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MSBA RESOLUTION

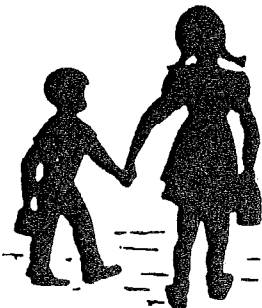
3.A.2. **Consolidation/Unification** - The Maine School Boards Association has historically supported voluntary school unit consolidation, regionalization and collaboration among and between school administrative units. MSBA supports the recent efforts of the Governor and Legislature to explore these issues.

Maine has had a successful experience with consolidation through the school administrative district and community school district unit structures. These early consolidations were successful because of the financial incentives provided to local communities, and the improvement in program offerings for students. There are many examples across the state of voluntary regional collaboratives that have enhanced effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of educational programs.

MSBA believes that:

- student achievement is of primary importance and should be the first priority in any regionalization/consolidation plan;
- All of the options associated with consolidation, regionalization, and collaboration must be fully developed and based on a balanced research review;
- The Governor and Legislature must provide financial incentives to encourage such consolidation/unification activities;
- Current laws and rules should be examined and, if necessary, amended to make it easier to develop and maintain regional program delivery models;
- Flexibility and creativity must be encouraged; and
- The MSBA opposes the mandating of any plans for school unit consolidation that does not require local voter approval of any proposed consolidated units.

MSBA is opposed to the mandatory merger of school units, but is supportive of and recognizes the value of voluntary consolidation, regionalization and collaboration. MSBA also opposes financial penalties for units that choose not to voluntarily consolidate, regionalize or collaborate. MSBA believes that our students, local communities, taxpayers, and all citizens can benefit from any such cooperative efforts. (Adopted 1995 - Amended 1998, 2003, 2005)



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49 COMMUNITY DRIVE • AUGUSTA, MAINE 04330

Phone: 207-622-3473 • Fax: 207-626-2968 • Website: www.msmaweb.com