

December 14, 2007

Amber Snell
780 Newell Brook Road
Durham, ME 04222

Dear Ms. Snell.:

Thank you for the Reorganization Plan that you submitted on behalf of Freeport School Department, Durham School Department and MSAD 62 on December 3, 2007 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)

- All information submitted as required.
- The actual number of students for which the proposed RSU was fiscally responsible as of October 1, 2006 was 1,931. I am making you aware of this as this is the enrollment number that will be used in determining Essential Programs and Services funding.

Checklist/Plan Text Items

Items Checked “Complete”

With respect to the items you checked as “complete”, please note the following:

** Required Elements*

2 & 3. My staff has reviewed the proposed apportionment of the regional school unit board that was included in the reorganization plan and has determined that the apportionment of the board is in compliance with 20-A MRSA Section 1472.

Items Checked “In Progress” or “Not Yet Started”

With respect to the items you checked as “in progress” or “not yet started”, we are unable to complete our review until the additional information is provided. However, based on our preliminary review we would ask you to please note the following:

** Required Elements*

4. Please continue work on this section.

5. Please continue work on this section.

6. Please continue work on this section.

7. Please continue work on this section.

8. Please continue work on this section.

9. Please continue work on this section.

10. Please continue work on this section.

11. Please continue work on this section.

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. Please provide the information regarding estimated cost savings; and please consider using the guidance offered in the Drummond Woodsum workshop materials.

A model for budgeting for system administration is available at www.maine.gov/education/supportingschools/planning.html.

The Department of Education will be issuing an RFP to procure routing software to be available statewide. It is the Department’s intent to issue the RFP early in 2008 and have a contract signed with a vendor as soon thereafter as possible so that the software will be available to RSUs and municipalities as soon as possible. SAUs may begin to work with the system in FY 2008-2009 but will not be able to budget any cost savings until FY 2009-2010.

13. Please continue work on this section.

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

** Parameters*

B. Please continue work on this section.

B (3). Please continue work on this section.

B (4). Please continue work on this section.

F. NOTE: If you have given an operational date of July 1, 2009 or later, see Cover Sheet, Footnote 6.

Needs for Assistance

The Department's Reorganization Management Team will be contacting you shortly to discuss how best to address the needs for assistance you identified.

SUBMISSION OF REVISIONS:

Please provide the additional materials to complete your plan by February 1, 2008. 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: Elaine Tomaszewski, Superintendent, Freeport School Department
Joseph Feeney, Superintendent, MSAD 62
Shannon Welsh, Superintendent, Durham School Department
John Gleason, RPC Co-Chair
Paul Schumann, RPC Co-Chair
Bob Kautz