

**SAD 5 / SAD 50 REORGANIZATION PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**June 4, 2008 – SAD 5 Board Room, McLain School**

Present: Committee Members

SAD 5

David Matthews, Owls Head  
Maynard Curtis, Owls Head  
Paul Luttrell, Rockland  
Ruth Hohfeld, South Thomaston  
Jeff Northgraves, South Thomaston  
Audrey Buffington, South Thomaston  
Dick Levasseur, Owls Head  
Nancy Jeffers, Rockland

SAD 50

Jamie Doubleday, Thomaston  
Bill Reinhardt, St. George  
David Cobey, Cushing  
John Falla, St. George  
Connie Russell, Thomaston  
Terry Driscoll, St. George  
Judith Zizza, Cushing  
Val Blastow, Thomaston

Maine Department of Education – Jim Rier

Superintendents – Al Pfeiffer, SAD 5, Judy Harvey, SAD 50

Business Managers – Toni Reed, SAD 5; John Spear, SAD 50

Recorder – Ann Matlack, St. George

Members of the Public – Representative Chris Rector, Thomaston; Kim Appleby and Brian Messing, SAD 5, Walter Breen, Leeann Upham, Town of Thomaston; Steve Betts, Courier-Gazette

1. **Welcome** – Chair Jamie Doubleday called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
2. **Minutes** – Due to lack of a quorum at the May 20 meeting, no business was conducted. Short minutes, indicating those present and the general topics of conversation were distributed at the meeting.
3. **Public Comment** – There was no public comment.
4. **Old Business** –
  - a. **Legislative Update** –Chris Rector quickly noted that the Legislature had adjourned and that changes had been made to the existing legislation to correct at least some of the problems communities and school boards had been encountering in reorganizing.
  - b. Commissioner Gendron was unable to attend the meeting due to illness, but Jim Rier, the Management Information Systems Team Leader at the Department of Education, was present to discuss funding formula cost-shift implications, Alternative Organizational Structures (AOS) and other concerns the Committee might have.

In dealing with cost shifts, Mr. Rier suggested one strategy would be to determine what was causing the shift. He said each new RSU would face different reasons for this cost shift. He said that since districts currently had cost-sharing formulas in place for dealing with costs over and above EPS (Essential Programs and Services), he suggested the new RSU initially share costs at those relative levels as a way of not creating cost shifts. Once the differences are determined, he suggested spelling them out in the Plan and then providing future schools boards with the flexibility to modify the cost-sharing formula as these differences changed and as the new RSU matured. He said there is no longer any language in the legislation detailing how new districts may change their funding formulas, which will allow for greater flexibility in dealing with the different problems each new RSU may face.

It was explained that the Committee had already identified the sources of the cost-shift. Mr. Rier was then asked about the priorities each district or even each community might have for

additional staffing, programs, etc., above EPS currently provided in the schools and how those programs could continue without adding to the cost shift. He explained that the new RSU legislation allowed for the creation of local school committees that could act on an advisory basis to recommend additional funding at the local level. At this time, however, this is no identified mechanism for those local school committees to do more than advise local municipal boards to appropriate additional funding. The Attorney General is currently determining how such structures might work.

Mr. Rier then handed out materials on AOSs. He pointed out that an AOS would receive only one subsidy from the state which the local RSUs would have to figure out how to allocate. Additionally, the AOS would have to determine how to provide administrative services, special education, transportation, and core curriculum for all units within the AOS. Were SAD 5 and SAD 50 to choose the AOS route, 3 budgets conforming to the new budget structure would need to be developed: one each for the current SAD 5 and SAD 50 and one for the AOS. In addition, were the Many Flags, One Campus project move forward, the new combined high school would require interlocal agreements with all 6 of the communities involved. Also, in order to move forward with an AOS, each of the two school boards would have to vote to prepare a plan for an AOS rather than an RSU: as currently authorized, the Committee may not proceed with an application for an AOS.

Jamie told the Committee that applications for Many Flags were due in October and that the Commissioner would identify one project to fund by December 31. She also said that the new RSU did not have to be in place by October; the SAD 5 and SAD 50 boards could submit a joint application for the Many Flags project.

John Spear reminded the Committee that the new RSU needed only a majority vote of both SAD's, not each municipality, in order to approve reorganization.

Mr. Rier also said that the penalties for not completing the reorganization process had been clarified and were posted on the DOE website. He explained that each unit that did not reorganize would be required to have 2% higher education mill rate and there would be a 50% reduction in the EPS allocation for system administration. Additionally, any state monies that accrued from the reduction in allocations to districts that voted against reorganization would be redistributed to districts that did. And any future school construction projects would be subject to less favorable scoring for those districts that did not vote to reorganize.

Mr. Rier did mention that the SAD 5 / SAD 50 Reorganization Planning Committee was ahead of other districts in their reorganization work, since many had stopped working while the Legislature made changes to the reorganization legislation.

- 5. Next Meeting** – The Committee will meet on Wednesday, June 25 at 6:30 PM in the Rockland City Council Chambers and on Wednesday, July 9 at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Matlack, Recorder