

Falmouth Public Schools
Administrative Offices

REC'D JAN 12 2009

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January 9, 2009

Susan Gendron, Commissioner
State of Maine, Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron:

In response to your letter of January 6, 2009, we have taken the following action:

1. On the updated Alternative Plan Cover Sheet and in Part A of the plan, we have included the actual number of students as of October 1, 2006 (2,147);
2. An addendum (Exhibit D) has been added to the plan and provides detailed projected expenditures and cost savings in FY 2008-2009 for system administration, transportation, special education, and facilities and maintenance. Exhibit D compares budgeted expenditures from FY 2007-2008 to those of the projections of FY 2008-2009. We appreciate the assistance of Karla Miller who provided a template for this exhibit.

What follows is:

- An updated Submittal Plan
- An updated Cover Sheet Checklist
- A revised page 1, Part A
- A copy of Exhibit D
- A copy of the Response letter of January 6, 2009

Please contact me should you have any questions or additional needs. We look forward to your review and response.

Best regards,

George H. Entwistle 3rd
Superintendent of Schools

ALTERNATIVE PLAN SUBMITTAL SHEET

School Administrative Unit Submitting Alternative Plan:

- Falmouth Public Schools

Contact Information:

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Date Plan Submitted by SAU: January 9, 2009 (2nd, revised submission)

The intent to submit an alternative plan has been approved by the Commissioner in the approval of the Notice of Intent?

YES NO

(If NO, please explain.)

Alternative Plan Cover Sheet
(Please attach Alternative Plan as Exhibit A)

(January 9, 2009)

Plan Requirements				
Item	Complete	In Progress	Not Yet Started	Need Assistance ¹
Plan addresses how the SAU will reorganize administrative functions, duties and noninstructional personnel so that projected expenditures of RSU in fiscal 2008-2009 for the following areas will not have an adverse impact on the instructional program.				
system administration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
special education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
facilities and maintenance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan addresses how cost savings will be achieved in fiscal 2008-2009 for the above four areas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parameters for Plan Development				
Enrollment meets requirements (2,500 except where circumstances justify an exception)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When viewed in conjunction with surrounding proposed units, may not result in one or more municipalities being denied the option to join an RSU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Includes at least one publicly supported high school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consistent with policies set forth in section 1451	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No closures of schools existing or operating during school year immediately preceding reorganization, except as permitted under section 1512	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative Agreements				
			Yes	No
Does your plan currently include information/documentation on collaborative agreements? <i>(not required, but encouraged)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Submitted after a unsuccessful referendum for Reorganization on November 4, 2008.

¹ Please explain what assistance you need to complete this portion of your plan, and state from whom you need assistance, on the next page.

Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

A. Introduction

On November 12, 2008, the Falmouth Public Schools submitted a Notice of Intent to file an alternative plan. The Alternative Plan was approved by the School Board at a meeting on December 15, 2008. The Board believes that the Falmouth Public Schools, with an enrollment of 2,147 (October 1, 2006), qualify for an exception to the 2,500 student requirement for the following reasons:

- The Falmouth schools enjoy a very high level of support from the community; student enrollment is and will continue to be stable; and the district is sustainable as an independent unit.
- Falmouth is an efficient school unit and has numerous current and planned initiatives to achieve further cost savings.
- Falmouth students are high achieving and the schools are recognized as excellent, not only within Maine but nationally, as evidenced by the awards they have received.
- Although Falmouth Public Schools officials demonstrated due diligence and good faith in the reorganization planning process with MSAD 51, the voters in Falmouth rejected the reorganization plan by a 2:1 margin.
- There are no other viable partners for consolidation available in Falmouth's geographic area, since all of the other school units have already had alternative plans approved by the Commissioner or reorganization plans approved by the voters.

B. Falmouth Qualifies For An Alternative Plan Because Circumstances Justify an Exception to the 2,500-Student Minimum and Its Continuation As A School Administrative Unit Is Consistent With The Purposes And Goals Of The Reorganization Law

The consolidation law states that a school administrative unit will qualify for an alternative plan if it serves fewer than 2,500 students:

- where circumstances relating to one or more listed factors justify an exception to the requirement of 2,500 students. In Falmouth, the following factors support approval of an alternative plan:
 - Demographics, including student enrollment trends and the composition and nature of the community;
 - Economics, including existing collaborations to be preserved or enhanced and opportunities to deliver commodities and services to be maximized; and
 - Other unique circumstances, including the need to preserve existing or developing relationships, meet the needs of students,

Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

maximized educational opportunities for student and ensure equitable access to rigorous programs for all students.

[See P.L. 2007, Chapter 240, Section XXXX-36(2)(B)(3) and (6(A).]

and

- where the plan would be consistent with the policies set forth in 20-A M.R.S.A. Section 1451, including:
 - **Opportunity.** Equitable educational opportunity for all students to demonstrate achievement of the content standards of the State's system of learning results
 - **Programs.** Rigorous academic programs that meet the requirements of the system of learning results established in section 6209 and that prepare students for college, careers and citizenship;
 - **Delivery.** Uniformity in the delivery of academic programs that meet the requirements of the system of learning results established in section 6209;
 - **Sustainability.** The efficient use of limited resources in order to achieve long-term sustainability and predictability in the support of public schools;
 - **Public funds.** Effective use of the public funds expended for the support of public schools by means of:
 - A. The creation of cost-efficient organizational structures; and
 - B. Administrative structures and efficiencies that permit the organized and regular delivery of uniform state-sponsored professional development programs to promote coherence and consistency in the understanding and application of the State's standards-based system for continuous improvement in student achievement;

The balance of this plan demonstrates in greater detail why Falmouth Public Schools meet the above criteria for approval of an alternative plan.

An alternative plan must also include a plan to reorganize administrative functions, duties and noninstructional personnel so that projected expenditures of the unit in fiscal year 2008-09 for system administration, transportation, special education and facilities and maintenance will not have an adverse impact on the instructional program. Although the law refers only to the current school year, this plan describes initiatives that will continue next year and beyond.

Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

1. Stakeholder Support/Sustainability

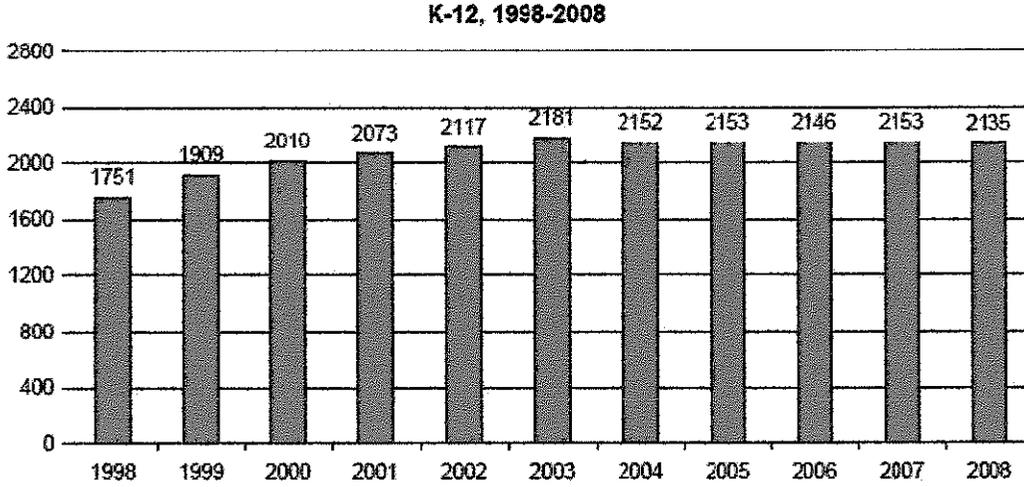
- **Community Support:** The citizens of Falmouth are very strong supporters of the Falmouth Public Schools and they see their public schools and students as a significant source of pride for the community. School budgets have always received the endorsement of the Town Council and have been supported by the community at-large. This community support was evidenced most recently in the outcome of the budget validation referendum (May 2008) and the new school vote (October 2008) with overwhelming positive responses from voters. In contrast, however, when it came to evaluating the proposed merger of the Falmouth Public Schools with MSAD 51, citizens were not convinced of the benefit to their community. In response to the proposed consolidation with MSAD 51, citizens voted approximately 2:1 in opposition to the Plan.
- **Planning Process:** Representatives from all stakeholder groups connected to the Falmouth Public Schools (students, teachers, parents, community members, community leaders and elected officials) have participated in open community forums, or “**Community Dialogues.**” Approximately 300 stakeholders have participated in these full or half-day dialogue sessions that have determined the district’s priorities and immediate focus areas. Each community dialogue has resulted in the creation of an **18-Month Plan** that identifies the work and initiatives to be undertaken by the district for the following 1 ½ years. Future planning then, for Falmouth, has involved stakeholders in the identification of the district’s long-term goals, fiscal priorities and action steps in 18-month increments.

