



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

October 29, 2008

James Dill, RPC Co-Chair
72 Sunset Drive
Old Town, ME 04468

Dear Mr. Dill:

Thank you for the Reorganization Plan that you submitted on behalf of the Old Town, Alton, Bradley, Greenbush, and Milford School Departments on October 28, 2008 for Department review for compliance with the school reorganization law, P.L. 2007, chapter 240, Part XXXX.

I recognize how much time, effort and thoughtful work is required to complete a reorganization plan and appreciate the efforts made, to date, by all those involved.

Members of my staff and I have reviewed the submission and offer the comments and notes listed below to assist you in completing the plan. If you make any substantive change(s) to any part of the plan beyond those listed below, please be sure to note those on the Updated Reorganization Plan Cover Sheet Checklist, along with notation of those items that have changed per the notes contained in this response.

General Documentation (Submittal Sheet)

- Please submit a Reorganization Plan Submittal Sheet including signatures from authorized representatives of member school units with the final submission of your plan.
- Please include the October 1, 2006 student enrollment count of 2,041 on p. 2 of the Reorganization Plan Cover Sheet.

General Comment

- Please remove all references to "RSU 16" from your plan. The Department cannot assign a regional school unit number until after the reorganization plan is approved by the Commissioner and the voters at referendum.

- There are several references in your plan to the “PRS’ and “PBS” Boards; please spell out these acronyms, as it is unclear to what you are referring.

Checklist/Plan Text Items

With respect to the items submitted as “complete”, please note the following

** Required Elements*

5. Please confirm that you intend to transfer the school properties listed in Exhibit 5-A, and only retain the names associated with the properties listed.

9C. Please correct the typographical error in bullet three; (“stage” to “state”?).

11. Please refer to the enrollment figures from October 1, 2006 in calculating the average number of resident pupils. The Department has been using the October 2006 counts since the inception of the reorganization law and must remain consistent with that. The unit must provide comprehensive K-12 programming and any plan must still meet the requirements of the reorganization law.

The Commissioner’s approval of a reorganization plan is of the plan as written on a date certain. Please also provide clarification in this section that future amendments to the plan require Commissioner approval.

12. Each regional school unit’s plan must provide an estimate of the cost savings to be achieved by the formation of a regional school unit and how these savings will be achieved in accordance with 20-A MRSA 1461(3)(A)(12) and in sufficient detail to provide clear direction for the new regional school unit prior to plan approval. Please provide the information regarding estimated cost savings; and please consider using the guidance offered in the Drummond Woodsum workshop materials.

We will review all items on the checklist again, upon your completion of the plan.

SUBMISSION OF REVISIONS:

Please provide the additional materials to complete your plan by Friday, November 14, 2008 in order to meet the referendum timeline requirements. Please include:

- Any additional data required
- An updated Submittal Page with Signatures
- An updated Cover Sheet Checklist
- A copy of this Response from the Commissioner.

I will respond no more than 14 days after the revisions/additional materials are refiled with the Department. As you are the contact person identified on the Submittal Sheet, this response is addressed to you but with the understanding that you will share it with your school administrative unit board members, RPC members and others involved with this Reorganization Plan.

Finally, what I am reviewing for approval is a plan (or a submission, if the plan is incomplete) which is by its very nature prospective, with steps yet to be taken or finalized; and any review comments or approval given are in relation to the elements required under P.L 2007, chapter 240, Part XXXX but not the legality of all the activities proposed. Thus, I strongly recommend that you have your own legal advisor(s) review the details of any particular transaction proposed in your plan (particularly with respect to the disposition of property, to debt, and to employee contracts/relations) as you proceed, to ensure the legality of the steps you'll be taking to implement the plan. If that review leads to any substantive changes in any parts of your plan, please be sure to submit an amended plan to the Department for our review and our file.

Again, my sincere thanks for your efforts.

Sincerely,



Susan A. Gendron
Commissioner of Education

cc: David Walker, Superintendent, Old Town School Department
Alan Smith, Superintendent, Union 90
Scott Hayden, RPC Co-Chair
Harvey Hayden, Facilitator