

Regionalization Planning Committee
Meeting Minutes

Location: Houlton Southside School, Houlton

Time: 6:30pm

Date: Thursday, November 15, 2007

Representatives from: MSAD #14, MSAD #25, MSAD #29, MSAD #70, CSD #9, Moro Plantation, Orient, Bancroft, and Hersey.

1. Steve Fitzpatrick, Superintendent of MSAD #29, welcomed all the RPC participants.
2. Mary Jane asked for the approval of the October 29, 2007 minutes, a motion was made and then seconded to approve the minutes. The motion duly passed.
3. Mary Jane asked if there was any public comment related to the RPC's work. There were no public comments.
4. Mary Jane asked if there were any questions from the RPC members that they might have for the committee. There were no questions.
5. Mary Jane explained that the goal for tonight's meeting is to review what is being submitted for the December 1st deadline. A copy of the work in progress Regionalization Plan that is being submitted to the state as of now was distributed. Currently, the only portion of the plan completed is who all of the members of the RPC planning group are, other than that, everything is marked in process. Mary Jane asked everyone to break into subcommittees and review the portions of the plan each subcommittee's are responsible for and ensure accuracy. Once the review is completed by each of the subcommittees the subcommittees will return to the whole group for a review of the entire plan. After the review for accuracy, each subcommittee chair will then present to the entire group their work in detail and what are they struggling with and what they have left remaining to do. The group broke into subcommittees for 30 minutes.
6. The subcommittees returned to the main group and the plan was discussed. The plan will be reviewed and any discrepancies should be brought up. Mary Jane said she would assume that the plan is accurate unless she hears from the subcommittee in charge of that item.
 1. complete
 2. not complete
 3. undecided, still focusing on method D
 4. undecided, subcommittee would like to recommend that there be no local school committees
 5. Disposition of real and personal school property
 - A. incomplete
 - B. none listed
 - C. none
 6. Existing school indebtedness
 - A. see items listed
 - B. see items listed
 - C. incompleted
 - D. incomplete

- E. incomplete – not discussed
 - F. incomplete
7. Assignment of school personnel contracts
 - B. a few things need to be added
 - C. see list, more need to be added to the list
 - all personnel polices are ok
 8. all are ok
 9. finance subcommittee still working on
 10. all meeting minutes are attached, this evenings minutes will be added
 11. undetermined
 12. undetermined, still being discussed
 13. undetermined
 - A. incomplete
 - B. incomplete
 - C. undecided
 - D. Bancroft added but need to remove last line stating “New students must attend within RSU #4”
 - E. remove none and change to incomplete
 - F. pending completion of plan
 - G. undecided

Mary Jane mentioned that each school board will need to vote to submit the plan to the state and sign that they’ve voted. One of the Superintendent’s will be responsible for getting the final plan off to Augusta reflecting the changes. She also would like to have a final version for the next meeting.

The subcommittee chairman’s provided updates on their committees work:

Governance – They are currently working on sub districts to be as follows:

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| East Grand | 1 director, 55 votes |
| Hodgdon | 3 directors, 66 votes each |
| Houlton | 5 directors, 69 votes each |
| Houlton North (Littleton, Hammond, Monticello) | 2 directors, 51 votes each |
| So. Aroostook | 2 directors, 73 votes each |
| Katahdin | 2 directors, 76 votes each |

Votes are based upon population (1,000 total votes). This would not change yearly unless it is asked to change and must be approved by the state. Anyone can request (in writing) a change in the school board. All requests are reviewed by the Commissioner of Education. This is a process that currently exists. The 2006 US Census data was used to determine the population for the votes for each sub district as directed by the Department of Education. They also recommend that there be no local school committees. The subcommittee felt it would be a conflict between schools and the main district. They are still discussing board members.

Assets & Liabilities – On page 2, 5a, land owned by the SAU’s is still incomplete. Personal property, there wasn’t anything. The indebtedness listed in 6a will be assumed because they

were approved by the state. Agreements that will not be assumed are listed in 6b. Item 6c&d are incomplete and still need to be discussed, specifically the bond issue in Houlton. Items 6e&f are incomplete and have yet to be discussed. Item 8 regarding reserve funds will be designated to go to reduce taxes for that year within the RSU. There are no trust funds. The last item is #13D, of which there are no tuition contracts. The only town affected by school choice is Bancroft. Bancroft has not yet decided if they will be joining the RSU #4. A question was asked about Bancroft and the school choice. Bancroft students will be the only ones allowed to attend school outside of the RSU should they choose. It was explained that there might be additional costs should this happen. A question was also asked about lease payments and bonds on page 4 of the plan. It was felt by the subcommittee that if those school districts committed those funds, then the towns should continue to pay for it.

Contracts – There is a great deal of depth to the committee as to what information is there. Page 6 of the plan lists the teachers and support staff and there is more that needs to be added. Page 7 lists out the contracts and the possibility exists to merge some of them in the future but that will be left up to the new board. Page 10 is on the SAU boards and what contracts they shall look to possibly merge.

Finance – They are feeling a lot of frustration, which seems to be a common theme across the state. They are still gathering information, but they have gathered all the budgets and 281's. They are having difficulty, but they are working on aligning the budgets. On page 13 regarding the transitional plan, they are working on this and have several models of what the central office will look like. The next step is to assign costs to the central office. Page 29 an estimate of cost savings, they don't believe there will be a cost savings. The next step to nail down central office, special education and transportation cost savings. On 13B future legislation may affect this. A question was asked if it would need to be decided soon to allocate money to hire a superintendent and secretary prior to the start of the RSU. Not sure if need to hire 6 months in advance or not. It would appear it would happen as follows: November 2008 would be voting on the 15 member super board and then January 1, 2009 will have to approve a secretary and put together a budget.

Mary Jane reminded those boards that have voted on the Regionalization Plan to have their Superintendent or representative sign the cover sheet.

7. The next RPC meeting will be Tuesday, December 4, 2007 at Hodgdon High School. At the next meeting, the January meeting will be determined.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Farnham