

**BUCKSPORT, ORLAND, MSAD 18**  
**REORGANIZATION PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**6:30 pm Monday, November 26, 2007**  
**Miles Lane School Library**

0. The meeting was called to order by Facilitator Ann Bridge at 6:30 pm. Rob Howard presiding.

Members present: Wayne Ames, Laurie Boardman, Tom Taylor-Lash (6:37 pm) (Orland Board alternate), Tom Foster, Guy Haney, Rob Howard, Roger Raymond, Roxanne Mushrall, and Jennifer Riefler.

Members absent: Millard Clement

Facilitator: Ann Bridge

Superintendent: Judy Lucarelli

Others present: Ralph Gonzales (Orland Selectman alternate), Don Houghton (The Enterprise), Rick Newman (MSAD 18 alternate), Jeff Robinson (Bucksport Council alternate), Boo Upton (Orland)

1. Moved by Wayne, seconded by Roger to approve the minutes of the 11/19/07 meeting as presented. No comments from citizens. Motion carried 8-0.
2. Report on data requested at previous meeting: no data was provided at this time.

Moved by Roger, seconded by Laurie to delete item 5A(2) the cost of legal and survey work to complete these agreements shall be included in the respective 2008-2009 school budgets. No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

3. Discussion and Action on Plan Item 9: Transition Plan

Moved by Guy, seconded by Roger to approve the following language for Item 9.A.: "All policies existing in the previous school administrative units shall continue to apply to the same employment positions and schools after they become part of the regional school unit. After the operational date, the regional school unit board and superintendent will develop and adopt region-wide policies in accordance with applicable law." No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

Moved by Roger, seconded by Guy to delete proposed language for Item 9.B. Allocation of funds for RSU purposes during the 2008-2009 school year. No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

Moved by Wayne, seconded by Roxanne to approve the following language for Item 9.C.: Process for development of 2009-2010 RSU budget

(1) Budget Development Process

- (a) Each administrator develop a cost-center budget
- (b) Meet as a Team to prioritize as a group
- (c) Superintendent makes final decisions on recommendations, presents proposed budget to RSU Board in specified cost center categories and revenue categories
- (d) RSU Board reviews/modifies proposed budget, approves budget for citizen consideration

- (e) RSU Board presents budget in District budget hearing
- (f) Citizens present at District Budget Meeting approve, increase, or decrease budget expenditure lines and appropriate funds accordingly
- (g) Within 10 days after District Meeting, RSU Board submits budget to citizen referendum for final approval
- (h) If referendum fails, RSU Board decides what budget to take for a second District meeting, and process repeats until the referendum approves the amount approved in the District meeting.
- (i) If not resolved by July 1, the RSU implements the most recent budget approved by the RSU Board, until such time as the referendum approves the amount approved in the District meeting.

(2) Draft 2009-2010 Budget Development Timeline

late January	Budgets to Cost Center Administrator
mid February	Budgets to Superintendent
early March	Administrative Team begins Review of Proposed Budget
mid March	Team Finalize Total Proposed Budget
late March	RSU Board Review of Proposed Budget
mid April	RSU Board Vote on Proposed Budget
early May	RSU Board conducts hearing on Proposed Budget
mid May	RSU Meeting held on Proposed Budget
late May	Referendum on Proposed Budget: within 10 days of district meeting

No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

4. Discussion and Possible Action on Plan Item 10: Documentation of the public meeting(s) held

Moved by Wayne, seconded by Tom Foster to approve the following language: “To develop this Plan, the RSU held the several public meetings, all open to the public. Meetings were posted in the Enterprise and the Ellsworth American as well as on the Bucksport School Department web page. Copies of minutes and agendas were provided to all school board members, all four municipal offices, and placed on the web page. For all but one RPC meeting this was mailed in advance of the meeting. Next to each meeting below is the number of citizens attending the meeting. The groundrules of the RPC stipulate that after a motion is made and seconded, and before there is a vote on the motion, the chair asks citizens present if there are any comments or questions on the matter under consideration.

