



THE MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

One Mackworth Island, Falmouth, ME 04105

**March 7, 2024
Board Meeting
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One Mackworth Island, Falmouth, ME 04105

Board of Directors Meeting

March 7, 2024

Agenda

- 5:30pm I. **Call to Order and Roll Call of Board Members – Lisette Belanger, *Chair***
Roxanne Baker, Lisette Belanger, *Chair*, Jason Bubier, Tommy Minch, *Vice Chair*, Anna Perna, Mike Pulsifer, Liz Seal, Sandra Wood
- 5:33pm II. **Motion to Elect an Executive Director Pro Tem for the March 7, 2024 Board Meeting**
“I move to elect _____ [state name] as the Executive Director Pro Temp for the March 7, 2024 board meeting.”
“I second the motion.”
- 5:35pm III. **Adjustments to the Agenda**
“I move to approve the March 7, 2024 agenda [state with or without changes].”
“I second the motion.”
- 5:37pm IV. **Motion to Approve the February 6, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes**
“I move to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2024 board meeting [state with or without changes].”
“I second the motion.”
- 5:39pm V. **Public Comments**
- 5:43pm VI. **Facilities Updates** Dean Flanagan, *Director of Operations*
- 6:00pm VII. **Departmental Report** Erin Bunce, *Middle School/High School Coordinator*
- New Business**
- 6:15pm VIII. **Committee Reports**
- Policy
 - Strategic Planning
 - Human Resources
 - Finance
 - Facilities
 - Board Development
 - Member Recruitment & Retention
 - Legislative Action
 - Bylaws
- 6:20pm IX. **Review of Strategic Plan**
“I move to review the Strategic Plan.”
“I second the motion.”
- 6:30pm X. **Executive Session**
“I move to enter Executive Session to discuss the following:
● Executive Director search, pursuant to Article 405(6)A;
“I second the motion.”
- 7:30pm XI. **Announcements**
- 7:31pm XII. **Adjournment**
“I move to adjourn to **Friday, April 5, 2024 at 5:30pm.**”
“I second the motion.”



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Board of Directors Meeting February 6, 2024 Minutes

6:04pm I. **Call to Order and Roll Call of Board Members – Lisette Belanger, *Chair***

Roxanne Baker, Lisette Belanger, *Chair*, Jason Bubier, Tommy Minch, *Vice Chair*, Anna Perna, Mike Pulsifer, Liz Seal, Sandra Wood

Excused: Jason Bubier

Also present: Steve Connolly, Consulting Superintendent; Susie Tiggs, Dean Flanagin, Lori Levesque, Directors; David Strock, Attorney; Cid Pollard and Grace Cooney, Interpreters; Cathy Lushman, Culture and Longevity Consultant; Kim Spencer, Executive Assistant

6:05pm II. **Adjustments to the Agenda**

“I move to approve the February 6, 2024 agenda without changes.”

“I second the motion.”

Roxanne **motioned**; Anna **seconded**.

6 in favor. 0 opposed. 0 abstained.

6:05pm III. **Motion to Approve the February 1, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes**

“I move to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2024 board meeting without changes.”

“I second the motion.”

Mike **motioned**; Roxanne **seconded**.

5 in favor. 0 opposed. 1 abstained.

6:08pm IV. **Public Comments - None**

Sandra Wood arrived after this Article

New Business

6:10pm V. **Executive Session**

“I move to enter Executive Session to discuss the following:

- Appointment of officials/appointees/employees pursuant to Article 405(6)(A)1;

“I second the motion.”

Tommy **motioned**; Sandra **seconded**.

7 in favor. 0 opposed. 0 abstained.

7:55pm VI. **Announcements - None**

7:56pm VII. **Adjournment**

“I move to adjourn to **Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 5:30pm.**”

“I second the motion.”

Tommy **motioned**; Liz **seconded**.

7 in favor. 0 opposed. 0 abstained.



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Board of Directors Meeting February 1, 2024 Minutes

5:32pm I. **Call to Order and Roll Call of Board Members – Lisette Belanger, *Chair***

Roxanne Baker, Lisette Belanger, *Chair*, Tommy Minch, *Vice Chair*, Mike Pulsifer, Liz Seal, Sandra Wood

Excused: Jason Bubier, Anna Perna

Also present: Directors Dean Flanagin, Lori Levesque, and Susie Tiggs; Culture and Longevity Consultant Cathy Lushman, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board Kim Spencer; Superintendent Consultant Steve Connolly, Board Nominee Dawna Thorpe; President of School Exec Connect Kevin O’Mara; Interpreters Grace Cooney, Zach Hardy, Amy Richardson

5:35pm II. **Adjustments to the Agenda**

“I move to approve the February 1, 2024 agenda with changes. Add Article VIII Approval of Interim Leadership Plan.”

Tommy **motioned**; Liz **seconded**.

6 in favor. 0 opposed. 0 abstained.

5:36pm III. **Motion to Approve the January 10, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes**

“I move to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024 board meeting with changes.”

