

TESTIMONY

Vermont House Education Committee

Tuesday, February 11, 2020

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An Update on Our Work Related to School Modernization in Vermont

1. 2109 Legislative Session Recap

- [H.209](#)
- **House Education Committee Miscellaneous Education Bill - 2019**
 - [April 19 draft language](#)
 - [April 30 draft language](#)

2. Ad Hoc Work Group - Summer and Fall 2019

- **Why we met**
 - To move the discussion forward
 - To continue to hear perspectives
 - To learn more around topics to inform the discussion
 - To prepare to inform the legislative process in 2020
- **Who participated**
 - Superintendents
 - Facilities Managers
 - Architects
 - USDA Resource Staff
 - Secretary of Education
 - Vermont Community Bond Bank
- **What we did**
 - 5 group meetings
 - Discussions with House Ed Chair and House Corrections/Institutions Chair
 - Discussion with the State Treasurer
 - Research on and discussions with the Massachusetts School Building Authority
 - Discussions with Surveying Firm from NYC
 - Surveyed school districts for information on past, pending and planned projects
 - Heard perspectives from across Vermont

- **Where we are**
 - Better understanding of the context
 - Aging infrastructure
 - Little major work in recent years
 - Student population is decreasing in many areas but no substantive changes in number of schools in operation
 - Space needs are changing
 - Without a school construction aid program, the state does not exert much influence in nature of projects and allocation of funding
 - Observations about inequity
 - Deferred maintenance, project need and costs are growing
 - Surrounding states provide school construction aid
 - And the opportunities...
 - Equity
 - Education Quality
 - Economic Development
 - Workforce Development
 - Resource Efficiency
 - Consensus about the need to create a new stewardship program for K-12 schools that promotes modern high-quality learning environments
 - Statewide Survey
 - State Construction Aid
 - Priority Criteria
 - Building Standards
 - Facility Director or equivalent (useful)
 - Facility Master Plan
 - AOE Staff
 - Planning grants
 - Understanding that this is a big effort and will take time, resources and leadership to design an effective system

END