

# MDI Regional School System Plan

Approved by MDI RPC: 8/6/2008;  
approved by MDI voters: 11/04/2008;

approved by State DoE: 8/25/2008  
certified by State BoE: 11/21/2008

## *Mount Desert Island Regional School System (MDI RSS)*

### **Plan to Reorganize as an Alternative Organizational Structure**

School Administrative Units (SAUs) submitting: Bar Harbor School Department, Mount Desert School Department, Southwest Harbor School Department, Tremont School Department, Cranberry Isles School Department, Frenchboro School Department, Trenton School Department, Maine School Administrative District No. 76 (Swan's Island) and Mount Desert Island Regional School District (hereinafter collectively "Member School Units").

Contact information: Gail Marshall (RPC Chair) 244-7219, Robert Liebow (School Union 98 Superintendent) 288-5011 ext. 323

Date submitted by SAUs: August 26, 2008

Proposed operational date of the MDI RSS: July 1, 2009

#### **1. The units of school administration to be included in the proposed MDI RSS.**

Bar Harbor School Department  
Mount Desert School Department  
Southwest Harbor School Department  
Tremont School Department  
Cranberry Isles School Department  
Frenchboro School Department  
Trenton School Department  
Maine School Administrative District No. 76 (Swan's Island)  
Mount Desert Island Regional School District

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## **2. The size, composition and apportionment of the governing body.**

The Mount Desert Island Regional School System shall be governed by an AOS school committee consisting of representatives of the school committees of each of the four towns within the Mount Desert Island Regional School District, being the Towns of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor and Tremont; the school committees of the Towns of Cranberry Isles, Frenchboro, and Trenton; and the Board of Directors of M.S.A.D. #76 - Swan's Island as follows::

<b><u>Member School Unit</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Representatives</u></b>
<b>Bar Harbor</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Mount Desert</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Southwest Harbor</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Tremont</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Cranberry Isles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Frenchboro</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Trenton</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>M.S.A.D. #76 (Swan's Island)</b>	<b>1</b>

The school committee of each town located within the AOS including the board of directors of M.S.A.D. #76 – Swan's Island, shall choose from its membership the representatives to the AOS school committee to which that school committee is entitled.

## **3. The method of voting of the governing body.**

Each MDI RSS school committee member shall have one vote.

## **4. The composition, powers and duties of local school committees**

The composition, powers and duties of the school committee of the Member School Units shall remain unchanged except as specifically modified by the attached Interlocal Agreement or as otherwise provided in this plan.

## **5. The disposition of real and personal school property.**

All School Union 98 personal property will be transferred to the Mount Desert Island Regional School System (MDI RSS). *School Union 98 holds no real property at this time. All real and personal school property of the Member School Units will remain with them.*

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## **6. The disposition of existing school indebtedness and lease-purchase obligations if the parties elect not to use the provisions of Section 1506 regarding the disposition of debt obligations.**

All School Union 98 indebtedness and lease-purchase obligations will be transferred to the MDI RSS. The indebtedness and lease-purchase obligations of the Member School Units will remain with them.

## **7. The assignment of school personnel contracts, school collective bargaining agreements and other school contractual obligations.**

All School Union 98 personnel, personnel contracts and other contractual obligations will be transferred to the MDI RSS. [School Union 98 has no collective bargaining agreements. All personnel contracts, school collective bargaining agreements and other school contractual agreements of the Member School Units will remain with them.](#)

## **8. The disposition of existing school funds and existing financial obligations, including undesignated fund balances, trust funds, reserve funds and other funds appropriated for school purposes.**

All existing school funds and financial obligations of School Union 98, including undesignated fund balances, trust funds, reserve funds and other funds appropriated for school purposes will be transferred to the MDI RSS. All existing school funds and existing financial obligations of the Member School Units will remain with them.

## **9. A transition plan that addresses the development of a budget for the first school year of the reorganized unit and interim personnel policies.**

The Mount Desert Island Reorganization Planning Committee shall dissolve on the date that a School Reorganization Plan is approved by the voters of the Towns of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, and Tremont or on June 30, 2009, whichever occurs first.

The MDI RSS school committee shall be appointed by January 1, 2009 and shall develop the budget for the MDI RSS for FY 2009-10. The MDI RSS budget for FY 2009-10 shall be adopted by the voters in accordance with the budget meeting and budget validation referendum procedures applicable to regional school units as provided in the Interlocal Agreement. The MDI RSS school committee shall employ the MDI RSS school superintendent and make all other necessary decisions in order for the MDI RSS to become operational. Present School Union 98 personnel policies shall serve as the interim policies for the MDI RSS.