Stakeholders in Falmouth report feeling part of the planning process and ownership of the plan. Community Dialogues have taken place in October 2004, March 2006, and October 2007. The next dialogue that will result in a plan designed to carry the district through September of 2010 will be held on April 16, 2009. All of the earlier 18-Month Plans have been successfully implemented; the current plan is also anticipated to be completed on schedule. These plans have provided the framework necessary to improve student performance and make district operations more efficient. A copy of the current 18-Month Plan (October '07 – April '09) is attached to this plan (Exhibit B).

- **Student Enrollment Projections:** Falmouth’s enrollment trend history has been very strong and in recent years, despite rapidly declining state-wide enrollment trends, has remained relatively stable due primarily to in-migration factors. The enrollment forecast for the next ten years shows a modest decline reflecting a decreasing child birth trend state-wide, but provides evidence of a sustainable student population for the foreseeable future.

Exhibit A - Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

NESDEC Falmouth, ME Historical Enrollment



NESDEC Falmouth, ME Projected Enrollment

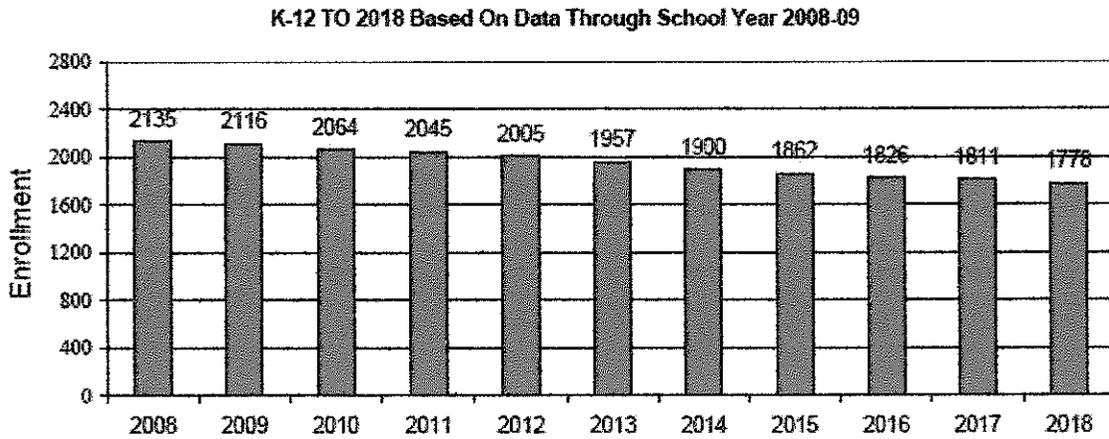


Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

2. Budgeting and Expenditure Trends

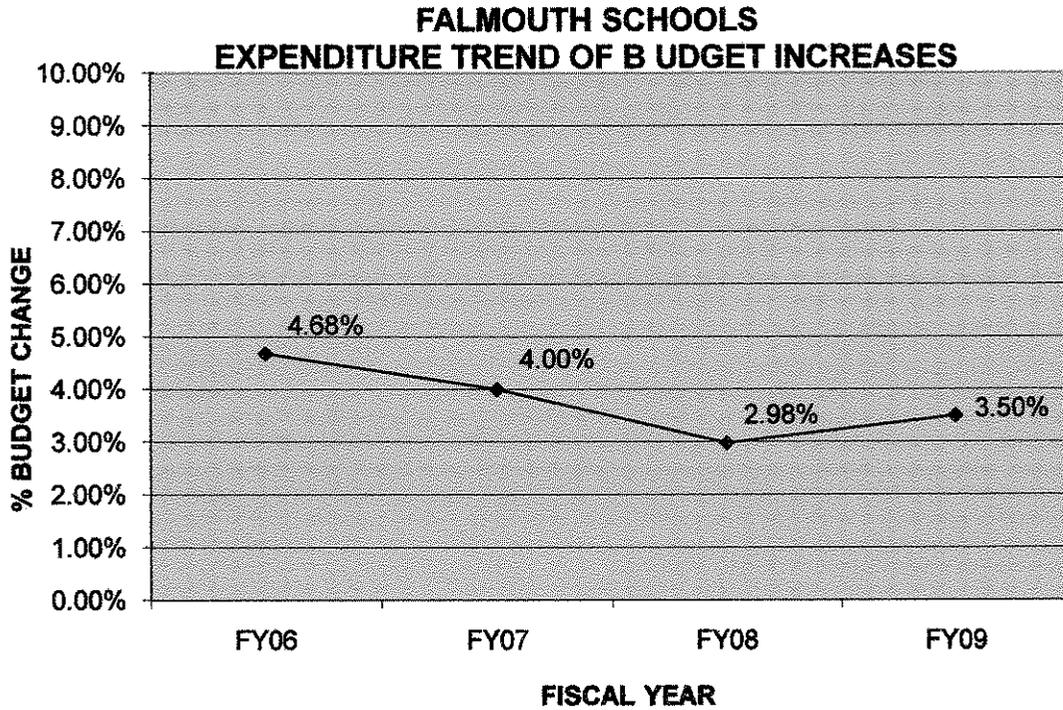
- **Budget Highlights:** The Falmouth community has demonstrated very strong support for the Falmouth Public Schools' budget for many years. Since FY 05-06, the budgets have been developed and framed in strict alignment with the **18-Month Plan**. The Falmouth Public Schools also adopted a **zero-based budgeting philosophy** during the FY 05-06 budget development process that has been utilized ever since. This philosophy emphasizes the need for the district to reassess the cost versus benefits of expenses and rebuilds the budget, rather than just rolling over line items from year to year. Consistent with this approach, all new proposed expenditures considered for inclusion in the budget must undergo scrutiny by both the Leadership Council and the School Board. **Proposal Templates** require the requestor to create and share a cost/benefit analysis for the new initiative.

During the next budget cycle, any initiative from the prior year is evaluated against the anticipated outcomes using a **Program/Position/Account Evaluation Template**. Although this was not the central intention for adopting these accountability mechanisms, a positive outcome has been that school leaders have significantly increased their knowledge base of K-12 student needs. Before these new requirements were implemented, school leaders tended to strongly advocate for the needs of only their own student population. They were far less sensitive to the give-and-take needed to ensure equitable allocation of resources across the entire student population. In addition, starting with the FY 08-09 budget, any new budget request was only reviewed if the proposed spending was offset by a dollar-for-dollar reallocation of existing funds or resources. This new criterion will continue to be part of the budget development process in the future.

