

MSAD 51: THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

1957

Maine Legislature passes the Sinclair Act, incentivizing small towns to consolidate. Goal: High school enrollments of at least 300 students.

1960

Cumberland, North Yarmouth, and Pownal consider consolidating—although even together, there are fewer than 300 high school students.

1961

The classroom wing of the future high school is approved and constructed, and occupied by junior high students.

Consolidation studies are ongoing. In November, 1962 the issue is brought to a vote in all three towns.

THE FIRST VOTE

North Yarmouth approves, 190-31
Pownal approves, 137-23
BUT Cumberland: 396-360.

1962

Cumberland Vote Defeats Three-Town SAD System

A proposed three-town school administrative district was defeated by 36 votes Friday when Cumberland voters turned thumbs down, 396 to 360. North Yarmouth and Pownal overwhelmingly approved the merger. Cumberland would have had eight directors, North Yarmouth three and Pownal two. North Yarmouth and Pownal also approved both articles. Controversy developed at Cumberland during the past week when Robert G. Dillenback, chairman of selectmen, said the town would pay the lion's share of district costs, and as the town grows the district costs would rise. Other district opponents said the school system could be improved faster without attitudinal school indebtedness with other towns.

Take a deep breath.

The towns continue to debate the pros and cons of consolidation. Another vote is taken in May, 1963.

1964

In Feb. 1964 North Yarmouth signs a 5-year contract with Cumberland, but warns that if further study of consolidation isn't part of the bargain they will be forced to consider Gray.

North Yarmouth seeks an affordable solution for 7th and 8th grade program needs. All grades in NYMS are overcrowded. Pownal students are attending one-room schoolhouses heated by woodstoves, so they look for other possible partners. Cumberland courts Yarmouth and Falmouth because it can't afford all the space it needs on its own.

1963

Take another deep breath.

North Yarmouth voters, "turned down twice" for consolidation, decline an offer to contract with Greely, vote to allow students to continue choosing which high school they will attend, and decide to explore other possibilities.

THE SECOND VOTE

Cumberland votes to approve, but there's a ballot mixup on Chebeague, and the state is called in for a recount.

Cumberland SAD Alliance Approved By Six Votes

Cumberland SAD Vote 5/12/63
Chebeague Recount
May Bring 497 Tie
Recount Shows 491-491 Tie Defeating Cumberland SAD



276 Students Enroll At Greely

CUMBERLAND — A total of 276 students enrolled at Greely Institute Wednesday, it was announced by Principal William N. Farwell. There are 72 freshmen, 85 sophomores, 57 juniors and 62 seniors. One postgraduate student is also enrolled. A new high school now under construction is expected to be completed by next year. No total enrollment figures were available for the town's three elementary schools but 49 new pupils enrolled during the summer. A new subprimary room was built onto the Sweetser School and is available for the first time this year. One division of the fourth grade is housed in the Greely Institute Annex, formerly the cafeteria.

Greely creeps toward the "magic" number of 300 students and construction on the second part of the new high school is starting. There's a race for space.

More pressure. School opens, and Gyger Gym is declared obsolete. Basketball teams have to go on the road for home games.

New Cumberland School To Be Open For Inspection

CUMBERLAND — Cumberland's new high school will be open for inspection today at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow. The school is located at the industrial arts building and is supervised by the superintendent. The new facility plus the industrial arts building is connected to the main building. Future building plans also include a cafeteria, rest room, and administrative offices for the principal, guidance director and superintendent are set at right angles to the main building. The industrial arts building is separated from the main building. Plans are to build the gymnasium complex onto the industrial arts building and connect this unit to the main building. Future building plans also include a cafeteria, rest room, and administrative offices for the principal, guidance director and superintendent are set at right angles to the main building.

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1965

High school students move to the first wing of the new high school. Junior high students move into the original Greely Institute building.

In October, 1965 a two-town committee recommends immediately purchasing property on Tuttle Road (where an old chicken house sits) and constructing a 16-classroom elementary school; building a gym and cafeteria at the high school; and adding classroom space for grades 7-12.

THIS WOULD ALL BE FEASIBLE ONLY IF A DISTRICT WERE FORMED.

1966

The Final Vote

January, 1966

The committee recommends a vote on a district as soon as possible and holds meetings to explain their findings.

Record Turnout Cumberland Okays SAD

CUMBERLAND — A record turnout for a special town meeting was recorded Friday night as a school administrative district was approved by 491-491 tie vote. The vote was 491-491, one vote was withheld out of the 981 total. The district would have 10 directors, three from North Yarmouth and seven from Cumberland. The vote was 491-491, one vote was withheld out of the 981 total. The district would have 10 directors, three from North Yarmouth and seven from Cumberland. The vote was 491-491, one vote was withheld out of the 981 total.

MSAD 51.

Triple-C Would Shun Outdated Greely Court

Greely's Gyger Gym is the only remaining small, obsolete hoop structure in the ten-member circuit with the opening of the new Windham High School and gym this year.

Greely Cagers Lack Facilities, Forced On Road

CUMBERLAND — Limited seating capacity and inadequate lighting at Greely Gym will force Greely Institute to play its home basketball games at Yarmouth this winter. The school superintendent is planning to purchase a new 25-year-old gym for Greely this winter.

