

Regional Planning Committee
Dresden Richmond Monmouth Hallowell Farmingdale
October 4, 2007 5:30 p.m.
Hall-Dale Elementary School Computer Room

Present: Chair O'Neil LaPlante, Doug Averill, Nadine Barnard, John Armentrout, Mary Gleason, Seth Goodall, Nancy Jodoin, Doug Ludewig, (Alt) Bill Mathews, (Alt) Tracey Woodman

Absent: Michaela Loisel, Cindy McPherson, Tom Austin, Gary Getchell, Jim Grandahl, John Ottum, Mike Rogers

Also attending: Don Siviski, Mike Burnham, Steve Philbrook

1. Call to Order

Chair O'Neil LaPlante called the meeting to order at 5:35pm

2. Action on the minutes

Nadine Barnard **motioned** to accept the minutes of 9/18/07. Mary Gleason **seconded** the motion, **voted in favor unanimously.**

3. Adjustments to the Agenda

No adjustments were proposed

4. Public Comment

The RPC discussed the need for public comment and at appropriate times and requested that the Chairpersons of all committees establish a protocol. Each chair will exercise discretion in soliciting and limiting public comment at meetings. Public Comment will be included on the agenda and solicited in reference to published agenda items. The chair may elect to include additional comments during discussions of various items.

Non-voting visitors will be physically located apart from the appointed members to ensure accurate voting procedures.

5. Old Business

Many RPC members attended the DWM Law workshop on consolidation and found it very helpful. A template for the "plan" due by Dec 1st was distributed electronically to all members.

6. New Business

6.1 Communication insights

Due to the increased level of electronic communication the group was cautioned about the effectiveness of messages "read 7%", "heard 38%" and seen 55%. When a message can be read heard and seen being deliver by the author there exists a far better opportunity in comprehending the original intent. Members were encouraged to constantly ask clarifying questions whenever an issue arose that caused confusion (including abbreviations).

The group was also introduced to the "change" process of human dynamics (Inform, Storm, Norm, Conform) as being necessary for the unlearning of old concepts/positions and the learning of new concepts/positions. Conflict is necessary and will occur; expect it and don't get discouraged by it.

6.2 Impasse procedures

The group determined that we were originally organized on an existing trust level and that the educational ideology of the districts were similar. We are focused upon improved student achievement opportunities as well as fiscal efficiencies. Sub committees have been formed to do the bulk of the investigation and should be asked to recommend a position to the group and defend it with data. The RPC may “table” a topic and ask the sub committee to investigate an issue further and return with a recommendation that included other points of view/positions. Such respect for their work and further study would be valued and received with an open-mind by the full committee.

6.3 The group addressed the “what if LD 499 was repealed?” question and determined that while many around-the-edge changes will be made that the wholesale elimination of the law is not probable nor expected. Our mission statement should reflect the values we share and would continue to share and develop should a repeal be voted in favor. Less funding is imminent and we still need to provide an improved educational experience for our children.

6.4 Recommendations to the School Boards
Since the RPC is “advisory” to the School Boards in the Regional Group, periodic updates should be given to the respective Boards. A joint school board meeting should be planned to deliver various parts of the plan as they are completed and approved by the RPC. Each local School Board will have to approve the plan prior to submission to the DOE.

6.5 Public Hearings
The group determined that keeping everyone current and knowledgeable about the consolidation efforts would be a crucial expectation of the success of the regional school unit. Public Hearings would then have to be organized in each town so that residents could attend the informational meetings in a known and convenient location and delivered by local residents on the RPC as well as School Board.

6.6 Other participants
With recent meetings of area districts who were denied their Letters of Intent, the group was asked how they would handle such a request. It was determined to pose that issue to the four district School Boards for advice and proper protocol.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Finance Com: Vice Chair Nadine Barnard reported that the committee met and has been developing a template from which to include data for analysis across and amongst districts. Audit reports from the 06-07 School Year should be available soon and will provide the committee with much data confirmed by a third party. Next meeting October 11th 5:30 HDES.

7.2 Governance Com: Chair Seth Goodall reported that the committee had investigated many variations of board configuration and presented a draft apportionment of an eleven member board. An additional position of having no other elected local school board was also shared. Meetings are held every Tuesday morning at 7:00 at the SAD 16 Central Office.

7.3 Public Ed/Rel Com: Chair Nancy Jodoin updated the group on a meeting held at the Portland workshop on consolidation and the proposal to have John Armentrout host informational resources on the Hall-Dale web-site so that various paper publications could include the “for more info” address and various school web sites the link to a single source. The site would include all minutes from the RPC, contact numbers/addresses of members and sub committee minutes as well. A link to the State of Maine site would also be included.

7.4 Other Committees

An area school transportation services meeting will be convened on October 10th at 5:30 to gather data and bid specifications for a collaborative bid package this fall/winter at the SAD 16 Central Office. Vendors will then be asked to respond to the total and or separate needs of the participating districts, with the bid awarded this winter for the next school year and beyond.

A request was made of the chair to consider organizing a Building and Grounds Com to address local facility ownership/transfer concerns inherent in the consolidation law.

8.0 Chair Report

The chair requested that all participants speak freely to him whenever an issue arose either at the RPC meetings or from a local constituent.

Legislation was requested from the Finance Committee and has also been supported by Rep Sharon Treat to help the RPC and local School Boards deal with barriers that may surface in future investigations/deliberations.

A four district joint school board workshop is scheduled for 7:00 on Oct 17th at the Hall-Dale Elementary School cafeteria to provide an open conversation between the RPC and local Boards/Communities they represent.

9.0 Topics for future agenda

None

10. Adjournment

Nadine Barnard **motioned** to adjourn at 7:20. Seth Goodall **seconded** the motion, **voted in favor unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Donald L. Siviski
Secretary to the RPC