These very simple but important components in the budget development process provide the needed data and confidence to those who are responsible for carrying the budget forward through the public review phase. This process has also been instrumental in securing a high level of local support for these last four budgets.

- **Budget Increases Kept to a Minimum:** The following graphs illustrate the results of the rigorous budget process discussed above. Budget increases since FY 05-06 have been controlled and moderate compared to many other districts and despite unpredictable cost pressures from the energy markets (heating fuel, diesel, electricity), and other cost factors including health insurance. School officials anticipate that budgets will continue to have community support because of the transparent budget process that is now well-established. Efficiencies continue to be identified and monies are directed toward improving student performance and programs.

Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan



3. DOE Targeted Cost Centers

➤ **System Administration**

Another key indicator that reflects positively on the efficiency of the Falmouth Public Schools is system administration as a percent of the district total budget.

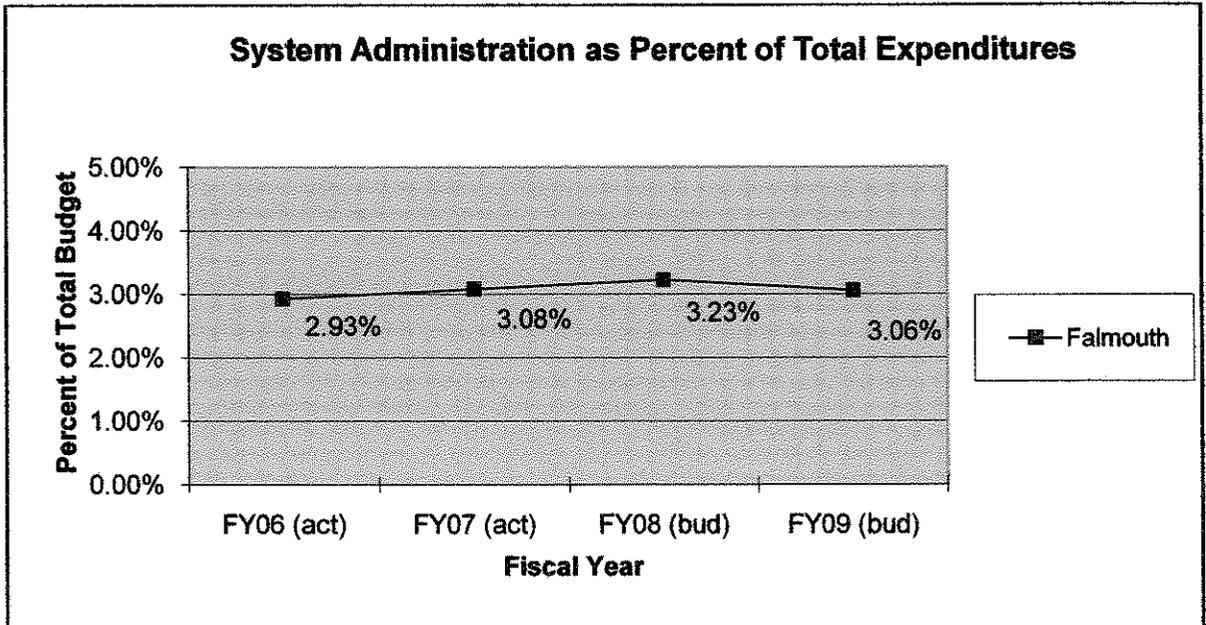


Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

This year, system administration has decreased as a percent of total budget. Review of administrative costs during the budget process led to the reduction of a full-time administrative position in the District and a part-time position in business operations. Although not a defined system administration cost per EPS, the Falmouth Public Schools have also reduced costs for technology support by eliminating the Technology Director position. This was accomplished by re-evaluating the technology support structure, identifying and supporting technology skills of remaining staff, and promoting sustainable support systems and processes. School officials will continue to review system administration costs and reduce them wherever possible. Existing and planned collaborative opportunities, especially with the Town of Falmouth, will seek to capture additional efficiencies and savings by reducing the redundancy of like functions.

➤ **Transportation**

The transportation department held its operations to an overall 1.15% budgeted expenditure increase for FY 08-09, net of the adjustment to address diesel/gas fuel market conditions.

The transportation department of Falmouth Public Schools has a 0.5 FTE director, who manages a fleet of 25 vehicles, staff and the transportation needs for over 2000 students. Routing software has been utilized since 2007 to analyze and manage bus routes and times, as well as manage fleet maintenance and repair schedules. The software also offers an on-line process for approving instructional and athletic trips. Cost savings have also been achieved through the following initiatives:

- Bus maintenance and replacement schedules are adhered to in an effort to keep buses operating efficiently and to avoid costly repairs or maintenance.
- Bus repairs are primarily done at the Town's public works garage in a collaborative effort to avoid costly contracted service rates.
- The transportation department utilizes the Greater Portland Council of Governments' (GPCOG) buying collaborative for purchasing bulk items such as diesel fuel, gas, tires, and lubricants.
- Buses are purchased through the State contract bidding program.
- Falmouth and MSAD 51 share daily transportation for students of both districts to the Portland Arts and Technology High School (PATHS).
- Tight management of routing has allowed for the elimination of a regular bus run at the K-4 level beginning in FY 07-08.
- A full transportation study is currently underway and the School Board is to evaluate all transportation-related services (regular runs, field trips, athletic trips, summer programs, etc.) to determine if there are additional efficiencies and/or cost savings opportunities.

Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

- School officials will continue to explore opportunities to reduce costs and improve efficiencies both in internal transportation operation and through collaborations with the Town and other school units.

➤ **Maintenance/Facilities**

Net of adjustments for the market volatility of energy costs (heating fuel), the maintenance department held operations to a 1.00% budgeted expenditure increase for the current FY 08-09 budget year.

The Falmouth Public Schools promote a pro-active, ongoing maintenance program for all school facilities. The excellent condition of the buildings, despite their age, is a testament to this effort and a source of pride for the community. It also makes good fiscal sense to address maintenance and repair conditions in a timely manner, before they can become more costly conditions to remedy.

Cost savings efforts include the following:

- Management of the cleaning of school buildings, grounds maintenance and facilities needs is successfully performed with a 0.5 FTE director (shared position with transportation).
- Contracting for cleaning service at the High School since 2001 has saved the district at least \$85,000 per year since its inception vs. in-house staffing. Savings are primarily made in benefits and overtime costs.
- The maintenance department is actively involved in cooperative bulk purchasing collaboratives that have provided the district with considerable savings. One collaborative is Maine Power Options, a buying group for energy that achieves economies of scale for bidding by combining schools, hospitals, and colleges as members. Significant savings have been attained for heating oil contracts, propane, and multi-year electricity contracts. The GPCOG also provides cost-effective buying opportunities for custodial supplies, signage needs, and other products.
- The Falmouth Public Schools and the Town of Falmouth share a facilities scheduler (town employee) who is responsible for scheduling the use of all Town facilities including the schools for non-school uses.
- Significant cost savings have been achieved in the past several years with lighting retrofits in all the buildings, which has included a conversion to energy efficient compact fluorescent and LED lighting as well as the inclusion of motion-activated sensors. Energy projects completed during the past two years alone have reduced electricity costs by over \$125,000 annually.
- Continuous evaluation of all building systems and envelopes are an integral part of efforts to improve operational efficiencies for the future. Currently, the Falmouth Middle School is undergoing an energy efficiency audit that will provide long-range energy improvement solutions for building heating and

Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

ventilation as well as upgrading the energy efficiency of the building exterior. Savings in energy costs will be used to fund any needed capital improvements.

