



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333-0023

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

PENDER MAKIN
COMMISSIONER

EXHIBIT X.C.

To: Members of the State Board of Education
From: Pender Makin, Commissioner*
Date: September 13, 2023
Subject: Major Capital School Construction Program; Concept Approval Consideration; RSU 14/MSAD 14 - New Middle School Construction Project

STATEMENT OF FACT

RSU 14/MSAD 14 Superintendent Christopher Howell requests that the State Board of Education grant Concept Approval for a new grades 5-8 school to be constructed in the town of Windham. Windham Middle School (grades 6-8) rated 5th on the Final Priority List of the 2017-2018 Rating Cycle and was placed on the Approved Projects List at the November 4, 2020 State Board of Education meeting.

RSU 14/MSAD 14 hired Lavallee Brensinger Architects to complete a New vs. Renovation analysis of the existing Windham Middle School and conduct further studies of the other elementary and middle school buildings in the district. This analysis resulted in a recommendation for new construction of a grades 5-8 Middle School which would include students from the Jordan Small Middle School (grades 5-8) in Raymond. The proposed new school went through a vigorous visioning process with strong community involvement. This recommendation will also allow for universal Pre-K programming in the district.

The project received State Board of Education Site Approval on July 12, 2023. The selected site is in the Windham Center Growth Area, is within 2 miles of the Windham High School/Primary School Campus, and a plan for utility and transportation infrastructure is in place.

The new building has been designed in accordance with the Department of Education school construction standards. Appropriate state and local agencies have had input in the planning process. The building will have an Energy Use Intensity (EUI - energy use in kBtu per square foot annually) of 35. The district intends to significantly reduce the EUI using solar panels through a power purchase agreement.

This Concept Approval is being requested pursuant to 20-A M.R.S., Section 15905(1) and State Board of Education Rule, Chapter 61, Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects.

Project Description by Christopher Howell, Superintendent

In 2018, Windham Middle School was identified as #5 on the Maine Department of Education Major Capital List for school construction. The building, which opened in 1977, scored high on the list through documented structural issues, ventilation issues, aging mechanical systems, and overcrowding. The structure and layout of the building along with a lack of space for specialized instruction, has created difficulties for meeting the diverse needs of middle level students. One third of students from the building need to be housed in the adjacent Field Allen School on campus. Students must walk across a parking lot to access the cafeteria, library, applied arts classes, and the main office. Windham Middle School is inadequate in size for the population that it serves.

In early 2020, the district hired Lavallee Brensinger Architects of Portland, Maine, to complete a 'new' versus 'renovation' study and to complete a comprehensive study of the current grade configurations of buildings in the district. The district also partnered with Dr. Fran Locker, to conduct a comprehensive visioning process with district middle school staff. The extensive planning with Dr. Locker challenged our staff to critically think about instructional best practices and the future of middle level education. This work set the foundation for our planning and heavily influenced the Educational Specifications for the proposed new middle school.

The district wide facility study conducted by Lavallee Brensinger Architects, the visioning work completed by Dr. Fran Locker, and initial discussions with the Maine Department of Education Construction team, identified a need for the district to examine the possibility of including students in grades 5-8 from Jordan Small Middle School (JSMS), Raymond, and 5th grade students from Manchester School, Windham, in this project. The work concluded that a Windham only construction project would have created inequitable access to programs and services for students at the same grade level in the same district. The district has been working towards providing equitable opportunities for students at the same grade level across the district and it has been a focus of educational planning and budgeting since the inception of the RSU. Even with this focus, the task has been difficult because of school size differences, fiscal sustainability of small programs, and geographic distance between the two buildings. JSMS was built in 1964 as an elementary school. In the late 90's the school underwent a partial renovation as part of a repurposing of the building to a middle school. The RSU 14 School board and the town of Raymond Selectboard facilitated a series of community conversations around the possibility of merging the two middle schools together. In November of 2021, it was determined that the district would move forward with a project that would combine grades 5-8 from the two towns of Windham and Raymond.

The development of a new middle school serving students in grades 5 to 8 will benefit students beyond the grade levels that are targeted for this project. Two of the three elementary schools will undergo a shift of grade levels. The change in grade configurations will provide an opportunity for the district to offer a universal full day pre-k program. With our current lottery system, there are typically over 80 families on a wait list.

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Exhibit X.C.

Concept Approval Consideration

New Middle School Construction Project

September 13, 2023

The new Windham Raymond Middle School concept design has been developed to fulfill the vision that was created by multiple RSU 14 stakeholders through our extensive 3-year visioning process. The concept supports a project-based learning model that emphasizes the importance of an integrated curriculum and opportunities for students to be engaged through multiple opportunities for hands-on learning. Art, STEM, and foreign language classrooms have been placed in central core locations in each wing to promote fluid integration with academic teams. The design recognizes the needs of students to feel connected to a small cohort within the context of a larger school. Students will be housed in 12 different team areas over the 4 grade levels housed in the school. Each of the team areas can function independently, focusing on the individual needs of the students that they are serving. To further support our educational vision for this building, the district is investing in common areas for each of the teams and grade levels that will further support the integration of subject areas and collaboration amongst students.

The concept maximizes the amount of square footage that is dedicated to educational programming. A typical middle school design loses 15 to 20 percent of floor space to non-educational functions (circulation, mechanical and storage). The efficient design has reduced this percentage to roughly 6%.

