



**School Construction Committee**  
Maine State Board of Education  
Minutes of the June 30, 2023 Meeting

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

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Bill Hansen, Facilities Director, RSU 14  
Chris Howell, Superintendent, RSU 14  
Dwight Anderson, Stantec  
Lance Whitehead, Lavallee Brensinger Architects  
Gisele Dionne, Asst Superintendent, VUESC  
Jamie Dorr, School Board, RSU 1  
Jason Claffey, Portland Press Herald  
Josh Desjardin, School Board, VUESC  
Lou Ensel, School Board, RSU 1

Nathan McIvor, Department of Education  
Patrick Manuel, Superintendent, RSU 1  
Samuel T. Baker, Senate Majority Office  
Sandra Bourget, State Board of Education  
Scott Brown, Department of Education  
Sharon Littlefield, Superintendent, RSU 53  
State Representative Allison Hepler  
State Senator Eloise Vitelli  
Joe Britton, Lavallee Brensinger Architects  
Valerie Chiang, Department of Education

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

Motioned by Bishop, seconded by Morin, and voted unanimously by those present to accept the May 26th, 2023 minutes as written.

Chair Desjardins asked Scott Brown to introduce the first agenda item, RSU 14 Site Approval Consideration. Mr. Brown presented the exhibit which included a brief history of the project including a successful recent community meeting and straw vote. He then asked Superintendent Howell to provide further information and address questions from committee members. Mr. Howell presented information supporting the consolidation of the district's two middle schools and a detailed summary of the site selection process which identified 61 Windham Center Road as the best site for the project. He discussed how public presentations and forums have engaged community members from Windham and Raymond and provided opportunities for feedback on the proposed site and the project. He further reviewed the extensive testing and studies that had been completed on the site including infrastructure, traffic, soils and environmental analysis, wetlands,

and site test fits. Lastly, he indicated that a signed option agreement with the owner has been secured. After several questions from the Committee, Chair Desjardins asked for a motion.

Motioned by Bishop, seconded by Morin, and voted unanimously by those present to recommend that RSU 14's request for Site Approval Consideration be placed on the July 12, 2023 State Board of Education meeting agenda and that the State Board grant Site Approval for the project.

Chair Desjardins then introduced the next item on the agenda, School Construction Program Update. Desjardins presented and reviewed her detailed Notes document which included all information reviewed and discussed to date regarding the MSAD 33 and RSU 1 fires. Chair Desjardins' Notes included the updated Fact Sheet of May 24, 2023, Considerations, and a detailed Summary of Findings. Additionally, the Fact Sheet provided further information and analysis of the history of Emergency projects under the provisions in Chapter 61. The Committee discussed the impact of potential consolidation, the debt ceiling, pending legislation, and the timeline for the next Rating Cycle. After extensive discussions, Chair Desjardins circulated copies of her recommendation to the Committee in response to her work and findings.

After reviewing Desjardins' recommendation, Bishop motioned that the recommendation "*The School Construction Committee recommends that the State Board of Education work with the Department of Education in moving forward the timeline for establishing a new rating cycle for the Major Capital School Construction Program; that the Dike Newell School and Dr. Levesque Elementary School which were partially and completely, respectively, destroyed by fires apply for school construction under the new rating cycle; that the State Board follow the protocol in place in honoring the existing Priority List; and that revisions to Chapter 61 be initiated for the new rating cycle*" be placed on the July 12, 2023 State Board of Education meeting agenda. Seconded by Morin and voted unanimously by those present.

Desjardins adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.