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## **10. Documentation of the public meeting or public meetings held to prepare or review the reorganization plan.**

See attached list of RPC meetings. All RPC meetings are public and at each meeting the public is allowed to comment. All meetings are podcast. Podcasts, agendas, minutes and related documents are posted on the MDI RPC website. A public forum on the proposed Reorganization Plan was held on August 6, 2008. Prior to referendum a public forum shall be held in each town to review the reorganization plan.

## **11. An explanation of how units that approve the reorganization plan will proceed if one or more of the proposed members of the regional school unit fail to approve the plan.**

If the plan is defeated by the voters of any of the following municipalities: Mount Desert, Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, or Tremont, the MDI RSS shall not be formed under this plan and the SAUs shall re-start the process to form an AOS with the same or other SAUs. Failure to approve this plan by the voters of any of the following municipalities shall not prevent formation of the MDI RSS: M.S.A.D. #76 - Swan's Island, Cranberry Isles, Frenchboro, or Trenton.

## **12. An estimate of the cost savings to be achieved by the formation of a regional school unit and how these savings will be achieved.**

Although there will be a need to hire some additional staff in the central office, with the addition of Trenton to the MDI RSS, some marginal savings due to efficiencies of scale are projected.

## **13. Other matters determined to be necessary.**

### **13-A. School Union 92 Assets and liabilities:**

The Trenton School Department will retain any assets and liabilities related to its prior association with School Union 92.

### **13-B. Tuition Contracts and School Choice**

#### **1. Tuition Contracts**

As of the date of this plan, the Trenton School Department has a contract with Mount Desert Island Regional School District which extends through June 30, 2010 for students in grades 9-12.

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A tuition contract will be maintained by the Trenton School Department and Mount Desert Island Regional School District for such time as the Trenton School Department is a member of the MDI RSS. Nothing contained in this plan shall prevent the Mount Desert Island Regional School District from contracting with other school administrative units for tuition students.

## **2. School Choice**

Students in grades 9-12 within M.S.A.D. 76-Swan's Island, Cranberry Isles School Department, Frenchboro School Department and the Trenton School Department may choose to attend any secondary school approved by the State for tuition purposes. In such instances, the respective SAU pays up to the maximum state-allowable tuition for each student.

Grade levels in the existing SAUs that have choice of schools as of the operational date shall continue to have the same choices in the MDI RSS.

## **13-C. Claims and Insurance**

Continuity of insurance shall be maintained with the assistance of counsel.

## **13-D. Fewer than 2,500 students**

As approved by the Commissioner of Education in response to letters of intent filed with the Department of Education, the proposed MDI RSS will serve fewer than 2500 students and qualifies for an exemption to that requirement for the following reasons:

- (a) The special conditions of island geography limit the practical boundaries for regionalization.
- (b) Demographics, including student enrollment trends and the composition and nature of communities in the regional school unit;
- (c) Economics, including existing collaborations to be preserved or enhanced and opportunities to deliver commodities and services to be maximized;
- (d) Transportation;
- (e) Population density of less than 100 per square mile; and/or
- (f) Other unique circumstances including the need to preserve existing or developing relationships, meet the needs of students, maximize educational opportunities for students and ensure equitable access to rigorous programs for all students.

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## 13-E. Plan for Consistent Collective Bargaining Agreements

### Current background and context:

There are presently two types of collective bargaining agreements in place within the Member School Units.

The first type of agreement covers the support staff in the town of Bar Harbor. The employment of all support staff personnel in the other Member School Units is not presently covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

The second type of collective bargaining agreement covers the teachers in all of the Member School Units in the proposed MDI RSS except the off-shore islands of Swan's Island, Cranberry Isles and Frenchboro. At present, one agreement is in place just for the teachers at the Trenton Elementary School. A second agreement is in place and operates as a series of common contracts that cover the schools in Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, Mount Desert and Mount Desert Island Regional School District. These common contracts contain identical language and identical salary scales and are negotiated at one time around one negotiating table by mutual agreement of all parties.

Swan's Island and Cranberry Isles schools, even though they have no formal collective bargaining agreement, have for several years followed the contract language and salary scale of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District. The Frenchboro School due to its extremely limited tax base has not mirrored the salary scale of the Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District.

### Regional School System plan to achieve consistent bargaining agreements:

The plan to achieve consistent collective bargaining agreements for all teachers in the proposed new Mount Desert Island Regional School System is as follows:

#### **Year 1: 2008-2009 School Year (Last year of present school organization)**

Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District will complete year three of their present three-year contract-in-common and begin to negotiate a new three-year contract-in-common to begin during the 2009-2010 school year.

