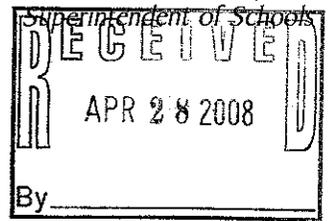


SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT NO. 44

21 Philbrook Street • Bethel, Maine 04217-4045

David W. Murphy Ed.D.



Tel. (207) 824-2185 Fax (207) 824-2725

April 23, 2008

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

Dear Commissioner Gendron,

With the Legislature finally finishing up this session with the passage of LD 2323, I am writing to request your assistance with regard to the School Consolidation requirement for MSAD #44. As I believe you know, we had worked diligently for nearly six months with MSAD 21, SAU 37 and MSAD 43 in an attempt to develop a consolidation plan that would meet the state requirements. Shortly before the December 1, 2007 filing deadline, MSAD 21 and MSAD 43 decided to submit a new plan that included MSAD 39 as their partner.

Prior to that time, we had also looked into a possible consolidation with MSAD 17. It quickly became clear that they would have experienced the same challenges in consolidating with us that they had encountered with MSAD 39. I also had a conversation with the Superintendent of MSAD 72 earlier in the process but they had been pursuing other options.

At the current time, we find ourselves as a true doughnut hole despite hundreds of hours of meetings, planning sessions and conversations with potential partners and the Department of Education. Every district that borders us is already part of an approved consolidation plan. Although our enrollment falls just shy of the required 1,000 student count (approximately 945 including our tuitioned students from the Unorganized Territories and several surrounding towns), we do have two schools that are eligible for the isolated small school adjustment.

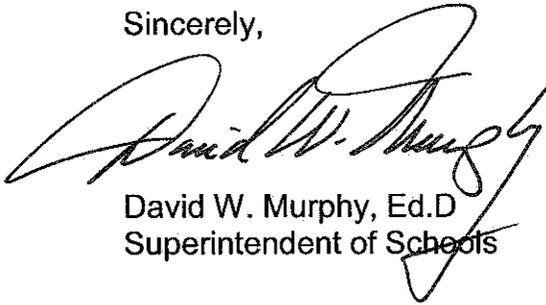
We have looked at the possibility of consolidating with SAU 37 but the reality of that relationship is difficult to justify as my office is 70 miles away from Rangeley High School (and that is taking the quickest route over the Height of the Land).

Over the past several years, we have developed collaborative efforts with other districts and would be interested in continuing and expanding on those types of relationships in light of our current status. It is important to note that we have also

reduced Central Office administration substantially over the past two years by eliminating the Business Manager and the Curriculum Director positions. I am currently contracting one or two days per month for services in each of those areas. As of today, our entire Central Office staff includes an administrative assistant, a bookkeeper, the superintendent and a part time receptionist. Just recently, I also spoke with the Auburn superintendent about the possibility of sharing payroll services and other business functions with them.

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss our specific situation in greater detail. I would also welcome any assistance that you might be able to provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David W. Murphy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "M".

David W. Murphy, Ed.D
Superintendent of Schools

Cc: Senator Bruce Bryant
Representative Timothy Carter
Representative John Patrick
Representative Sawin Millett