- 6 pm Monday, September 17, 2007 at Bucksport Town Council Chambers: 2 citizens, 2 press
- 6 pm Tuesday, October 2, 2007 at Bucksport Middle School Library: 3 citizens, 2 press
- 6 pm Monday, October 15, 2007 at Bucksport Middle School Library: 6 citizens, 1 press
- 6 pm Monday, October 22, 2007 at Orland Consolidated School room 40: 7 citizens, 2 press
- 7 pm Tuesday, October 30, 2007 at Jewett School Conference Room: 7 citizens, 2 press
- 6 pm Monday, November 19, 2007 at Bucksport High School Library
- 6:30 pm Monday, November 26, 2007 at Miles Lane School

The plan was discussed at each board meeting held in September, October, and November and at special board meetings held the last week of November when the Boards voted to submit the plan. Meetings were held as follows:

Bucksport: Council Chambers, 7 pm on 9/5/07, 10/3/07, 11/15/07, action following the hearing on 11/28/07

Orland: Orland Consolidated School, 6:30 pm on 9/11/07, 10/9/07, 11/13/07, action following the hearing on 11/27/07

MSAD 18: Central Office, 7 pm on 9/12/07, 10/10/07, 11/14/07, action following the hearing on 11/28/07

Citizens are permitted to speak at all board meetings.

Three hearings were held on the plan to be sent to the Department of Education:

- (1) Orland at 6:30 pm on 11/27/07 in the Orland Consolidated School
- (2) MSAD 18 at 6 pm on 11/28/07 in the Central Office
- (3) Bucksport 18 at 7 pm on 11/28/07 in the Central Office

No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on Plan Item 11: Explanation of how the school systems that approve the plan will proceed if not all involved school systems approve the plan

Moved by Guy, seconded by Tom Tailor-Lash to approve the following language: "If citizens of any of the three school systems fail to approve the Plan, the RPC shall be reconvened to draft a plan more likely to be approved by all school units. Failing in this, the school boards shall restart the process."

No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on Plan Item 13A: Operational Date of the RSU

Moved by Tom Tailor-Lash, seconded by Roxanne to approve the following language: "The operational date of the RSU shall be no sooner than July 1, 2009."

No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

7. Discussion and Possible Action on Plan Item 13B: School Board Member Compensation

Following brief discussion there was no action on this item.

8. Discussion and Possible Action on Plan Item 13C: Proposed Name for RSU 9

Following brief discussion there was no action on this item.

9. Discussion and Possible Action on small unit item A: Due Diligence to partner for 2500 students

Moved by Jennifer, seconded by Tom Tailor-Lash to approved the following language:

The formation of our RSU was determined in part by geography, since the upper Penobscot Bay affects transportation. It was also determined by the makeup of school units in the region. As a service center community, Bucksport is interested in a partnership with communities of the same or smaller size in order to maintain our unique character. This factor ruled out partnering with Ellsworth or Brewer.

The SAD's on the west side of the river prohibited partnership with outlying communities such as Stockton Springs, Frankfort, or Winterport. Orrington has close ties with Brewer so that partnership was not an option.

There are advantages to the current make-up of RSU 9. All three school systems are active participants in the Penobscot River Educational Partnership, which is committed to providing shared services for greater efficiencies in several areas, including special education, professional development, and financial operations. All three systems contract for transportation from the same provider, which will make transitions easier. The three school systems share administrative services. All MSAD 18 students attend school in Bucksport under an exclusive contract, and 75% of Orland high school students attend Bucksport High School even though the contract stipulates at least 60%. The schools are relatively close together, allowing flexibility in programming in future years. The towns collaborate on programs and share resources. And the list goes on.

Student enrollments fluctuate in small school systems. However, the trend in these communities is for stability, with entering grades larger than in recent years. There are programs and services that will be mutually beneficial, such as building on the experience in Orland of providing a preschool program as this is considered in Bucksport, and adding Orland to the bid pool for electricity and heating oil. Professional development is being shared in the present year, as well as special education services. The Orland Principal now sits on the Bucksport Administrative Team. Computer technology assistance has improved conditions in Orland, and even in food services and maintenance, the areas where there is not oversight by the Bucksport Directors, we will implement advantages such as shared purchasing.

