

REGIONALIZATION PLANNING COMMITTEE
(RPC)
MSAD #34 & MSAD #56

MINUTES
September 26, 2007
7 pm
Belfast Area High School

AGENDA

1. Introduction – Ray Freve
2. Goals and Purpose
3. Procedures:
 - A. Facilitator/Chair/Co-Chairs
 - B. Recorders
 - C. RPC meeting dates/times/location
4. Sub-committees (13)
5. Internal decision making process:
 - A. Majority vote?
 - B. Consensus?
6. Ground rules
7. Attendance
8. Questions and possible answers
9. Adjourn

Ray Freve, facilitator, opened the meeting with some introductory remarks. His role is to assist the RPC. The role of the RPC is to develop a plan for the two school districts to send to the Commissioner for a referendum vote. The Notice of Intent has been approved. There is a December 1 deadline for the RPC to complete its work. There needs to be clarification of what happens if there is a problem with the deadline and we submit a partial plan.

There are 13 components to the plan. Ray said he would explain, and go through the process. The RPC may choose to divide the group into sub-committees. The committee can meet at any time it chooses.

13 Components

1. Units to be included in the RSU.
2. Size, composition and apportionment of the governing body: governance structure, size of the Board, voting process.
3. Method of voting. How? Weighted? One man, one vote.
4. Composition of school committees? Do you want these, and if so, what are their duties?
5. Disposition of real and personal school property. Who owes what?
6. Disposition of indebtedness and lease purchase obligations.
7. Assignment of personnel contracts, collective bargaining agreements and other contractual obligations. Do not do now.

8. Disposition of existing school funds and existing financial obligations. This includes trust funds, other funds, balances, etc. The state needs to know what we have.
9. Transition plan that addressed the development of a budget for the first school year and interim personnel policies. How shall this occur?
10. Documentation of public meetings held. Who attended? How many?
11. An explanation of how units that approve the reorganization plan will proceed if one or more of the proposed members of the RSU fail to approve the plan.
12. Estimate of cost savings and how these saving will be achieved.
13. Other such matters decided as deemed necessary by the SAUs.

The intent of the statute is for everyone to be in an RSU, all of which will have at least 1200 students. Ray felt that this RPC was ahead of the game at this point due to previous work by administrators.

When money will be discussed, Ray will ask Jim Rier from the state to attend. Brian MacFarland, Business Manager in MSAD #56 will also be available for information.

Recorders

Both large groups and small groups need recorders.

Meetings

Ray stressed the importance of everyone attending the meetings. December 1 presents the group with a very aggressive timeline. The RPC needs to decide how often they will meet, where, dates, whether to rotate the meetings to different locations, and whether decisions are made by consensus or majority vote. There are no weighted votes here.

Ground Rules

These rules address how to govern yourselves. Suggestions from Ray were:

1. No dump questions.
2. Deal with issues, not people/personalities.
3. Need to be recognized to speak by the facilitator.

The advantage to a January referendum is that the state will pay for it. The disadvantage to the January referendum is that the RSU Board, etc. must be elected prior to July 1, 2008.

Questions and Answers

1. Local control and representation? That is one job of the RPC, to develop the governance structure and define the powers.
2. Can the RSU Board form at the same time as the plan starts? Perhaps.
3. Can the RPC members have a hard copy of the law and the Intent? Yes.
4. Can some of the committees have the templates? Yes. Choose 3 sub-committees to serve on and the chairperson will decide. Templates will be given to the appropriate committees.
5. A sign up sheet is circulating.
6. Is the role of the RPC to submit a plan? The school committees submit the plan to the Commissioner. School committees can not modify the plan.

7. What happens if the plan is turned down? At the January referendum, the vote is not on the plan, but rather on whether or not to join the RSU.
8. Makeup of the RSU Board? Must meet the one man, one vote test. Could use weighted votes.
9. 13 sub-committees to do the work. Would like to have members on each of the committees. Will these sub-committees present to the entire RPC? Others are doing that, but this group makes that decision.
10. Public hearing on the plan? Submit to the Board of Directors and post a meeting.
11. The facilitator will copy all of the templates.
12. Can we talk about contracts and change them? No, we can't do that until the RSU is formed.
13. Are meetings open to the public? Yes, they must be open meetings. There are no executive sessions.
14. How will we handle the public? The RPC determines that.
15. Are sub-committee meetings open to the public? Yes, they should be held in public places, not in someone's home.
16. Is the purpose of all this to consolidate administrative services? The purpose is to improve educational services. We need to find ways to save money since resources and the number of students are diminishing.
17. 1200 students + 800 students: will have one superintendent to reduce costs? Is it realistic that we will save money? Where? Yes, it is realistic that we will save money, but people may lose some services.
18. School choice? Inclusion program? We will save money by stopping redundancy. School choice may be an option in the RSU. By banding together, we will save money with the shifting of teachers, better placement of students/teachers, sharing of food costs, etc.

A motion was made by Jean Dube and seconded by Rick Marston that Ray Freve serve as Chair of the RPC. **VOTE: 25-1-0**

A recording secretary could be paid for by the state. Hire this position out? Mrs. Szwec volunteered her notes from tonight's session.

The RPC then discussed meeting times, dates, etc. It was decided unanimously to meet once a week. The question was asked if each sub-committee would meet each week. You must stay and complete your task before you go to another committee. Sub committees were grouped in threes: 1-3 together, 4-6 together, 7-9 together, skip 10, 11-13 together.

The majority of the RPC decided to meet every Wednesday evening from 6:30- 9:30 pm. The meetings will rotate between SAD 34 and SAD 56.

The next meeting will be October 3 at the Searsport District High School/Middle School cafetorium.

Templates will be mailed out on Friday.

Further questions, answers, comments

1. For the December 1 deadline, the RPC can submit a complete or a partial plan.
2. Is there a concrete benefit to instituting the new RSU on July 1, 2008? We need to look at it and see what happens.
3. There may be some legislative changes in January 2008. We need to see the early date as a goal, do our job, and be fair to people. We simplified the task by making sub-committees. Be proactive. We need to collaborate together.
4. Is the press planning on being present at all meetings? Yes.
5. What happens to the group if we don't arrive at a decision? Possible consequences include the withholding of subsidy.
6. We need information.

Ray Freve will book Jim Rier for a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.