➤ **Special Education**

Our special education staff work hard to achieve cost efficiencies while still providing high quality in these legally-mandated services. Managing special education costs can be very challenging, since individual student needs can quickly and unpredictably outstrip available resources. The Falmouth Public Schools have a long history of success in providing identified students with effective and responsive services offered in the least restrictive environment. Every effort is made to provide needed programs to Falmouth students “in house” so as to avoid more costly, out-of-district placements. The number of identified special education students in the Falmouth Public Schools is currently below the state average – Falmouth 11% and the State +/- 15%.

An effective Response To Intervention (RTI) system is fully operational in the elementary grades and allows staff to quickly identify specific student issues that are interfering with learning and immediately introduce targeted, tiered support interventions. It is anticipated that the RTI system, expanding now to the middle school grades, will reduce the number of students referred to and/or identified as needing special education services.

Targeted efforts to support our special education students have included implementing an on-site day treatment program and development of an academic program to support a Youth Alternative residential treatment program. Both of these programs access alternative funding mechanisms and afford an economy of scale to support overall special education operations. The special education department will continue to meet the needs of its students by reallocating existing resources and reducing costs whenever possible.

4. Collaborative Agreements

Current Agreements

Falmouth Public Schools benefit from a variety of collaborative agreements already in place. Collaborative agreements benefit the district both in terms of greater efficiencies in business and support operations and allowing access to educational opportunities for students that might otherwise be cost-prohibitive for the district and parents. Such agreements and relationships cover a broad spectrum and include:

- **Collaborative Purchasing Agreements/Consortiums**
 - Town of Falmouth
 - Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG)

Exhibit A – Falmouth Public Schools Alternative Plan

- York and Cumberland County Cooperative Purchasing Group (food services)
- Maine Power Options

- **Cooperative Service/Program Agreements**
 - Portland Public Schools (Special Education)
 - Cape Elizabeth Public Schools (Special Education)
 - Scarborough Public Schools (Special Education)
 - South Portland Public Schools (Special Education)
 - MSAD 51 (transportation, literacy, Mandarin Chinese)
 - Southern Maine Student Support Consortium (curriculum and instruction)

- **Vendor Agreements**
 - University of Southern Maine (professional development)
 - Counseling Services, Inc. (student support)
 - Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE) (reciprocal student support)
 - YMCA of Greater Portland (Alternative High School program)

New/Expanded/Potential Agreements

It is recognized that there is a continuing need to identify efficiencies and to seek new and innovative ways of doing business. Falmouth Public Schools plans to expand its work with the **Town of Falmouth**. The Town has proven to be a very willing and creative partner, and expansion of collaboration is anticipated to result in some significant savings of resources, money, and/or effort for both the schools and the Town. Falmouth's location also offers a unique opportunity to sit at the table with the **Governor Baxter School for the Deaf and The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** as a neighbor and a partner willing to explore how administrative savings might be found through collaboration. While these first two partners may hold the greatest opportunity for significant cost control and savings, expanding the on-going work with **USM** and **UNIBE** will also be explored. We also intend to help resurrect the **Casco Bay Educational Alliance** which has been inactive during intensive reorganization planning. In the past, CBEA has been a successful collaborative structure for offering important and economical professional development for its members in the greater Portland area.

5. Falmouth Students and Faculty are High-Achieving

Falmouth is proud of its nationally-recognized, high achieving students and faculty. Exhibit C contains a detailed description of each school, its students, faculty and their accomplishments. Falmouth students consistently achieve at very high levels – levels comparable to those of other school districts in southern Maine with like demographics, including Yarmouth, Cape Elizabeth and MSAD 51.

6. No Adverse Impact on Instructional Programs

The Board and administration thoroughly examined Falmouth's educational services and the needs of students, and the FY 08-09 school budget was developed with an eye to preserving and enhancing the instructional program. **Both the Board and the administration believe that the budget is fiscally responsible and that it will result in no adverse impact on the instructional program.**

C. After Performing Due Diligence, Falmouth Does Not Have Any Potential Partners

The consolidation law further provides that a school administrative unit may stand alone if, after performing due diligence to develop a plan for over 2,500 students, a school administrative unit is unable to achieve the enrollment goal due to the decision of geographically proximate school administrative units to participate in a different regional unit.

The Falmouth Public Schools demonstrated due diligence and good faith in carrying out their obligations under the school reorganization law to consolidate with other school units in the geographic area.

Falmouth and MSAD 51 submitted a Reorganization Plan to Commissioner Gendron on January 15, 2008 and received preliminary approval for the Plan pending resolution of the cost-sharing provisions through legislation. On May 1, 2008, Commissioner Gendron provided final approval of the Plan. A revised Plan was submitted on June 10, 2008 and approved by the Commissioner on June 13, 2008.

On November 4, 2008, Falmouth voters rejected the Reorganization Plan. This leaves Falmouth without any viable consolidation partners:

- MSAD 51 submitted an Alternative Plan on December 2, 2008.
- Portland's Alternative Plan has been approved.
- Yarmouth's Alternative Plan has been approved.
- Westbrook's Alternative Plan has been approved.
- The Windham and Raymond School Department's Reorganization Plan, previously approved by the Commissioner, was approved by the voters on November 4, 2008.

D. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Falmouth Public Schools are uniquely situated to stand alone. The school district is achieving excellent educational results while managing costs effectively, has a stable student population that continuously receives strong taxpayer support, and has and will continue to aggressively pursue management methods and collaborations that produce cost effective results for our community.

Falmouth Public Schools

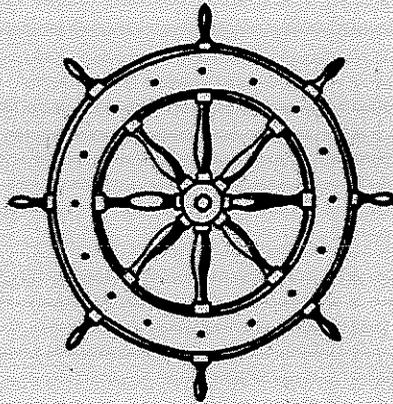


Exhibit B

18-Month Plan
(October, 2007 – April, 2009)

Exhibit B - Falmouth Public Schools 18 Month Action Plan (October '07 - April '09)

Values Because the community values:	Long Term Goals	18 Month Targets	District Wide Initiatives	District Special Education	Lunt School (K-2)	Plummer-Motz School (3-4)	Falmouth Middle School (5-8)	Falmouth High School (9-12)
Health, Fitness, & Learning	Goal 1: Maintain a culture of wellness that promotes the physical, social and emotional well-being of all members of our school community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue to make measurable improvement in the school culture K-12. ▪ Nutrition ▪ Physical Activity ▪ Promotion of Positive Social Interactions ▪ Resilience ▶ Expand knowledge base of mental health issues and support systems. 	Conduct research on models to better meet students' needs related to mental health matters (including exploration of how better to build resiliency).	Explore service options to better serve students with serious mental health issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue to support local school wellness initiatives and programs to improve targeted areas. -Implement school wide initiative to teach relaxation and yoga activities for students. 	Continue to support local school wellness initiatives and programs to improve targeted areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue to support local school wellness initiatives and programs to improve targeted areas. -Expand elective options that promote wellness. -Improve, expand upon intramural & co-curricular activities. 	Continue to support local school wellness initiatives and programs to improve targeted areas including: CPR training for all seniors, CPR training for Ed. Techs. and teachers, and promoting wellness offerings for Intersession 2008/2009.

