



School Construction Committee
Maine State Board of Education
Minutes of the May 22, 2025 Meeting

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

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Valerie Chiang, Senior Construction Coordinator, Department of Education

Scott Brown, Director of School Facilities, Department of Education

Lisa Sawin, Architect, Harriman

Heather Manchester, Superintendent, RSU 17/MSAD 17

Chair Desjardins called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Motioned by Morin, seconded by Bonneau, and voted unanimously by those present to accept the March 21, 2025, minutes as written.

Chair Desjardins asked Scott Brown to introduce the first agenda item, RSU 17/MSAD 17 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 Manchester to provide further information and address questions from committee members. Superintendent Manchester presented information supporting the consolidation of the district's two middle schools and a detailed summary of the site selection process, which identified the existing North Campus Middle School 24.62-acre site at 100 Pine Street in South Paris as the best site for the project. She discussed how public presentations and forums have engaged community members and provided opportunities for feedback on the proposed site and the project. She 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. After several questions from the Committee, Chair Desjardins asked for a motion.

Motioned by Morin, seconded by Bonneau, and voted unanimously by those present to recommend that RSU 17/MSAD 17's request for Site Approval Consideration be placed on the June 11, 2025 State Board of Education meeting agenda and that the State Board grant Site Approval for the project.

Under the Miscellaneous agenda item Chair Desjardins reviewed the Governor's Commission on School Construction Interim Summary. She highlighted several items of the report and asked for feedback from

Committee members. Discussions included the possibility of identifying additional funding for construction and a review of the Commission's meeting schedule and report deadline.

Chair Desjardins provided an update to the Committee regarding legislative bills related to school construction. She reviewed several bills that would impact school construction funding and more specifically, the carryover of LD 1892, An Act to Establish Procedures for School Construction Projects.

Mr. Brown spoke of changes taking place with the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Educational Facility Application process. He will discuss those changes at the June 2 Office Hours scheduled for 1:00 p.m. online via Zoom.

Chair Desjardins adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

The next committee meeting will be on Friday, June 27, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.