

MAINE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

**SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION PLAN SUMMARY
ISSUE BY ISSUE COMPARISON OF APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE PLAN
AND FARRINGTON/RURAL CAUCUS PLAN**

ISSUE	APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE PLAN – 4/11/2007 DRAFT	FARRINGTON/RURAL CAUCUS PLAN
1. Local Vote	No local vote is permitted on new Regional School Units (RSUs)	Local vote in November, 2008 to approve or disapprove proposed plans for reorganized school units
2. Timeline	New RSUs become operational July 1, 2008	New school units become operational July 1, 2009, if approved by voters
3. Number of school districts	No more than 80 RSUs	No number specified
4. Minimum size of school units	2,500 students per RSU with approved exceptions to reflect geographic, demographic, economic, transportation, population density or other unique circumstances	2,500 students per school unit in York and Cumberland counties; 1,200 students per school unit in remaining counties with approved exceptions for coastal islands, population density below 30 people per square mile
5. Ability to opt out	No provision for opting out of RSUs	Local voters in each municipality may vote to opt out of proposed reorganized school units
6. Penalty for opting out	Not applicable	Loss of 50% of EPS allocation for system-wide administration

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7. Leadership and Direction	Commissioner of Education provides leadership and direction; local regional planning committees have supporting role	Local regional planning committees provide leadership and direction; Commissioner of Education has supporting role
8. Role of Reorganization Planning Committees	Assist with implementation of RSUs; form interim personnel, budget and policy committees	Manage reorganization planning process; prepare reorganization plans for submission to local voters
9. Territory of Reorganization Planning Committee	A planning committee is established within the territory of each proposed RSU	Planning committees are established within territory of each CTE region – with approved exceptions for existing planning collaboratives
10. Make up of reorganization planning committees	School and municipal officials with representatives of general public	School and municipal officials with representatives of general public
11. Form of school units	All existing school units are merged into Regional School Units (RSUs) except for large municipal school units; SADs, CSDs and school unions are abolished as of July 1, 2008	SADs, CSDs, municipal school units and school unions may continue to exist
12. Terms of current school board members	Terms of all elected school board members are terminated June 30, 2008; newly elected RSU school boards take office July 1, 2008	Terms of current school board members are not terminated early unless changed by locally approved reorganization plans approved by local voters
13. Budget transparency	Mandated summary budget format with eleven expenditure articles	Mandated summary budget format with eight expenditure articles

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14. Budget adoption process	Mandatory budget validation referendum process for all school units for FY 2008-09 budget and for all school units above EPS for FY 2009-10 and FY 2010-11 budgets – no exceptions	Budget adoption procedures remain as they are subject to change at the local level by school board or voter petition process
15. School unions	School unions are abolished	School unions may continue to exist and are permitted as a reorganization option
16. Cost-sharing formula for additional local funds	State mandates a new cost sharing formula for additional local funds raised by RSUs based on each municipality’s required local contribution under EPS (may violate Article 9, Section 8 of the Maine Constitution because SADs and CSDs would be abolished and there would be no local vote to approve cost sharing formulas)	Cost sharing formula are determined by local agreement or private and special law as they are under existing law (no constitutional issue because SADs and CSDs remain in existence and local voters would approve cost sharing formulas)
17. Local only debt	Local only debt remains with the existing school unit even if RSU takes over associated school property	Local only debt is transferred to reorganized school unit if reorganized school unit takes over associated school property
18. Proposed State savings in FY 2008-09	\$36.5 million	\$36.5 million

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19. Method of achieving State savings	GPA for system administration is reduced by \$20 million; GPA for transportation, buildings and maintenance and special education reduced by 5% (mandatory special education reductions may violate “maintenance of effort” requirements of federal special education regulations)	GPA for system administration is reduced by \$20 million; GPA for transportation, buildings and maintenance and non-instructional costs reduced by 5% (no legal issue under federal special education regulations)
20. Collaboration	Collaboration among RSUs and between RSUs and municipalities is encouraged by general statutory language	Collaboration among school units and municipalities is encouraged; new statutory procedures are established to make collaboration easier to achieve
21. School closing procedure	2/3rds vote of school board required to initiate school closing procedure	2/3rds vote of school board required to initiate school closing procedure
22. School property	School property is transferred to RSU, if needed	School property is transferred to reorganized school units, if needed
23. State subsidized debt	State subsidized debt is transferred to RSU	State subsidized debt is transferred to reorganized school units