Values Because the community values:	Long Term Goals	18 Month Targets	District Wide Initiatives	District Special Education	Lunt School (K-2)	Plummer-Motz School (3-4)	Falmouth Middle School (5-8)	Falmouth High School (9-12)
Individualism, Growth, Equity & Diversity	Goal 2: Meet the learning needs of every student.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue curriculum development and connect it with assessment, instruction & student learning; ▶ Establish clear priorities across K-12 content areas and, on the basis of data analysis, reasonably sequence the curriculum across the grade spans; ▶ Continue to strengthen RTI (Response to Intervention) systems and structures that monitor student learning and trigger support interventions as needed; ▶ Create comprehensive service learning plan (K-12) and continue to expand active learning options. ▶ Expand collective knowledge of, and capacity for, adopting instructional practices that best connect to student learning goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue curriculum review cycle, with a focus on documentation using the content summary templates for K-12 consistency; •Implement science and social studies modifications and develop common assessments. •Implement reading goals and assessments and evaluate effectiveness. •Clarify writing goals K-12. •Review math curriculum sequence K-12 07-08. •Review VPA curriculum sequence K-12 08-09. •Continue RTI program development and implementation in reading and math. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop new policy to ensure linkage between Special Education and RTI. -Explore moving from a grade level to a learning standards based report system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Each grade level will take on a service learning project with clear connection to curriculum. -Expand intervention capacity to include math support. - Align referral process and follow-up procedures for SCT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Each classroom will take on a service learning project with clear connection to curriculum. -Expand intervention capacity to include math support. - Align referral process and follow-up procedures for SCT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Integrate service learning projects into Advisories. -Examine grade reporting and grading practices (including homework) that provide more valuable information to students and parents about progress. - Align referral process and follow-up procedures for SCT and SAT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expand, support and monitor alternative learning opportunities for FHS students. -Document and publicize service learning projects done by FHS students. -Target and plan for new studies at FHS to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Intro to Chinese •AP French •AP Physics •Math course options •Reading/ writing course options. •Align referral process and follow-up procedures for SCT.

Values Because the community values:	Long Term Goals	18 Month Targets	District Wide Initiatives	District Special Education	Lunt School (K-2)	Plummer-Motz School (3-4)	Falmouth Middle School (5-8)	Falmouth High School (9-12)
Justice, Social Responsibility & Voice	Goal 3: Promote responsible citizenship behavior (locally, regionally, nationally, globally).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue to create new opportunities for student voice; ▶ Create a global learning plan; ▶ Create opportunities for environmental awareness and action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Continue to explore and enhance multi-cultural learning opportunities through connections with UNIBE and the China Bridge program as an aspect of the global learning initiative. •Continue implementation of gr. 1-12 world language initiatives. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Adopt a project that promotes environmental awareness (reducing, reusing or recycling). -Host UNIBE practicum teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopt a project that promotes environmental awareness (reducing, reusing or recycling). -Host UNIBE practicum teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Adopt a project that promotes environmental awareness (reducing, reusing or recycling). -Implement an evidence-based initiative to increase prosocial behavior in the student population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Support, document and publicize global learning opportunities for students and staff. -Use feedback from Student Forum and Community Dialogue to develop environmental awareness projects (including Intersession offerings).

Values Because the community values:	Long Term Goals	18 Month Targets	District Wide Initiatives	District Special Education	Lunt School (K-2)	Plummer-Motz School (3-4)	Falmouth Middle School (5-8)	Falmouth High School (9-12)
Life-long Learning, Instructional Quality & Professional Integrity	Goal 4: Build Professional Learning Communities (within our schools, across our district, regionally and beyond).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Regularly incorporate process for sharing professional learning ; ▶ Expand opportunities for greater levels of professional collaboration; ▶ Use curriculum review process (in collaboration with consolidation partners) to guide instructional planning/capacity building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Create a K-12 PD steering committee with representation from each building. •Explore and design partnerships with USM and UNE in response to identified needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -action research -deepened content knowledge -research-based pedagogy -novice teacher development -school leadership. •Begin to identify authentic PD collaboration opportunities with MSAD 51. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue to foster the UNE and USM teacher development program relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify Professional Development Team responsibilities. -Continue to foster the UNE and USM teacher development program relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Charter a Plummer Motz Professional Development Team responsibilities. - Continue to foster the UNE and USM teacher development program relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Charter a FMS Professional Development Team. -Continue to foster the UNE and USM teacher development program relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charter a FHS Professional Development Team and use NEASC self-study to identify PD needs related to curriculum, assessment and instruction. -Incorporate student feedback into evaluation & supervision process for staff members in years 1 & 2.

Values Because the community values:	Long Term Goals	18 Month Targets	District Wide Initiatives	District Special Education	Lunt School (K-2)	Plummer-Motz School (3-4)	Falmouth Middle School (5-8)	Falmouth High School (9-12)
Community Involvement, Equity & Accountability	Goal 5: Continually improve our organizational systems and structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ School administration consolidation plan/implementation (with focus on expanding/improving student learning opportunities); ▶ Review/adjust time usage for non-instructional purposes; ▶ Continue Pre K-12 facilities planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consolidation planning in accordance with prescribed timeline and legislation. -K-12 facilities planning in accordance with DOE process and timelines. -Restructure business, personnel and administrative functions at the Central Office (efficiency/productivity). -Energy conservation/savings •Support Cool Communities initiatives •Investigate and promote energy efficient initiative (audits/recycling at all schools/energy projects). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluate and adjust as indicated time spent by staff & students for non-instructional purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluate and adjust as indicated time spent by staff & students for non-instructional purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluate and adjust as indicated time spent by staff & students for non-instructional purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluate and adjust as indicated time spent by staff & students for non-instructional purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluate and adjust as indicated time spent by staff & students for non-instructional purposes. -Continue to look for creative use of space to meet instructional needs.

Falmouth Public Schools

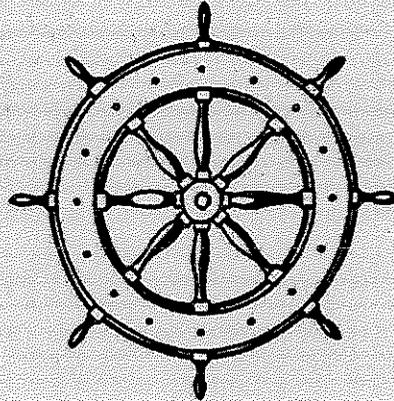


Exhibit C

School Profiles

EXHIBIT C

2008-2009 School Profiles

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

The Town of Falmouth, population 11,000, has a long tradition of strong support for its schools. It is a community primarily of well-educated professionals who maintain very high expectations of their students, teachers and schools. Most residents earn their living in Portland. Falmouth is proud of its nationally-recognized, high-achieving students and faculty.

Falmouth High School is a comprehensive public high school offering a rigorous academic program and a wide range of athletic and extracurricular activities. It has an enrollment of approximately 680 students in grades 9 through 12; the Class of 2009 includes 163 students. Falmouth Middle School has an enrollment of approximately 740 and serves students in grades 5 through 8. The two elementary schools, Lunt and Plummer-Motz, serve children in grades kindergarten through 4. Lunt houses 406 primary students while Plummer-Motz has 311 students in grades 3 and 4.

FALMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

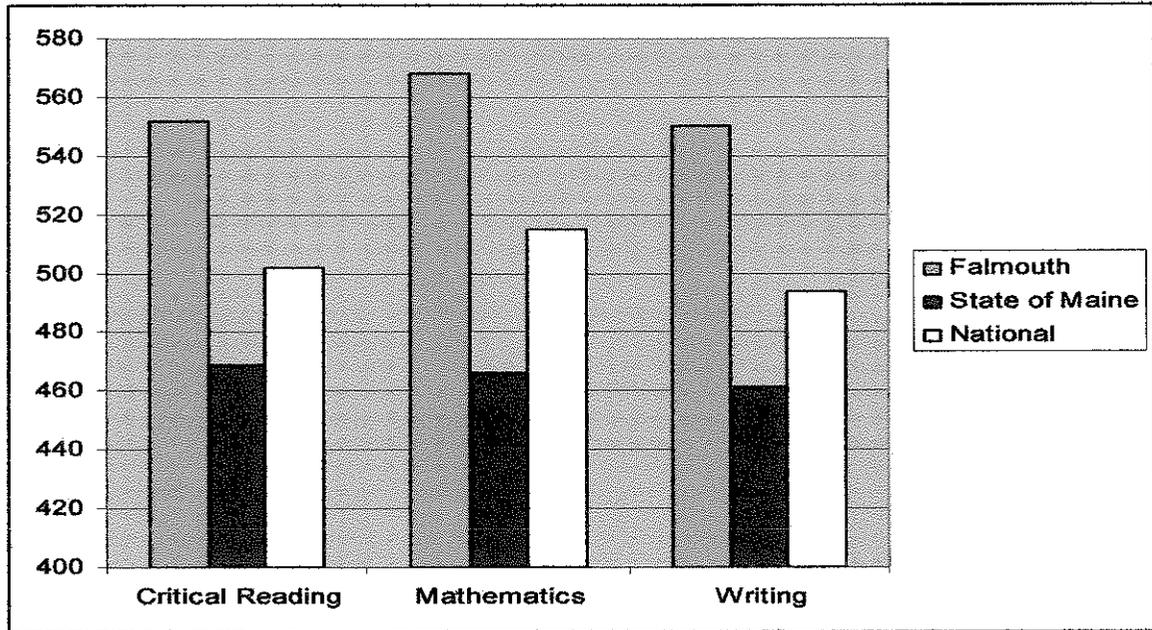
Curriculum: Falmouth High School offers a number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses in addition to a full array of challenging college-preparatory (CP) and honors-level (H) courses. The Class of 2009 has had thirteen AP courses available to them during their time at FHS:

AP Biology (<i>1.5 credits</i>)	AP European History	AP Psychology
AP Calculus AB	AP French Language	AP Statistics
AP Chemistry (<i>1.5 credits</i>)	AP Government & Politics: Comparative	AP United States History
AP English Language & Composition	AP Government & Politics: United States	
AP English Literature & Composition	AP Physics B	

Additional advanced courses include English IV Honors / English IV SUPA (Syracuse University Project Advance - taught at the college freshman level) and Spanish V Honors.

Student Performance: The Falmouth High School Class of 2008 included 10 National Merit Finalists and 19 AP Scholars, 10 AP Scholars with Honors, and 11 AP Scholars with Distinction.

Class of 2009 SAT Average Compared with State & National Averages



	<i>Critical Reading</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>Writing</i>
Falmouth	552	568	550
State of Maine	469	466	461
National	502	515	494

Post Secondary Plans:

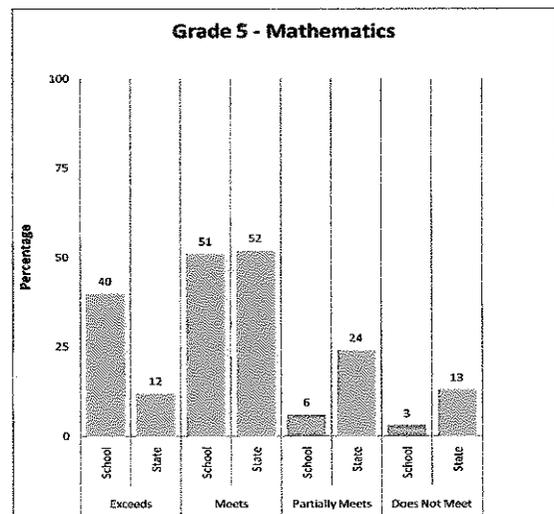
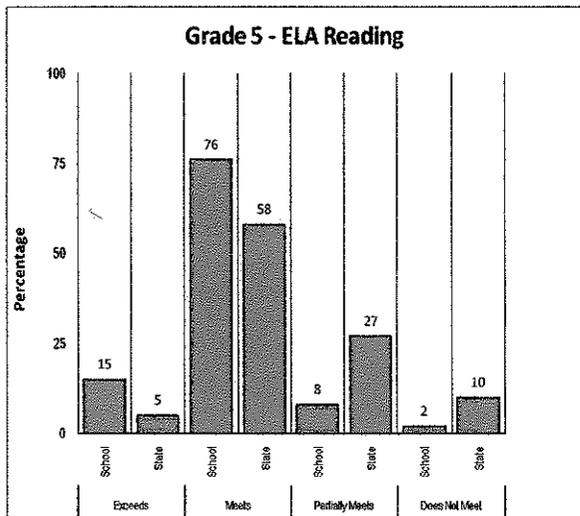
	<i>4-Year College</i>	<i>2-Year College</i>	<i>Postgraduate</i>	<i>Program</i>
<i>Work/Travel/Other</i>				
Class of 2008	90%	6%	1%	5%
Class of 2007	82%	9%	2%	7%
Class of 2006	81%	4%	1%	14%

