

## **Governor's Commission on School Construction – Meeting Summary**

Date: September 12, 2025  
Location: via Zoom  
Time: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

### **Attending**

*Commission Members.* Valerie Landry (Chair), Chelsey Fortin-Trimble (on behalf of Commissioner Pender Makin), Elaine Clark, Fern Desjardins, Art Dudley, Chris Howell, Anthony Jaccarino, Jane McCall, Justin Poirier, Rhonda Sperrey

*Maine DOE Staff.* Scott Brown, Abigail Cram, Glenn Cummings, Laura Cyr, Paula Gravelle

#### *Guests:*

Naomi Beal, Executive Director, passivhausMAINE

Donald Bresnahan, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Building Infrastructure Management Solutions

Bruce Colburn, Professional Engineer, Maine Indoor Air Quality Council

Christy Crocker, Executive Director, Maine Indoor Air Quality Council

Anisa Heming, Director, Center for Green Schools at U.S. Green Building Council

Don McGilvery, Construction Services Manager, MaineHousing

Max Rush, The Resurgam Group

### **Key Topics**

1. Essential Roles and Responsibilities—updated
2. Measures of Success—initial discussion
3. Sustainable Schools Concept—initial presentation

### **Action Items**

- Essential Roles and Responsibilities will be converted to a draft organizational model consistent with the hybrid entity shared at the July 8, 2025 meeting for review at an upcoming commission meeting.
- Consolidation considerations are being summarized for the commission's review.
- Draft measures of success will be developed for the commission's review.
- The topic of sustainable schools will be revisited for commission recommendations.
- The Maine DOE will provide a list of schools already using best practice standards for energy efficiency.

### **Discussion**

#### **1. Essential Roles and Responsibilities**

The draft reviewed at this meeting included modifications suggested at the September 5, 2025 meeting. Commission members generally agreed with the functions described, with some differences. All agreed with the next step to organize the elements into a potential organizational model. Comments included:

- The intent of new roles and responsibilities is to reduce cost, increase revenue, and better leverage existing resources.
- Two members expressed concern about creating any new bureaucracy; at least one member commented that any new revenue should go strictly to construction.
- The existing piecemeal approach does not support informed investment or planning.
- Centralizing and/or better coordinating information is needed to make it available to all stakeholders (e.g., superintendents, school boards, municipal officials, etc.) and to make informed, data-driven decisions.
- Having the information accessible and available to all is needed; it would help superintendents to have all of the information at the outset of a project.
- The many and varied functions described in Essential Roles and Responsibilities do not exist within any one existing structure; some do not exist at all. The hybrid model does not centralize all functions; specialized functions, such as bonding, would remain in existing organizations.
- Authority and ownership are critical to execute the Essential Roles and Responsibilities.
- School construction involves infrastructure investment and planning over many decades, with aspects that span and involve different administrations, multiple state agencies, school districts, and a wide array of other stakeholders. A quasi-independent entity would be better positioned than one state agency to plan, coordinate, communicate, and monitor progress.
- Discussion of potential changes does not reflect any dissatisfaction with any existing organization or agency but rather the commission's responsibility to examine how to reach the goal of all schools being in sound condition in the decades ahead.

## **2. Measures of Success**

Anthony Jaccarino described the value of developing critical success factors or benchmarks to track the progress of any new approach. Examples of areas to consider include:

- Square footage per student
- Cost
- Maintenance
- Commuting distance between schools

Commission members responded favorably to developing critical success measures, and it was agreed that options would be formulated for the commission's consideration.

## **3. Sustainable Schools**

Glenn Cummings, Ed.D., Maine DOE Director of Green Schools, presented key issues associated with sustainable schools with emphasis on fiscal responsibility; health and safety for students, teachers, and staff; and environmental impact. Cummings provided a chart, which described the energy savings and impact of various strategies. Topics included:

- Third-party certification models: WELL, Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS), Energy Star for Schools, LEED
- Indoor air quality, ventilation, daylight, and noise
- Energy modeling to measure the building against certification standards

- Cost savings
- Environmental impact
- Maintenance contracts with manufacturers to counteract the shortage of technicians

Comments included:

- New schools in Maine are constructed to much higher energy efficiency standards. The Maine DOE has established high standards in this area and does an outstanding job.
- Although new schools are built to energy efficient standards, existing building stock varies greatly. A 2025 Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) report was mentioned in this regard.
- Third-party certification is a relatively modest cost (\$10,000-\$20,000) to obtain high-quality data on each school. Without a third-party expert approach, state or district officials would need to undertake this time-consuming review.
- Indoor air quality does not get enough attention.
- In any new approach, there is a need to build in “resiliency of process.”
- Some issues have emerged in geo-thermal.