



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

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GOVERNOR

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

Exhibit #IV.A.

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Susan A. Gendron, Commissioner*

DATE: September 12, 2007

SUBJECT: Major Capital School Construction Program; *Concept Approval Consideration*; Durham School Department, New PreK-8 Elementary School Construction Project.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Durham School Department's project was rated at number eleven on the 2004-2005 Approved Projects List. The project will house 505 students grades PreK-8. It will replace the current Durham School that, following a detailed New vs. Renovation Study, was determined not to be appropriate for renovation.

The school will be constructed on the current school site. The site is large enough to locate the new project on the site, while maintaining the current school until construction is completed. The site is in the center of Durham and can be accessed from both Route 9 and Route 136. It is adjacent to the Durham Town Office and the fire station.

Durham will contribute more than \$2 million to the project if the local referendum is successful. Local funds will be used to add a number of pitched roofs to the building, to construct an oversized school gymnasium, and to share in the cost of a geothermal heating/cooling system.

This Concept Approval is being requested pursuant to M.R.S.A. Title 20-A, Section 15905(1).

Project Information:

Project: New PreK-8 Elementary School
Superintendent: Shannon L. Welsh
Principal: William Pidden
Architect: Dan Cecil, Harriman Associates
School Replaced: Current Durham Elementary School

Superintendent Shannon Welsh has provided the following project description statement:

Durham is committed to providing a strong educational program for its children. We are a K-8 school where people feel connected to each other and committed to helping all of our students meet or exceed the Maine Learning Results standards. Citizens offer fundraising support and

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volunteer hours to provide extra-curricular opportunities for our students. The support provided by the State through construction funds will help us meet our goal of providing our children with an exemplary academic program in a facility that supports and enhances learning.

The community first considered problems we hope to solve through this construction project. Priority issues to be resolved include:

- Improved program space to help strengthen our academic program;
- Consistency of academic program for students across a grade/age level;
- Enhanced communication and coordination of services for students and staff;
- Maximized options for student placement to accommodate individual learning needs; and
- Provide an elementary school as the heart of the community.

The Town of Durham has strong support for the proposed elementary school project concept. The location is at the center of the Town and is on the same site as our current school. Improved facilities will help us enhance and improve our educational program through the following:

- Science and technology lab space with access to a diverse outdoor environment for science application;
- Program space for art, music, and foreign language which are currently taught in shared or inadequate spaces;
- Tutorial and student support instructional spaces in close proximity to classrooms to reduce lost instructional time due to transitions; and
- Improved security systems with monitored access to the building to ensure a safe, secure learning environment.

Project Budget Information:

Estimated total Project Cost: \$23,906,405
Local Only Cost (no State participation): \$2,176,696
Anticipated Maine High Performance Schools Energy Grant: \$120,000
Approved for State/Local Debt Service Subsidy: \$21,609,709

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Construction Committee met on September 4, 2007, and voted unanimously to send this exhibit to the State Board of Education for consideration with an approval recommendation.

COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDATION

The Commissioner recommends that the State Board grant Concept Approval to Durham School Department for a new PreK-8 elementary school in Durham, Maine, and approve the budget as presented.

*Prepared by the School Facilities Services Team