



School Construction Committee
Maine State Board of Education
Minutes of the April 23, 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, and Edmond Morin

OTHERS PRESENT:

Scott Brown, Director of School Facilities, 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 9:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the fifth meeting of the School Construction Committee's review of Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects.

Motioned by Morin, seconded by Bonneau, and voted unanimously by those present to accept the March 27, 2026 meeting minutes as written.

Motioned by Morin, seconded by Bonneau, and voted unanimously by those present to accept the April 14, 2026 special meeting minutes as written.

Desjardins introduced the next item on the agenda, *Public Comments*. No one presented comments at the meeting. Desjardins received an email from Tom Keller, Vice Chair of the State Board, on April 12, 2026, which she forwarded to all team members with the agenda. Some of Keller's comments (e.g., CTE's now serving middle school students; errors in points assigned to certain criteria in the rating system) were agreed upon and became part of the draft amendments; other comments will be discussed in future meetings.

Desjardins introduced the next item on the agenda, *Updates on Amendments to Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects*. Team members amended a number of items that were tabled in sections 1-5.

- Section 1 Definitions
 - “Middle school level students” will be added in numbers 6, 7, and 8 on Career and Technical Education
 - Added number 15 on “Cost Sharing”
- Section 2 Major capital School Construction Project Flow Chart, Application Form and Submission Deadlines
 - The team decided to continue with an Application Form rather than move to a Selection Process.
 - By consensus, the team chose to eliminate 3(A) and 3(B).
- Section 3 Rating System
 - In number 2, “building” was added between “public school” and “that”; and “housing” was changed to “occupied and educating”.
 - Errors in point calculations raised in comments from Tom Keller were adjusted.
- Section 4 Priority Lists, Evaluation Report and Administrative Review
 - The second paragraph of 1(B) will be deleted or moved into Section 15.
 - In 3(A), “informal hearing” was changed to “informational meeting” and agreement was reached to leave the rest of the paragraph as is.
 - 4(B) was deleted by consensus.
- Section 5 Approved Projects List
 - In the second paragraph, “housed” was changed to “educated”.
- Section 6 School Construction Eligibility and Approval Process
 - Discussion did not lead to agreement on any of the tabled items in this section. The section will be revisited at a future meeting(s).

Other Chapter 61 sections included for review on the agenda were moved to the next meeting.

Chair Desjardins moved to the next item on the agenda, *Update on School Construction Bills in the Legislature*. With LD 1892 “An Act to Establish Procedures for School Construction Projects” being “dead”, concern was expressed on no additional allocation being made to the School Revolving Renovation Fund nor raising the maximum debt service limit in FY2028-FY2031. That will further limit the capacity to meet renovation and construction needs.

The next School Construction Committee meeting with Chapter 61 team members will be held at 9:00 a.m. on May 1 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 1:00 p.m.