Data for various years). Such data are reported by New Hampshire school districts to the Department. Tax rates printed on town tax bills are not equalized and cannot be compared among towns. Using equalized data allows an apples-to-apples comparison among town tax rates and property values.*