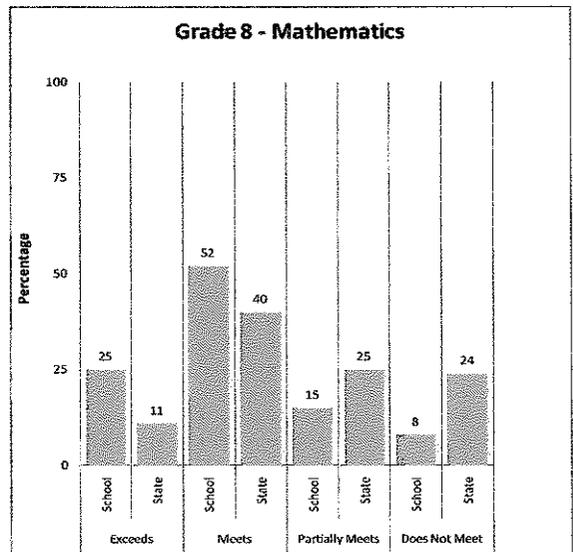
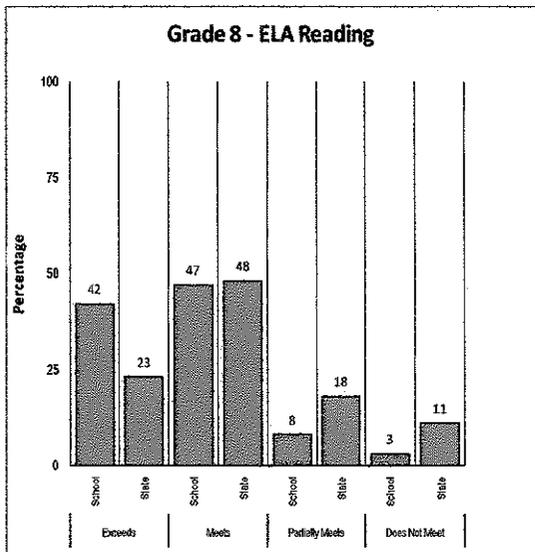
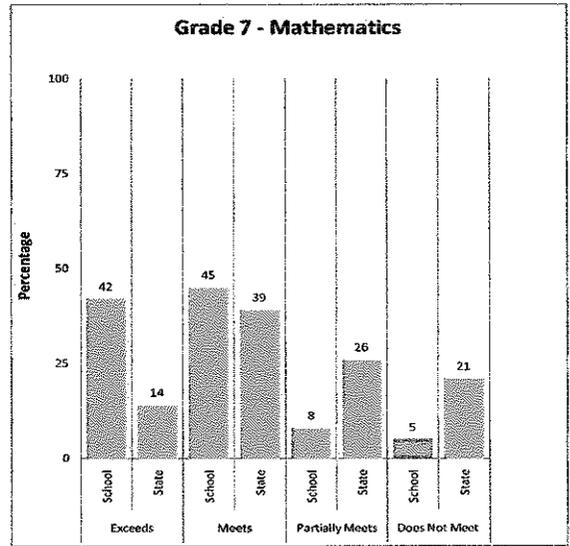
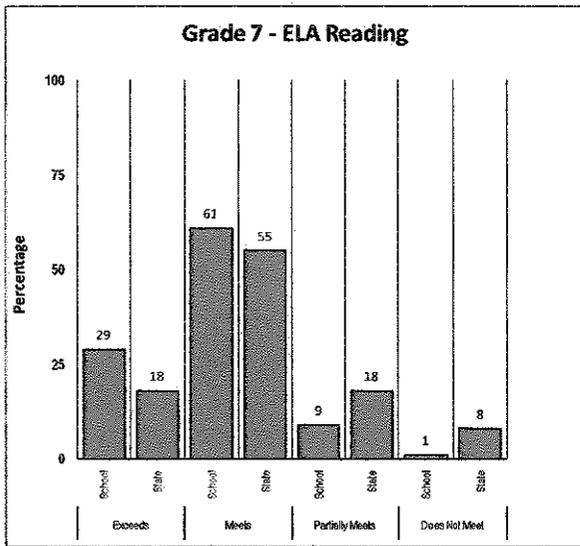
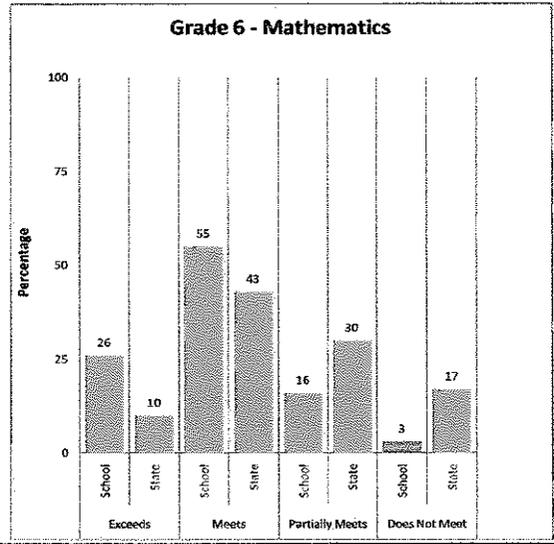
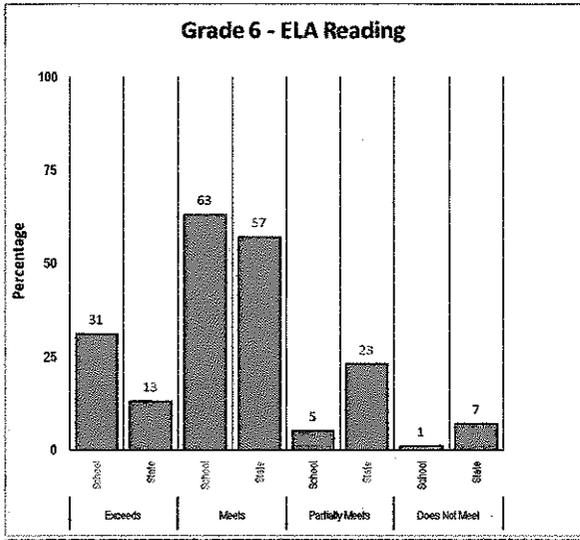
Academic Awards: *US News and World Reports* named Falmouth High School a **Silver Medal School in 2007**, which placed it in the top 500 high schools nationally. There are also 16 teachers at the high school certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

FALMOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

Curriculum: Falmouth Middle School offers its students heterogeneously placed classrooms in teams of teachers for grades 5 and 6, and in crews for grades 7 and 8. Core curriculum at all four grade levels includes English language arts, math, science, social studies, Spanish or French, as well as unified arts experiences in physical education, music (choral and instrumental), visual arts, health, industrial technology, and computer technology. Eighth grade students also receive a trimester of instruction in Chinese language and culture. The English language arts curriculum is based on the Revised Maine Learning Results, as are all other content areas. The math curriculum, in addition, moves from the Everyday Mathematics program in grade 5 to Connected Math II in grades 6 through 8. The Northwest Evaluative Assessment (NWEA) is used as an additional source of performance data in grades 4-8 in reading and math. Using the above data, along with end of fourth grade performance indicators, Middle School teachers differentiate effectively within this heterogeneous setting. Math and English language arts acceleration is available for students who exceed grade-level expectations and/or qualify for gifted and talented programming. Co-curricular, intramural, and middle school sports opportunities offer a vast array of options for students. The Middle School's Civil Rights Team is an active co-curricular opportunity for students of all ages, and special attention is paid to creating a respectful and safe environment for all learners.

Student Performance: Falmouth Middle School students score extremely well on the Maine Educational Assessment. Most recently, the range of students meeting or exceeding standards in reading at all four grade levels is 84% - 94%, while the range of "does not meet" scores is only 1% - 5% at those grade levels. In math, the range for meeting or exceeding standards is 77% - 91%, while the range of "does not meet" scores at this level is 3% - 8%. These scores lead or are consistent with those attained by other schools in the southern Maine area with comparable demographics, including Yarmouth, Cape Elizabeth, and MSAD 51.

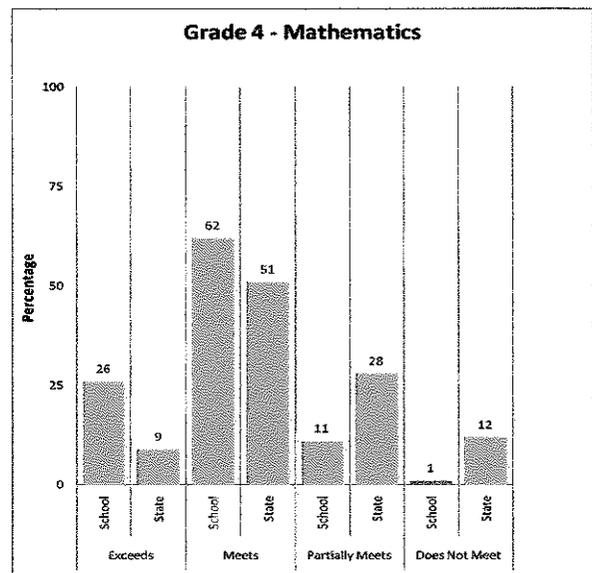
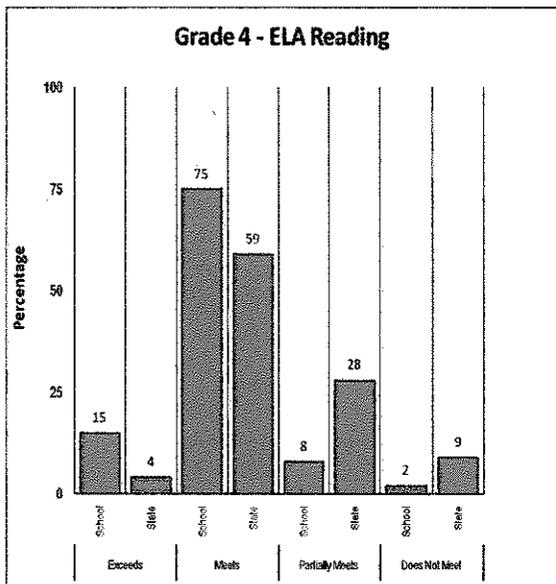
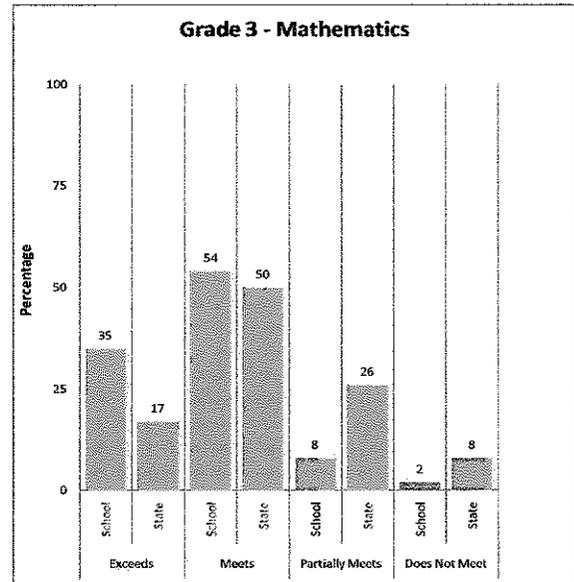
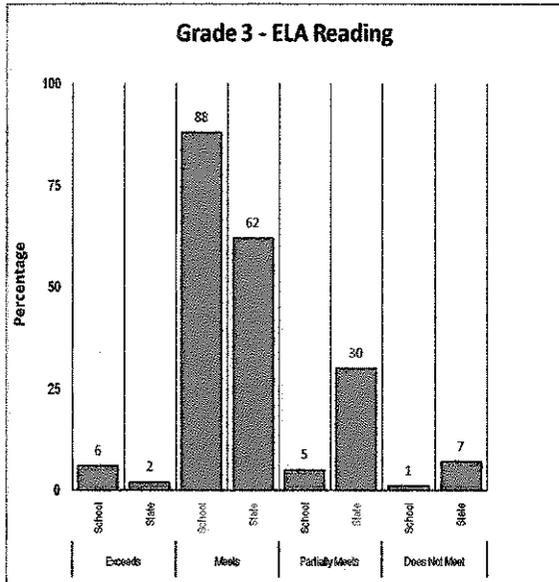




