

MAINE COALITION TO SAVE SCHOOLS
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Good morning honorable members of the legislative rural caucus:

Thank you for the opportunity to say a few words about school consolidation.

1. THERE ARE NO NET COST SAVINGS TO SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION. NONE ZERO
2. If the law is not repealed, it will create the largest single property tax increase in the history of the State of Maine.
3. LD 1932 does not solve "the unintended financial consequences" of the law as Commissioner Gendron likes to say.
4. Members of regional planning committees(rpc) from all across the state tell us that they will not have a plan in place for citizens to vote on by November 2008 as the law requires. In some instances, people do not believe that it is possible to develop a logical plan from the configuration of partners. If plans are developed, most believe that they will not be approved by the public.
5. My sense is that most rpcs have at least temporarily suspended meeting until you decide what changes to make to the law, if any. One community has already decided not to utilize the budget validation referendum required by law this year.
6. Reduce whatever subsidy you need to take from EPS, but please give us our schools back by repealing this law. If you do not do it now, the next legislature will repeal it in January 2009 or Maine citizens will repeal it in November 2009.

QUESTION: IF THERE IS NO NET COST SAVINGS, if the law is not received favorably by the public, if it increases local property taxes, if the law can not be altered to resolve the problems, why does the legislature persist in defending the law instead of representing the wishes of you constituents and repeal the law?

*Thank you
Skip Kaculau*