

Governor's Commission on School Construction – Meeting Summary

Date: March 21, 2025
Location: Via Zoom
Time: 1-3:30 p.m.

Key Topics

Upcoming Commission Activities
School Visits Report
Preliminary Draft #1 Review

Attending

Commission Members. Valerie Landry (Chair), Elaine Clark, Hollis Cobb, Fern Desjardins, Art Dudley, Roy Gott, Christopher Howell, Anthony Jaccarino, Jane McCall, Rhonda Sperrey

Governor's Office. Joe Marro

DOE Staff. Scott Brown, Daniel Chuhta, Glenn Cummings, Laura Cyr, Chelsey Fortin-Trimble, Chloe Teboe

Other Attendees. Donald Bresnahan (Building Infrastructure Management Solutions), Chuck Adam (Turner & Townsend), Meredith McLaughlin (Cornerstone Government Affairs)

Action Items

- The Commission has received permission from the Governor's Office to continue its work after April 15. Therefore, a final report will be issued later in 2025 (date TBD). In the meantime, an interim summary has been circulated for comment by Commission members. The purpose is to consolidate information thus far.
- A meeting scheduled earlier this week with the Commission Chair and the Chairs of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee was cancelled, due to other legislative pressures. It will be rescheduled.

Discussion

Review of Commission School Visits – *Christopher Howell, Jane McCall, Rhonda Sperrey, Fern Desjardins, Chelsey Fortin-Trimble, and Glenn Cummings*

- Caribou Community School:
 - Part of the Major Capital School Construction Program.
 - Exemplifies how consolidation expanded opportunities for students and staff.
 - Expanded special education spaces.
 - Light and space has made a big difference.
 - Includes other elements (e.g., a dental clinic) to better address student wellbeing.
- Central Community Elementary School:
 - An example of consolidation, as five buildings merged into one.
 - Concerns exist regarding the new mechanical systems and lack of expertise locally to address.

- Lewiston Middle School:
 - Experiencing overcrowding with a growing population.
 - An older building requiring updates at a local expense – and not ADA-compliant.
 - Staff members have a positive attitude, which is what makes a school community.
- Andover Elementary School:
 - Value-based decision-making plays a large role in some tight-knit, smaller communities.
 - Withdrew from a larger school administrative unit, despite financial impact.
 - Housed in an older building that is not ADA-compliant.
 - Declining enrollment.
 - Has not applied for state funds for construction due to lack of capacity to do so.
 - A building itself is not what makes a school; it is the people in it.
- General comments related to school visits:
 - Interest expressed in having common building plans for new construction projects, including plans for maintenance, technology, etc.
 - Need to have similar mechanical systems, electrical systems, plumbing systems, etc., statewide for ease of maintenance.
 - Timeframes for construction can be lengthy (i.e., the 21-step process)—but there is recognition that the different phases of construction are important.
 - Challenges exist between making renovations to older buildings versus waiting for approval for a larger school construction project. A need exists for funding levels in between School Revolving Renovation Fund and Major Capital School Construction Program.
 - Discussion occurred regarding potential for green elements of school construction and potential savings on energy.

Review of Interim Draft

- Purpose is to reflect all discussion from the past four months.
- Members should submit comments and edits for Draft #2 by next week.
- This is not the final report, as the Commission has been approved to continue its work.
- Confirmed agreement to paraphrase a direct quote on page two from a MEPRI report, pertaining to the approval of “one” project.
- Comments offered at the Commission meeting will be included in Draft #2 for review prior to the April 11 Commission meeting.

The next scheduled Commission meeting is **April 11, 2025, from 1-3:30 p.m.** at location TBD.