



School Construction Committee
Maine State Board of Education
Minutes of the September 26, 2025 Meeting

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

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Scott Brown, Director of School Facilities, Department of Education

Erica Tompkins, Office Specialist, State Board of Education

Chair Desjardins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Ed Morin requested that the September 5, 2025 minutes be amended to include the MSAD 17/RSU 17 Middle School Concept Approval straw poll results (96 in favor, 2 opposed). The Committee members agreed. Motioned by Morin, seconded by Bonneau, and voted unanimously by those present to accept the September 5, 2025 minutes as amended.

Chair Desjardins then moved to the first agenda item, Miscellaneous.

Chair Desjardins reviewed recent developments from the Governor's Commission on School Construction. She updated the Committee regarding agenda items from the September 5 and September 12 meetings including the need for consolidation, essential roles and responsibilities, an eligibility vs. application process, an initial discussion of measures of success, and an energy efficiency presentation given by the Director of Green Schools, Glenn Cummings. She stated that the final report is still due to be completed in December.

Chair Desjardins asked Mr. Brown to update the Committee on the status of the Department's revisions to the construction planning and guidelines documents. Mr. Brown noted that the revisions to the three documents have been completed. He informed the Committee that the Office of School Facilities and the contractor hired to assist on the project, Harriman, would be conducting a Zoom meeting with all those that contributed to the documents on Friday October 10 at 9:30 a.m. After that meeting the Department will be posting the revised documents on the Office of School Facilities website for use on current and future projects. Chair Desjardins suggested the upcoming opportunity to have Mr. Brown present the documents at the November State Board workshop.

Chair Desjardins then introduced the next Miscellaneous agenda item, Rule Chapter 61 revisions. The Committee discussed potential revisions to various sections of the Rule including Section 3, Rating System. They discussed scoring amendments that would recognize maintenance, consolidation, and additional educational program categories. Additionally, the Committee discussed the need to significantly amend Section 15, Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Educational Facility. They discussed developing a new vision for these projects and reviewed the need to revise the rules to align with the vision. They intend to initiate a revision to Rule Chapter 61 in the fall of 2025.

Chair Desjardins asked Mr. Brown to update the Committee on the status of the Proposed Priority List. Mr. Brown noted that the Commissioner's Office was still working on completing the Administrative Review process. He informed the Committee that he anticipated that a Final Priority List would be presented to the Board at its November meeting.

Morin suggested that after the 2024-2025 Rating Cycle Final Priority List is approved and projects are moved to the Approved Projects List, a request along with a draft of a press release be sent to the Maine Department of Education for approved projects.

Under the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Application agenda item Chair Desjardins reviewed the status of the current application and timeline. She further shared concerns she had with the timing of the work and recommendations of the Governor's Commission, necessary or important rule amendments, and the need for identified funding for the program. After extensive Committee discussions that centered around the idea of pausing the program for an unidentified amount of time, the Committee felt the need to share their concerns with Commissioner Makin. It was motioned by Morin, seconded by Bonneau, and voted unanimously by those present to recommend to the Commissioner of Education that there be a pause for Part 1 and Part 2 of the application for the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Educational Facility program until (1) a review and necessary revision of the rules has taken place, (2) there is an identification of funding for the project, and (3) the Governor's Commission on School Construction has submitted its report and recommendations to the Governor.

Chair Desjardins adjourned the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

The next Committee meeting will be on Friday, October 31, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.