



**School Construction Committee**  
Maine State Board of Education  
Minutes of the April 14, 2026 Meeting

The School Construction Committee met in Room 500, Burton 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

Ann Pinnette, School Facilities Manager, Department of Education

Laura M. Cyr, Federal and State Legislative Specialist, Department of Education

Paula Gravelle, Director of Public School Finance, Department of Education

Ted Hall, School Facilities Consultant

Lyndon Keck, School Facilities Consultant

Ruey Yehle, School Facilities Consultant

Craig Flowers, Office Specialist, State Board of Education

Chair Fern Desjardins called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the fourth meeting of the School Construction Committee's review of Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects. She asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Desjardins introduced the next item on the agenda, *Public Comments*. No one presented comments at the meeting. Desjardins received an email by a former superintendent of schools on March 24, 2026, which she forwarded to all team members with the agenda. It was part of today's discussion on Cost Sharing.

On the next item of the agenda, *Updates on Amendments to Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects*, team members had no amendments to present for consideration on the items tabled in sections 1-8.

The group then moved to a discussion on *Cost Sharing*. Ann Pinnette, School Facilities Manager at the Maine Department of Education, shared a spreadsheet on cost sharing options that she

worked on with the Director of School Facilities. The options were based on the Essential Programs and Services funding formula. The required FY 2026 State Share Percentages and Local Share Percentages for all School Administrative Units were presented on the spreadsheet. Working off the Local Share Percentages, the spreadsheet presented calculations if SAUs were required to raise 25%, 50% or 75% of their Local Share Percentages toward the cost of a school construction project. For example, if the EPS local share percentage for a SAU for FY 2026 was 15.58% and that SAU was on the Approved Projects List for school construction, it would have to raise 3.89% of the total construction cost if the cost sharing was set at 25%; 7.79% if it was set at 50%, and 11.68% if it was 75%.

Taking it a step further, the spreadsheet also showed the impact of going with the 50% multiplier as the local share in building one school, but providing an incentive to consolidate two or more schools by bringing down the local share to 35% instead of the required 50%. For example, the local share of a \$100,000,000 school construction project requiring 7.88% would be \$7,880,000. If the SAU consolidated one or more schools, the required percentage would go down to 5.52%. The construction cost for the bigger school could be \$150,000,000 and the required local share would be \$8,280,000.

The team also discussed the possibility of including a cost reduction category for out of district consolidation projects. For such projects, the local share percentage would be reduced to 25%.

Director Brown then shared language drafts for Cost Sharing and suggested including whatever language is recommended by the team be placed in Chapter 61, Section 11 “Financing School Construction” as the new number 4 and adjusting the numbers after number 4.

By consensus, the team agreed to a 50% multiplier of the EPS local share as the local amount to be raised for a school construction project and bringing it down to 35% as an incentive for school consolidation or 25% if it were an out of district consolidation.

Chair Desjardins moved to the next item on the agenda, *Update on School Construction Bills in the Legislature*. Dr. Cyr reported that LD 1892 An Act to Establish Procedures for School Construction Projects, presented by Rep. Michael F. Brennan, is “dead.” The Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee did not approve funding for any of the school construction bills in the second regular session of the 132<sup>nd</sup> Maine Legislature.

The next School Construction Committee meeting with Chapter 61 team members will be held at 9:00 a.m. on April 23 in person at the Cross Office Building in room 500 and remotely for those wishing to attend via Zoom. The team will revisit tabled items in sections 1-8, cost sharing, and begin discussions on sections 9-12.

Desjardins adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m.