The RPC, school boards, and Superintendent are working hard to develop a plan that will serve the communities and children well. Many hours have been committed to this. The Superintendent began publishing a monthly newsletter in August, mailed to every household in four towns to inform citizens about the status of reorganization.

### **COLLABORATION: PENOBSCOT RIVER EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES**

The Penobscot River Educational Partnership (PREP) is a model school and University collaborative effort serving the Penobscot River Valley. The partnership has been in place since 1996 and supports member school systems in their provision of staff development, educational planning, provision of student support services, and, most recently, initiating the provision of business related services. Focusing on efficiency and effectiveness has led to increased collaboration, trust, and support to the member school units.

PREP partners include Brewer schools, Bucksport schools, Orland, School Union 90 (Alton, Bradley, Greenbush, Milford), Indian Island School, Orrington, University of Maine (College of Education & Human Development, College of Business, Public Policy & Health, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences), Old Town schools, School Administrative District 22 (Hampden, Newburgh, Winterport) Union 87 (Orono, Veazie), SAD 63 (Clifton, Eddington, Holden), United Technology Center (Bangor), and Maine Child Development Services/Penobscot County.

The following is a listing of current initiatives involving schools within the PREP Partnership.

#### Executive Officers

This committee meets four times yearly and provides overall direction for PREP Initiatives. The Executive Officers are comprised of school superintendents and the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development and the Dean of the College of Business, Public Policy, and Health.

### Curriculum Coordinators

This group meets monthly to provide planning, direction and support for professional improvement, student achievement, and planning for improvement.

### Professional Development/Professional Learning Community Development

#### Guidance Initiative

This is the fourth year of this groups functioning. Overall leadership has moved from the Mitchell Institute to a group involving guidance counselors and university faculty. This group will meet five to six times a year. Members consistently speak of the support received from this community. These activities are provided at no cost.

#### Response to Intervention K-1 Literacy

This is the third year of this communities functioning. A significant staff development initiative is ongoing with the provision of eight days of staff development to public school staff supporting K-1 Literacy. These activities are provided at no cost. University professors in literacy and special education are providing these trainings as service to PREP Schools.

#### Pre-Referral Initiative

This expectation is found in the updated special education regulations. It focuses on regular education and in many ways is a continuation of the work already begun in the Response to Intervention Initiative. Dr. Marcia Davidson, Dr. Jim Artesani, and Owen Maurais have offered to facilitate long term planning for all PREP districts around this issue. The initial planning is provided at no cost to PREP school units. A proposed summer institute is projected at costing each involved school unit \$1,000.00 for the involvement of their school staff.

#### Professional Learning Community Development

Sue Card is providing 4 days of staff development supporting the development of a Train the Trainer format for PREP Schools around the development of Professional Learning Communities. Sessions are provided for K-5 and 6-12 staff. Cost to each school unit for this training is \$1,000.00. This funding provides access to eight full days of staff development training for 12-15 staff members from each school unit.

### Curriculum Coordinators

Curriculum Coordinators are involved with a book study focusing on assessment for learning.

### Adult Education

A committee has been established to review the current status of Adult Education staffing and programming within PREP school units. Initial recommendations regarding possible efficiencies in program administration and the maximizing of course offerings will be made to PREP superintendents in mid December 2007.

### Teacher Preparation Committee

Representatives from school units and the University of Maine continue to refine a format to formalize communication and collaboration around a Professional Learning Community Format. Hundreds of candidates from the University of Maine are involved with PREP schools on a yearly basis. Enhancing communication and collaboration between the University of Maine and PREP schools provides for increased quality of programming for all individuals involved.

### Virtual High School Initiative

There is interest in continued planning for the use of technology to support the development of and access to on line courses. A committee has been established to plan for and implement this initiative. A University of Maine Associate Professor in Information Technology will be assisting this committee in their initial planning. It is anticipated that recommendations will be made to PREP superintendents in late Winter 2008. Funds remaining from a previous Secondary School Initiative will fund the initial planning and development efforts.

