

School Consolidation Committee Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2025
Holbrook Middle School Library

RSU 63 Committee Members Present: Linda Graban, Heather Grass, Derek Robertson

Others Present: Jared Fulgoni, RSU 63 Superintendent of Schools; Brittany Wood; Rachel Downs; Benjamin Breadmore, Holden Town Manager; Gary Ferrill; Becky Pelkey; Jon Williams; Desiree McCarthy; and Whitney Gould-Cookson.

1. **Election of Committee Chair:** Motion by Linda Graban to nominate Heather Grass as Chair of the School Consolidation Committee, second by Derek Robertson.
Vote: Unanimous. Heather Grass accepted.
2. **Maine School Consolidation State Law and Process:** Superintendent Jared Fulgoni reviewed the laws and process from the handouts provided. Documents can also be found on our website under the Consolidation Tab.

Discussion took place on the three-step process. We are in the investigation stage, gearing up for Step 1. Step 1 requires the Board to vote on the “lack of need” of a building and what building is not needed. Step 2 includes filing the necessary reports with the Maine Department of Education proving lack of need. Finally, step 3 requires the towns to vote on closing the building that the Board found to be no longer of need. An important fact to remember is, if “lack of need” is filed and approved by the state, the state will no longer provide funding and the total cost of operating that building must be funded by the towns.
3. **Timeline:** Superintendent Fulgoni advised there is no set timeline. This is a slow-moving process to ensure a well-informed decision is made. Tentatively, the Board could vote in May of 2025 as Step 1.
4. **Enrollment Projection vs Actual Enrollment:** A handout was provided in the meeting packet that showed the projected enrollment from 2017-2026 vs the actual enrollments from 2017 to the current school year. A decline in enrollment was projected and the actual enrollment numbers are well below the projections. Discussion took place on what happens if enrollment increases and if we can get projection numbers past 2026. Benjamin Breadmore, Holden Town Manager advised he looks at population numbers regularly for the Town of Holden and confirmed the population numbers have declined and continue to decline.
5. **Other Facts to Consider and Research:** None
6. **Next Meeting Date:** Saturday, February 8, 2025 at 10:00am, Eddington Elementary School. This meeting will include an in-depth walk through of the building and grounds. Discussion took place on having a representative of Carpenter Associates being present at the meeting to help answer questions.
7. **Adjournment:** 7:10pm

APPROVED: January 27, 2025