The RSU 14 Middle School Building Committee has been focused on energy efficiency, safety, and long-term sustainability of the project as well as the efficiency of the delivery of academic programs. A subcommittee composed of building engineers, mechanical engineers, and interested individuals have been working over the past year and a half to research and recommend possible building systems, mechanical systems, and building layouts. The committee has recommended air source heat pumps for the heating and ventilation system. The committee has recommended additional window glazing and insulation that will help to provide the best possible learning environment with the least environmental impact at the lowest possible cost. The building committee is recommending the exploration of a solar power purchase agreement that will further support the long-term sustainability of this project.

The committee is using the project as an opportunity to invest in programs and services to support middle level students and the greater community. The project will include a locally funded 600 seat auditorium with supporting technical spaces, a greenhouse, student and community access to an adjacent nature preserve, an indoor walking track for student and community use, and an investment in large collaborative spaces within the building to support team and grade level projects.

The process of developing our design concept has had an impact on middle level education in our district. The multiple meetings and planning conversations that have led to the design have also served to bring the staff from our two middle schools together. We are more than excited about the programs and opportunities that we will be able to offer our students and the positive impacts that it will have for years to come.

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Exhibit X.C.
Concept Approval Consideration
New Middle School Construction Project
September 13, 2023

Project Information:

Project: RSU 14/MSAD 14 New Grades 5-8 Middle School Construction Project
Superintendent: Christopher Howell
Architect: Lavallee Brensinger Architects – Lance Whitehead
Schools to be closed: Windham Middle School and Jordan Small Middle School

Project Budget Information:

Total Project Cost: \$171,551,289.
Local Only (no State participation): \$39,838,444.
Approved for State/Local Debt Service Subsidy: \$131,712,845.

COMMISSIONER’S RECOMMENDATION

The Commissioner of the Department of Education recommends that the State Board of Education grant Concept Approval to RSU 14/MSAD 14 for a new grades 5-8 Middle School construction project as presented.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

On August 25, 2023 the School Construction Committee recommended that this exhibit be placed on the September 13, 2023 State Board meeting agenda and that the State Board grant Concept Approval to RSU 14/MSAD 14 for a new grades 5-8 Middle School construction project as presented.

**Prepared by the Office of School Facilities*



RSU 14
Middle School Project
Grades 5-8 Students 1200

Lavallee Brensinger Architects
Concept Approval
September 13, 2023

	State/Local	Local Only & Other Funding	Total
A CONSTRUCTION			
1 Construction Estimate	<u>\$104,174,782</u>	<u>\$30,255,397</u>	<u>\$134,430,179</u>
Subtotal	<u>\$104,174,782</u>	<u>\$30,255,397</u>	<u>\$134,430,179</u>
B ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS & RESERVES			
2 Land Purchase and Related Costs	\$1,234,628	\$410,372	\$1,645,000
3 Moveable Equipment	\$4,287,767	\$3,021,755	\$7,309,522
4 Advertising and Legal	\$522,067	\$77,931	\$599,998
5 Percent for Art	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
6 Project Reserves	\$2,362,000	\$750,000	\$3,112,000
7 Project Contingency	<u>\$10,417,478</u>	<u>\$3,025,540</u>	<u>\$13,443,018</u>
Subtotal	<u>\$18,873,940</u>	<u>\$7,285,598</u>	<u>\$26,159,538</u>
C FEES AND SERVICES			
8 Architect / Engineer Basic Services	\$6,250,487	\$1,815,324	\$8,065,811
9 Architect / Engineer Additional Services	\$148,100	\$36,600	\$184,700
10 Architect / Engineer Reimbursables	\$46,400	\$0	\$46,400
11 Site Selection	\$204,279	\$0	\$204,279
12 Permitting & Approvals	\$958,975	\$135,725	\$1,094,700
13 Survey and Soils	\$169,056	\$0	\$169,056
14 Construction Testing	\$205,375	\$59,625	\$265,000
15 Project Coordination	\$130,200	\$37,800	\$168,000
16 Clerk of the Works	\$347,820	\$100,980	\$448,800
17 Commissioning	\$199,431	\$111,395	\$310,826
18 Other Professional Services	<u>\$4,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>
Subtotal	<u>\$8,664,123</u>	<u>\$2,297,449</u>	<u>\$10,961,572</u>
D TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$131,712,845	\$39,838,444	\$171,551,289
E OTHER FUNDING SOURCES	\$0	\$0	\$0
F MAXIMUM BOND AMOUNTS	\$131,712,845	\$39,838,444	\$171,551,289

RSU 14
Middle School Project
Concept Approval
September 13, 2023

PROPOSED PROJECT SCHEDULE

<u>Activity</u>			<u>Date</u>
Site Approval by State Board of Education			July 12, 2023
Concept Approval by State Board of Education			September 13, 2023
Referendum Date			November 7, 2023
	Early Site	New School	
Design Development Complete	December 2023	April 2024	
100% Construction Documents Complete	March 2024	November 2024	
Design & Funding Approval by State Board of Education	April 2024	December 2024	
Project out to Bid	April 2024	December 2024	
Bid Opening	June 2024	February 2025	
Final Funding Approval by the Commissioner of Education			March 2025
*Dept. of Education Established Bond Date			Spring 2025 / Spring 2026
Substantial Completion	August 2025	August 2027	
Building Occupancy			August 2027

**Bond date contingent upon Legislative appropriation.*

SQUARE FOOT SUMMARY

<u>Space Definition</u>	<u>State/Local</u>	<u>Local Only</u>	<u>Total</u>
New Construction (sf)	199,431	61,395	260,826 sf
Renovation (sf)	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0 sf</u>
Total	199,431	61,395	260,826 sf