M.S.A.D. #76-Swan's Island and the Cranberry Isles School Department will continue to mirror the terms and salary scales as outlined in the main island contract-in-common by mutual agreement.

The Trenton School Department will be completing year one of a new previously negotiated three-year contract with its teachers.

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The Frenchboro School Department will continue to pay its teachers independently of the other school units as per prior agreement with the Commissioner of Education due to its exemption by law as an off-shore island.

## **Year 2: 2009-2010 School Year (First year of new AOS)**

Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District will complete year one of a new three-year contract-in-common.

M.S.A.D. #76-Swan's Island and the Cranberry Isles School Department will continue to mirror the terms and salary scales as outlined in the contract-in-common by mutual agreement.

The Trenton School Department will complete year two of its three-year contract and will agree to open that contract to negotiate the adoption of the non-salary language from the contract-in-common in place for Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District to be in effect during the 2010-2011 school year.

The Frenchboro School Department will continue to pay its teachers independently of the other school units as per prior agreement with the Commissioner of Education due to its exemption by law as an off-shore island but will adopt the other terms of the contract-in-common of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District.

## **Year 3: 2010-2011 School Year (second year of new AOS)**

Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District will complete year two of the new three-year contract-in-common.

The Trenton School Department will complete year three of its three-year contract and will begin negotiations for a one-year contract to cover the 2011-2012 school year containing the same language and including the adoption of the salary lane structure of the contract-in-common in place at Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District.

M.S.A.D. #76-Swan's Island and the Cranberry Isles School Department will continue to mirror the terms and salary scales as outlined in the contract-in-common by mutual agreement.

The Frenchboro School Department will continue to pay its teachers independently of the other school units as per prior agreement with the Commissioner of Education due to its exemption by law as an off-shore island but will adopt the other terms of the contract-in-common of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District.

## **Year 4: 2011-2012 School Year (third year of new AOS)**

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Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District will complete year three of the new three-year contract-in-common.

The Trenton School Department will complete its new one-year contract.

Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District and the Trenton School Department will all join together to begin the process of negotiating a new three-year contract-in-common to cover all six schools to begin during the 2012-2013 school year.

M.S.A.D. #76-Swan's Island and the Cranberry Isles School Department will continue to mirror the terms and salary scales as outlined in the contract-in-common by mutual agreement.

The Frenchboro School Department will continue to pay its teachers independently of the other school units as per prior agreement with the Commissioner of Education due to its exemption by law as an off-shore island but will adopt the other terms of the contract-in-common of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District.

### **Year 5: 2012-2013 School Year (Fourth year of new AOS)**

Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District and the Trenton School Department will begin year one of a new three-year contract-in-common. All language will be similar but the Trenton School Department will begin a three-year phase-in of the salary scale.

M.S.A.D. #76-Swan's Island and the Cranberry Isles School Department will continue to mirror the terms and salary scales as outlined in the contract-in-common of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District by mutual agreement.

The Frenchboro School Department will continue to pay its teachers independently of the other school units as per prior agreement with the Commissioner of Education due to its exemption by law as an off-shore island but will adopt the other terms of the contract-in-common.

### **Year 6: 2013-2014 School Year (Fifth year of new AOS)**

Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District and the Trenton School Department will complete year two of the new three-year contract-in-common. The Trenton School Department will complete the second year of a three-year phase-in of the salary scale.

M.S.A.D. #76-Swan's Island and the Cranberry Isles School Department will continue to mirror the terms and salary scales as outlined in the contract-in-common by mutual agreement.



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The Frenchboro School Department will continue to pay its teachers independently of the other school units as per prior agreement with the Commissioner of Education due to its exemption by law as an off-shore island but will adopt the other terms of the contract-in-common.

### **Year 7: 2014-2015 School Year (Sixth year of new AOS)**

Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Mount Desert Island Regional School District and the Trenton School Department will complete year three of the new three-year contract-in-common. The Trenton School Department will complete the final year of the three-year phase in of the salary scale of the contract-in-common.

M.S.A.D. #76-Swan's Island and the Cranberry Isles School Department will continue to mirror the terms and salary scales as outlined in the contract-in-common by mutual agreement.

The Frenchboro School Department will continue to pay its teachers independently of the other school units as per prior agreement with the Commissioner of Education due to its exemption by law as an off-shore island but will adopt the other terms of the contract-in-common.

The implementation of this plan for consistent collective bargaining agreements is subject to collective bargaining with the bargaining units within the Member School Units of MDI RSS.

### **13-F: Incorporation of Interlocal Agreement**

The Interlocal Agreement for the Creation of Mount Desert Island Regional School System, attached to this Plan as Exhibit A, is expressly incorporated into and made a part of this Plan.