Academic Awards: *Falmouth Middle School was named a Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education in 2008 for continuous improvement by a high performing school.* In addition, seven teachers at the Middle School have been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

PLUMMER-MOTZ SCHOOL

Curriculum: Plummer-Motz is the elementary school serving children in grades three and four. The literacy program is a balanced effort including word study, guided reading, with both fiction and non-fiction, whole class novels, and Junior Great Books. AIMSweb and the Developmental Readers Assessment help guide RTI efforts in this school. Writing is purposeful and integrated, with Six-Trait Writing and other research-based programs guiding instruction. The Everyday Mathematics Program is taught at these two grade levels as well. Social studies focuses on Native Americans and Maine Studies, while Science Companion kits in physical, earth/space and life science guide instruction in science. French is currently the language taught at both grade levels, but Spanish will replace French in grade three next year and in grade four the following year as the long sequence language begun in first grade moves through the district. Art, music, physical education, and computer classes are enjoyed by all students as well as regular library programs and access. Gifted and talented identified children are served through Seminar, while high achieving math students are accelerated one grade level beginning in grade four. Community is fostered through monthly all school assemblies. Also, co-curricular offerings for children begin in grades 3 and 4, including chorus, select chorus, after school explorations in physical education, robotics, math club, and a community service club called Kids Who Care. The Northwest Evaluative Assessment (NWEA) is introduced in grade three as another important standardized assessment in reading and math. Using the above data, along with end of second grade performance indicators, Plummer-Motz teachers focus in carefully on differentiated needs for all students.



Student Performance: Scores on the 2008 Maine Educational Assessment are extremely high, with 90% - 95% of children meeting or exceeding standards in reading and 88% - 89% meeting or exceeding standards in math. Only 1-2% of Plummer-Motz students do not meet standards in these two areas. These scores lead or are consistent with those attained by other schools in the southern Maine area with comparable demographics, including Yarmouth, Cape Elizabeth, and MSAD 51.

Academic Awards: *Plummer-Motz School* was named a *Blue Ribbon School* by the United States Department of Education in 2005 for continuous improvement by a high performing school. In addition, two Plummer-Motz teachers have been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

LUNT SCHOOL

Curriculum: Lunt School is a primary school serving children in grades kindergarten through second grade. Students experience a print-rich literacy environment, are taught in a balanced literacy program including read alouds and guided reading, are assessed regularly using the AIMSWeb as well as the Developmental Reading Assessment and Observational Survey, and receive differentiated instruction depending upon their current level of performance. Response to Intervention (RTI) is already a clearly established and documented intervention in reading and math. (Lunt teachers recently were presenters at the Department of Education's Response to Intervention Conference in Augusta.) Writing is a key component of the literacy program and is assessed in both the fall and spring. Math instruction is based on the Everyday Mathematics Program, while science and social studies are carefully sequenced to cover developmentally appropriate topics in local and global citizenship and community history, as well as life, physical and earth/space science topics. Second grade science has an important resource in FOSS hands-on kits. Spanish is taught beginning in first grade and is the new long-sequence language in Falmouth, replacing French beginning in 2007-08. All children additionally receive regular instruction in music, physical education, and art, and also visit the library weekly. Character education is supported through all-class meetings led by the principal and through age-appropriate building themes regarding respectful behavior. Service learning and community service is also a strong component of the primary experience.

Student Performance: Nearly 90% of the children leave second grade reading at grade level as measured by the Developmental Reading Assessment.

Academic Awards: Lunt School is proud to share the Blue Ribbon School award with Plummer-Motz School since their work in math and reading instruction clearly establishes the children at grade level prior to the transition to third grade. In addition, one teacher in this school has been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Exhibit D

Comparison of budgeted expenditures for identified cost areas:

Cost Area	FY07-08 Expenditure Budget	Percent of Total Budget	FY08-09 Expenditure Budget	Percent of Total Budget	State Average (%)
System Admin	849,045	3.50 %	769,024	3.06 %	4% target
Transportation	1,240,582	5.11 %	1,305,014	5.19 %	5.20 %
Maintenance	2,415,922	9.95 %	2,485,198	9.89 %	12.10 %
Special Ed	2,808,874	11.57 %	3,080,093	12.26 %	13.95%

A description of savings (realized/planned) within each cost area is identified in Section C of the Alternative Plan.

These cost savings will not have an adverse impact on educational programs.



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

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

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

January 6, 2009

George Entwistle, Superintendent
Falmouth Public Schools
51 Woodville Road
Falmouth, ME 04105

Dear Superintendent Entwistle:

Thank you for the Alternative Plan that you submitted on behalf of Falmouth Public Schools on December 16, 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 an alternative 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 Alternative 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 include the actual number students as of October 1, 2006 (2,147) on p. 2 of the Alternative Plan Cover Sheet and in Part A of the plan.

Checklist/Plan Text Items

Items Checked "Complete"

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

** Required Items*

Each alternative plan must provide detailed projected expenditures and cost savings in FY 2008-2009 for system administration, transportation, special education, and facilities and maintenance in accordance with P.L. 2007, chapter

240, Part XXXX-36(6)(F). Please compare expenditures from FY 2007-2008 to those of the projections of FY 2008-2009. When providing these projected expenditures and cost savings, you may want to consider using the guidance offered in the Drummond Woodsum workshop materials. If you have questions concerning this requirement, please email Karla Miller or Suzan Beaudoin at karla.miller@maine.gov or suzan.beaudoin@maine.gov for assistance.

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 as soon as possible so that you meet the January 30, 2009 timeline requirements. Please include:

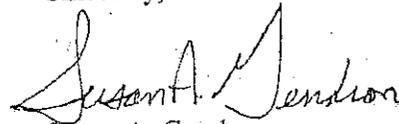
- Any additional data required
- An updated Submittal Page
- An updated Cover Sheet Checklist
- A copy of this Response from the Commissioner.

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.

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