### Special Education Related Services Initiative

A psychologist, a certified psychological service provider and two speech therapists are providing evaluations and direct services to students served by the PREP partnership. They have been hired as employees. Speech services are being provided in schools where services were previously unavailable. Psychological services are being provided at a significant saving over the rate provided in a typical contracted services arrangement.

### Maine Municipal Bond Bank Initiative

The Penobscot River Educational Partnership was awarded a \$100,000.00 grant from the Maine Municipal Bond Bank to support the development of efficiencies within PREP schools in areas supporting business functions. The following initiatives are supported by this grant. Some of these initiatives involved all PREP public schools and some involve a more limited pilot population of schools.

#### Food Service Initiative

A consultant, Kevin Freeborn, has been hired and has met with representatives of school units, making several extended visits to gather additional information prior to developing an analysis and recommendations regarding efficiency and effectiveness. PREP Superintendents will be meeting to discuss Mr. Freeborn's report and recommendations in mid December 2007.

#### Health, Safety and Efficiency

Three committees have been developed and are focusing on efficiencies in purchasing school safety and training needs. Each committee is identifying possible areas involving collaboration and increasing efficiencies. An update on each committee's functioning will be provided to PREP superintendents at their December meeting.

#### Financial Services

One PREP school unit will be initiating use of software for the management of timekeeping and payroll data. Information on this implementation will be made available to all PREP schools in the spring of 2008. Also, all PREP school units are eligible for a reduction in technical assistance costs, if they wish to access technical assistance from ADS.

#### Substitute Teachers

Three PREP school units will pilot a software program in early winter 2008 utilizing technology to enhance the current system of securing substitute teachers. Information gathered on effectiveness and efficiency will be shared with other school units.

- A. Demonstrate that Bucksport, Orland, and MSAD 18 school boards "performed due diligence" to develop a regional plan with 2500 students but neighboring school systems voted to partner with others

A number of meetings were held in July and August when determining the partners for our school systems. Some of these were between administrators and individual board members, and some were

public meetings or forums. During this period we sought a trained facilitator from the Department of Education. Most facilitators were either not working during the summer or were already over-committed. We were able to secure the services of an experienced Superintendent, Ann Bridge, whose assistance has been essential to the development of this plan. The list of all meetings follows:

- 6/25 Bucksport Public Forum on Reorganization, 6:30 pm, televised
- 6/29 Letter to Board Chairs of Dedham, Orrington, MSAD 63, MSAD 56, SU 76, SU 93
- 7/3 Meeting with Bucksport district administrators and directors to identify issues
- 7/6 Letter to Superintendents of Dedham, Orrington, MSAD 63, MSAD 56, SU 76, SU 93
- 7/8 Orland School Committee, 6 pm, regular meeting
- 7/9 Bucksport School Board, 7 pm, televised meeting
- 7/11 Superintendent + 2 Board members from Bucksport and MSAD 56, 3 pm, Central Office
- 7/11 Conversation with Castine Board Chair: not interested
- 7/11 Conversation with Dedham Board Chair: interested in meeting
- 7/11 Conversation with Penobscot Board Chair: interested in meeting
- 7/12 Board member attended regional meeting in Blue Hill for RSU 10 members
- 7/16 Contact with MSAD 63: interested in meeting
- 7/16 Orland, Bucksport, Penobscot Board reps and Bucksport Superintendent, meeting in Bucksport
- 7/19 MSAD 18 School Board, 6 pm, Central Office
- 7/24 Orland, Bucksport, MSAD 63 Board reps, 2 superintendents, 1 pm in Bucksport
- 7/20 Completed extensive survey for MSAD 56 Superintendent
- 7/25 Attended DWM conference with Orland and Bucksport Board members
- 8/1 Bucksport School Board, 7 pm, televised regular meeting
- 8/3 Board members from Bucksport and Dedham, meeting in Dedham
- 8/6 MSAD School Board, 7 pm, Central Office
- 8/13 MSAD 63 and Bucksport Board reps, 2 superintendents, in Holden
- 8/14 Bucksport RPC member, 6:30 pm, Town Council Chambers
- 8/14 Orland School Committee, 6 pm, regular meeting
- 8/15 Bucksport Public Forum on Reorganization, 6:30 pm, televised
- 8/16 Conversation with MSAD 63 Superintendent
- 8/22 Presentation of Bucksport Forum materials at MSAD 63 Board meeting, Public Forum on Reorganization, 7 pm, Holden
- 8/29 Bucksport School Board, 6 pm, televised

