



**School Construction Committee**  
Maine State Board of Education  
Minutes of the August 25th, 2023 Meeting

The School Construction Committee met in Room 500, Cross Building, 11 Sewall Street, Augusta. There was also a remote attendance option.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Fern Desjardins (Chair), Kristin Bishop, Edmond Morin

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Ann Pinnette, School Facilities Manager,  
Department of Education  
Benjamin Sirois, Superintendent, VUESC  
Bill Hansen, Facilities Director, RSU 14  
Chris Howell, Superintendent, RSU 14  
Deborah Alden, Superintendent, RSU 10  
Gisele Dionne, Asst Superintendent, VUESC  
Joe Britton, Architect, Lavallee Brensinger  
Lance Whitehead, Architect, Lavallee  
Brensinger  
Lisa Sawin, Architect, Harriman

Mark Lee, CEO, Harriman  
Nathan McIvor, Department of Education  
Sandra Bourget, Office Specialist, State Board  
of Education  
Scott Brown, School Facilities Director,  
Department of Education  
Sharon Littlefield, Superintendent, RSU 53  
Paulette Bonneau, State Board of Education  
Ted Hall, Program Consultant, Department of  
Education  
Valerie Chiang, Department of Education

Chair Desjardins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Motioned by Bishop, seconded by Morin, and voted unanimously by those present to accept the June 30th, 2023 minutes as written.

Scott Brown presented an overview of the Design & Funding Approval Exhibit for the RSU 10 New PreK-8 School Construction Project. He reviewed where the project is on the State's 21-step construction process and provided additional historical information on the project.

Superintendent Alden then explained that her team had to hold a second referendum for the construction project with all 7 towns in the district on November 8, 2022. She then informed the Committee of other important changes and progress that have occurred since the Board granted Concept Approval including RSU 10's decision to not demolish the Meroby Elementary School in

order to save costs. She further announced that the building will be named Mountain Valley Community School.

The Committee discussed the waiver of timeline requests needed for the project to move forward per Chapter 61 Section 6.2.F., Time Limitations, (2) and (3).

Motioned by Bishop, seconded by Morin, and voted unanimously by those present that the exhibit be placed on the September 13, 2023 State Board meeting agenda and that the State Board grant Design and Funding Approval to RSU 10/MSAD 10 for a new PreK-8 school construction project as presented and waive Chapter 61 Section 6.2.F., Time Limitations, (2) and (3), pursuant to Section 2.5.C, whereby the State Board finds reasons for a waiver. The second referendum resulted in approval of the project, and the subsequent revised project schedule and budget are workable.

Chair Desjardins introduced the next agenda item Major Capital School Construction Program Concept Approval Consideration for RSU 14's New Middle School Construction Project. Brown provided background information before introducing Superintendent Howell and his Team.

Superintendent Howell presented on how the new building will combine Windham's middle school with Raymond's neighboring middle school in order to ensure equitable educational capacities within the district. He reviewed the building layout in detail and explained how the Team learning approach would be implemented. After answering several questions from the Committee, Howell and his architect, Lance Whitehead, stated that the building will have an Energy Use Intensity (EUI - energy use in kBtu per square foot annually) of 35. The district intends to significantly reduce the EUI using solar panels through a power purchase agreement.

Motioned by Bishop, seconded by Morin, and voted unanimously by those present that this exhibit be placed on the September 13, 2023 State Board meeting agenda and that the State Board grant Concept Approval to RSU 14/MSAD 14 for a New Grades 5-8 Middle School construction project as presented.

Desjardins then discussed a recent correspondence from the Maine Senate President and Senate Majority Leader. Desjardins reviewed the idea of a separate school construction fund for emergencies. The Committee discussed whether schools suffering fire damage should be given precedence over other schools with significant needs. There was discussion about developing an emergency fund as well as removing the emergency provision from Chapter 61.

The Committee discussed legislative bills L.D. 280 and L.D. 1415 as well as the needed revisions to rule Chapter 61.

The Committee reviewed changes to their meeting schedule including a September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom.

Desjardins adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.