

## RSU2 Exploratory/Review Committee Meeting

Meeting held on January 11, 2017 at Bridge Academy Library. Members in attendance were Dale Hinote (Selectman), Jeffrey Pierce (PB), Brenda Sawyer (Resident/Teacher), and Shari Lilly (Recording secretary). Brendan Perrault and Patty Stewart had other commitments.

Vice Chair, Jeff Pierce, opened the meeting at 6 p.m. Copies of the teacher agreements were available. We will get some copies of the other agreements between the Ed Techs, etc. and the bus drivers, kitchen workers, etc.

**#1 – Previous minutes** – Dale made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 28 meeting; Brenda seconded the motion. Motion carried by a show of hands.

**#2 – Budget** – We are working on a couple of different ideas on the budget. We have tried to get info on other towns our size to use for comparison. Jeff said that Georgetown didn't join an RSU, but they do contract with Morse Middle/High School. They have approximately 165 students total. He said that West Bath will be sending him a copy of their withdrawal. He noted it isn't known yet if they've saved any money as this is the first year. Phippsburg will send their info on how the process went when they made changes to their funding formula. Jeff just emailed the W. Bath withdrawal agreement to Shari. It contains about 30 pages. Brenda said that St. George has information online. Shari had given Jeff information from the Town of Lincolnville which is similar in size.

Dale mentioned that the online rankings of Middle Schools shows Hall-Dale is 67<sup>th</sup> in the State out of 211 schools. He does want to check the methodology of the ranking system that is used. Jeff has the State of Maine Budget briefings in case anyone wants to look it over. It is quite an extensive amount of pages. Dale went on to say that he doesn't feel it would be to our advantage to join RSU12.

Jeff said that our objective is to see if we can tweak how we fund the RSU2. He wonders if Dresden gets the best for the money, as well as the quality of education we deserve. He went on to say that the RSU1 is not very helpful, but they will forward their info to him. He said the three (3) choices suggested are all different venues which would give a starting point. He should have all the info for the next meeting.

As the number of students has dropped in recent years, the costs are still rising. It was mentioned that if our student count has dropped, perhaps we could consider bringing one class back to Dresden which would help to cut the cost. Dale said that teachers are educated for K – 8 grades, so he feels we would be able to handle another grade (such as the 6<sup>th</sup>).

Jeff said we need to do a survey, but Dale feels we should wait a while on that. However, Jeff & Brenda feel we do need to find out how residents feel about the cost of education, the choice of schools we have and how they feel about the education their children are getting at Hall-Dale. It can take up to eight (8) weeks before we can get a survey together. Some of the issues Dale suggested are: Do you feel your child got/is getting a good education? Was your child prepared for college, prepared for the military, and/or prepared for their future life? He then suggested that all members come up with ten (10) questions each, knowing that some would overlap. The survey should have about twenty (20) questions on it. He also suggested questions such as if they know the amount we're paying, or if we could get a better education, would you want to pay more? Is money being spent wisely?

Jeff suggested that we send out "Requests for Proposals" at some later point. We can provide a number of students; find out what the cost would be (Tuition). First we would need to find out the rankings for the schools. He said we could also consider doing individual vouchers so students could go the school of their choice (by parent's request). Dale noted that it used to be that if there was no high school supported in a town, your child could drop out in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Brenda said now they have to be at least 16 years old.

Dale said we should also consider the cost for transportation.

Brenda likes the idea of coming to the next meeting with questions from each member. That would give us a good starting point for the survey.

*The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. The next meeting will be at 6 pm at B.A. on Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>*