We began by pursuing a partnership with MSAD 56 based on the recommended allocation of school units on the Department of Education map. Conversations between superintendents, and between superintendents and Board leadership did not result in a partnership, as the MSAD 56 Board decided to join MSAD 34, based on the strong ties between Searsport and Belfast.

Simultaneous with this we explored partnering with MSAD 63, Dedham, and Penobscot. The Superintendent presented financial and educational analyses of this combination of towns in a televised public forum and was asked to repeat the presentation for a special meeting of the MSAD 63 Board. Dedham determined that they would stay in partnership with Brewer, which currently provides superintendent services to this town. The MSAD 63 Board decided that our towns might be their fourth choice for regionalization, which became a rejection of this partnership.

We received the financial analysis from the Department of Education on partnering with the towns in RSU 10. It was apparent that this would create financial hardship for our school systems, since most of the towns in RSU 10 are minimum receivers. It would also be particularly difficult to create

a common K-12 school system since these towns are currently operating independent K-8 school systems, except for CSD 13 which operates a small isolated K-12 system.

We were informed in late August that the RSU 10 Boards had rejected partnership with us. After our Boards had voted to form a “doughnut hole” RSU, we learned that Penobscot had expressed interest in partnering with Bucksport. In our July meeting with Penobscot Board leadership, this interest had been narrowly focused on whether special education students would still be accepted on a tuition basis even if Penobscot did not partner with us – to which we responded with interest. In September there appeared to be continuing interest by Penobscot, but the Bucksport Board voted in October to not partner with Penobscot for a number of reasons. First, it was not clear whether this was an interest of the full board or just one part of town (based on the comments of a Penobscot Board member who attended our first RPC meeting). Second, it would have slowed progress considerably for the RPC for RSU 9 to work on dual plans: one with Penobscot and one without Penobscot. And finally, it was possible that Penobscot moving out of RSU 10 would leave enrollments too small in RSU 10 for Commissioner approval. It was not possible to secure a definitive response from the Department of Education on this matter. In the future, if Penobscot wishes to join RSU 9 there will be a complete plan for that town to choose to endorse or reject.

No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

#### 10. Discussion and Possible Action on small unit item B: Comprehensive K-12 Programming

Moved by Jennifer, seconded by Tom Tailor-Lash to approve the following language: “MSAD 18 and Bucksport students have benefited from comprehensive K-12 program for decades. The RSU will add the PK-8 program in Orland to this. Bucksport High School shall be the publicly supported high school for the RSU.”

A citizen asked for clarification that this item does not apply to school choice. Motion carried 9-0.

#### 11. Discussion and Possible Action on small unit item C: Plan Consistent with State Policies

Following brief discussion there was no action on this item.

#### 12. Discussion and Possible Action on small unit item D: Plan Does Not Displace Students or teachers or Close Schools

Moved by Jennifer, seconded by Tom Tailor-Lash to approve the following language: “To be consistent with statute, no students or teachers will be displaced by this Plan, and no schools where students are educated will close because of this Plan, in the first year after the RSU becomes operational.”

No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

#### 13. Discussion and Possible Action on small unit item E: 08-09 RSU Spending

Moved by Wayne, seconded by Guy to approve the following language: “The RSU will not become operational until 7/1/09 so this item does not apply, as stipulated by the Commissioner.”

No comments from citizens. Motion carried 9-0.

14. Schedule Two Meetings:

- Meeting confirmed for 6:30 pm December 10 at Jewett School
- Meeting scheduled for 6:30 pm January 7 at Jewett School

15. Develop Agenda for Next Meeting: items 7, 8, and 12

16. Identify additional data to be provided at the next meeting

- Cost analysis for negotiated agreements

17. Adjourn