

RSU #2 Review

Dresden, Farmingdale, Hallowell, Monmouth, Richmond
Our number one goal is improving the education of children.

February, 2009

RSU #2 conducted their first official meeting on Dec. 9, 2008. O'Neil LaPlante was elected Board Chair and Jim Grandahl was elected Vice Chair. Other members of the Board of Directors are: Joan Drappeau, Dawn Gallagher, Gary Getchell, Rich Howard, Jon Lambert, Linda Leet, Sarah McNaughton, Cory Munsey, Mark Pearson and Tracey Woodman. Don Siviski was hired as the Interim Superintendent until June 2009 and will be hired as official Superintendent of the RSU #2 until 2011 pending contract negotiation and approval of the Board.

Since that time, we have met weekly, alternating regular meetings with subcommittee meetings. Currently we have subcommittees working in the following areas: Policy & Personnel Chaired by Tracey Woodman; Buildings & Grounds / Food Services / Transportation Chaired by Rich Howard; Finance & Budgeting Chaired by Gary Getchell; and Negotiations (Chair not voted on as of yet).

The Board would like to keep the communities informed of the progress being made. We want folks to know that all minutes, meeting times and places, and agenda's are posted on our website: www.kidsrsu.org. We also realize that not everybody uses or has a computer so we will be sending out Review's, such as this one, periodically.

The Policy & Personnel subcommittee has been working on getting RSU policies in place, reviewing job descriptions to accommodate the RSU positions and Central Office administrative roles.

The Buildings & Grounds / Food Services / Transportation subcommittee has Joan Drappeau and Sarah McNaughton focusing on Food Services, Jon Lambert and Rich Howard focusing on Transportation and Mark Pearson and Rich Howard focusing on Buildings and Grounds.

Within these areas of focus for B&G are an Operations and Maintenance budget for 'life safety' concerns, researching State and Federal assistance that is or may become available, and the process of deed and title transfer. Food Services have gathered data in relation to district budget, year end balances, food production, subsidy rates and technological accounts. The Transportation Committee has begun initial review of all district transportation processes for immediate and long-term efficiencies. All areas have completed job descriptions for positions within the RSU.

Finance and Budgeting has worked on a calendar to include public meetings prior to the public hearing and budget voting on warrant articles. Currently, they are preparing for budget information from each school unit so they can merge the data into one RSU budget. They will be busy with this process after March 1st. In addition, the Finance & Budget subcommittee will accept the responsibility of overseeing technology expenditures and programming, and review current services and practices.

The RSU Administrative Team has been awarded a \$5000 Dept of Ed planning grant to create a short and long range strategic plan for improved student achievement. We also recently received notification that the RSU will be eligible to apply for a grant up to \$25,000 to help with the acquisition of business software and computer hardware to unify all financial functions and accounting procedures.

By the beginning of the school year in September, all RSU #2 staff will have been trained and schools will be operational with Infinite Campus, which is a comprehensive student information system with parental access of student academic and behavior activities. This service has been provided to all districts in Maine by the Dept of Ed.

Legislators Sen. Earle McCormick(R), Sen. Seth Goodall (D), Rep. Sharon Treat (D), and Rep. Les Fossil (R) recently attended a Board meeting to discuss concerns regarding Budget Validation Referendum, start-up costs assistance, status of Funding Stream for Economic Stimulus allocation, and how RSU #2 can be helpful to the Legislators. We are all committed to working together in these and other areas of the education process.

It is our intent to encourage people to get involved, attend meetings, ask questions, add the website to "Favorites" and visit it often.