

A “BLENDED” PLAN FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

This proposed school district reorganization blends language from the reports of the Education Committee and Appropriations Subcommittee.

KEY POINTS:

- **SAVINGS:** Achieves the required \$36.5 million savings in the state GPA allocation for FY 09. All existing school administrative units must plan for 5% reductions for FY 09 in transportation, facilities & maintenance, and other non-instructional functions, and a reduction in the FY 09 state EPS allocation for system administration.
- **COLLABORATION:** Provides an easy method for all existing school administrative units to create educational service collaboratives to support achievement of the targeted cost savings for FY 09 and offer enhanced educational programming.
- **CONSOLIDATION:** Utilizes Regional Planning Committees to develop consolidation plans affecting at least 80% of the school administrative units in Maine.
- **REGIONAL DIFFERENCES:** Differentiates minimum district size
 - Cumberland and York Counties = 2500 students
 - Remainder of the state = 1200 students
 - Exceptions for geographic isolation, coastal islands
- **LOCAL VOTE:** Requires a local vote to ratify any district consolidation.
- **BUDGET TRANSPARENCY:** Establishes a uniform school budget format that breaks down proposed budget into eight major cost-center categories.
- **CHOICE:** Preserves existing school choice arrangements.
- **SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURE:** A proposal to close a school must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the school district board and by a town referendum vote.
- **DEBT:** Requires all newly created school districts to assume the local debt associated with any school property they take.

“Blended Plan – Proposed Timeline

Date	Collaboration	Consolidation
September 2007 FY 08	All local school units tasked with engaging in enhanced collaboration, shared service agreements, etc., to plan for: 1) 5% reductions for FY 09 in transportation, facilities & maintenance, and other non-instructional functions, and; 2) Reduction in FY 09 EPS allocation for system administration.	Regional Planning Committees established in CTE regions (with option for alternatives). Membership includes school officials, municipal officers, and public members. RPCs tasked with planning consolidation of school districts within a region to minimum size of: 2500 (York and Cumberland Counties) 1200 (remainder of state)
February 2008	Savings plans for FY 09 completed.	
March 2008		RPCs submit preliminary plans for district consolidation.
June 2008		Final consolidation plans submitted
July 2008 FY 09	School units implement planned collaboration efforts. Adjusted EPS levels for FY 09 reflect cost reductions (\$36.5 million savings to GPA)	
November 2008		Ratification votes on proposed district consolidations.
July 2009 FY 10		Consolidation districts fully operational.