



School Construction Committee
Maine State Board of Education
Minutes of the March 13, 2026 Special Meeting

The School Construction Committee met in Room 500, Cross Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta and remotely via Zoom.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Fern Desjardins, Chair; Paulette Bonneau (remote); and Edmond Morin

OTHERS PRESENT:

Scott Brown, Director of School Facilities, Department of Education

Paula Gravelle (remote), Director of Public School Finance, Department of Education

Ted Hall, Lyndon Keck and Ruey Yehle

Chair Fern Desjardins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the School Construction Committee's review of Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects.

Desjardins introduced the first item on the agenda, *School Construction Vision*. Director Brown distributed and the team discussed three handouts during his presentation:

1. *Facilities Needs Analysis: Public School and CTE Needs Identified by the Maine School Building Inventory*. This analysis identifies a potential \$11 billion cost for new construction, renovations, modernization and code compliance.
2. *Debt Service History/Projections*. The 1990-2033 table identifies the state's share of education, annual percentage increase, statutory debt ceiling for school construction, and the annual debt ceiling percentage of the state's share of education.
3. *\$50 Million Annually: Maine School Finance Program*. The chart identifies the potential impact of receiving an additional \$50 million annually to support the following programs:
 - a. Office of School Facilities
 - b. School Revolving Renovation Fund (SRRF)
 - c. Major Capital Improvement Program (MCIP)
 - d. Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 School Facilities

Desjardins then moved to the next agenda item, *Updates on Amendments to Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects*. Ted Hall distributed edited copies of sections 1 and 2 with highlights and strikethroughs from the meeting he had with Desjardins. There was agreement on suggestions for amendments and also for tabling items that would be impacted by sections not yet reviewed. Paula Gravelle agreed to review and draft suggestions for some of the terms that were questioned.

Director Brown then reviewed the rating changes that he and Ted Hall, Lyndon Keck and Ruey Yehle came up with for Section 3 on the “Rating System.” Bonneau, Morin, and Desjardins agreed with the point changes that were presented.

The group then moved to Section 4 “Priority Lists, Evaluation Report and Administrative Review” followed by Section 5 “Approved Projects List.” Team members presented their ideas on both sections. Some proposed amendments were agreed to while others were tabled for further consideration.

Chair Desjardins moved to the next item on the agenda, *Update on School Construction Bills in the Legislature*. Bonneau and Desjardins reported that LD 1892 An Act to Establish Procedures for School Construction Projects, presented by Rep. Michael F. Brennan, passed as amended by a 7-5 vote of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee on March 12. The bill will now move forward. There was no other legislative action on school construction.

The team decided to add another April meeting to its schedule and April 14, 12:00-2:30 p.m. was selected. The updated schedule is as follows:

Friday, March 27, 9:00-12:00, via Zoom
 Tuesday, April 14, 12:00-2:30, Room 500
 Thursday, April 23, 9:00-2:00, Room 500
 Friday, May 1, 9:00-12:00, Room 500
 Friday, May 15, 9:00-12:00, Room 500
 Wednesday, May 27, 9:00-12:00, Room 500
 Friday, June 12, 9:00-2:00, Room 500
 Friday, June 26, 9:00-12:00, Room 500

The team also agreed to reach out to MSSA and others about upcoming meetings and to invite legislators to join the team.

At the March 27 meeting, the team will revisit sections 1-5 and move forward beginning with Section 6.

Desjardins adjourned the meeting at 11:32 a.m.