Add Steve Connolly to list of attendees.

Mike **motioned**; Sandra **seconded**.

6 in favor. 0 opposed. 0 abstained.

5:38pm IV. **Public Comments - None**

5:38pm V. **Facilities Update** Dean Flanagin, *Director of Operations*

5:58pm VI. **Departmental Report** Cathy Lushman, *Preschool Coordinator*

New Business

6:13pm VII. **Staff Nomination**, Kim Matthews-Hermans, *Family and Peer Programming Coordinator*

“I move to accept the recommendation of Kim Matthews-Hermans for the position of *Family and Peer Programming Coordinator* effective January 22, 2024 without changes.

Mike **motioned**; Tommy **seconded**.

Long discussion ensued.

3 in favor. 3 opposed. 0 abstained.

Motion does not pass

6:49pm VIII. **Approval of Interim Leadership Plan**

“I move to approve the Interim Leadership Plan without changes.”

Tommy **motioned**; Roxanne **seconded**.

6 in favor. 0 opposed. 0 abstained.



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Board of Directors Meeting February 1, 2024 Minutes

7:00pm IX. **Committee Reports**

- Policy - Mike reporting - the committee is willing to meet to discuss policies. Steve asked that policies be added to the next CORE agenda.
- Strategic Planning - Roxanne reporting, nothing to report
- Human Resources - Tommy reporting, nothing to report
- Finance - Tommy reporting, nothing to report
- Facilities - Liz reporting, nothing to report
- Board Development - Anna absent, no report
- Member Recruitment & Retention- Anna absent, no report
- Legislative Action - Roxanne reporting, nothing to report
- Bylaws - Tommy reporting, nothing to report

7:00pm X. **Executive Session**

"I move to enter Executive Session to discuss the following:

- Executive Director search applications, pursuant to Article 405(6)A;

Tommy **motioned**; Liz **seconded**.
6 **in favor**. 0 **opposed**. 0 **abstained**.

8:18pm XI. **Announcements** - Sandra announced *Deaf Night Out* taking place Friday, 2/2, at 33 Elmwood in Westbrook

8:20pm XII. **Adjournment**

"I move to adjourn to **Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 5:30pm.**"

Tommy **motioned**; Sandra **seconded**.
6 **in favor**. 0 **opposed**. 0 **abstained**.



February 2024 Board Report
for the March 7, 2024 meeting

Dean Flanagin - Director of Operations

Business and Human Resources

Work is wrapping up on electronic filing of Form 1099 to vendors and Form 1095 health insurance forms for employees. The IRS requires an IRIS (Information Returns Intake System) application for a TCC (Transmitter Control Code) for the electronic filing of Form 1099s, which is due on March 31, 2024. The IRS requires an ACA application for TCC for the electronic filing of Form 1095s, which is due April 1, 2024. The IRS method and software are new this year and require identification verification through the IDME data program. Many thanks to Chris Rheault and Lori Levesque for their work to complete the required verification and data submissions.

Facilities Projects/Improvement

On February 28, MECDHH/GBSD met with Elaine Clark and Deane Rykerson from the State Bureau of General Services (BGS) to discuss the master plan and specifically the challenges with Greenlaw (Building D). In addition, there was a discussion about the lack of classroom space available to our preschool students. Susie Tiggs explained how the lack of space impacted the programming for our MECDHH students. Steve Connolly suggested that the new building being proposed should have more classroom space to allow for the program needs now and into the future. Elaine Clark contacted Education Commissioner Pender Makin and received the approval to fund the necessary renovations to Greenlaw Building and renovate Patrick Building and construct an outdoor pavilion in support of summer programs.

Cost estimates and tasks for proposed renovations for Building D (Greenlaw):

Roof structural evaluation and upgrades and replacement	\$1 million
South side siding replacement	\$1 million
North side repointing of masonry	\$500,000
Replacement of carpeting throughout	\$25,000
Total Budget Estimate for Greenlaw	\$2,525,000

New Construction and Renovation in Support of Summer Programs:

Project costs to construct outdoor pavilion, including ADA ramps from the gym to the pavilion	\$500,000
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Project costs to renovate Patrick Building by removing wall,
relocating power, utilities, and sprinklers and additional egress
to create 2 large and 1 smaller classroom \$900,000

**Total new construction of pavilion and
Patrick renovations \$1,400,000**

Grand Total of all construction and renovations \$3,925,000

Elaine Clark is proposing that a new classroom building be included in the 2026 – 2027 State budget.



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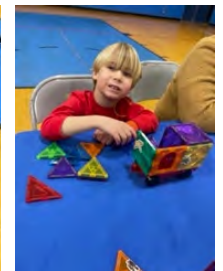
Mackworth Island Preschool - Cathy Lushman, Coordinator

We have just completed a fascinating journey of colors. During this unit, we had the opportunity to explore the beauty of colors through nature and the world around us. We were also engaged in numerous hands-on activities that kept us curious and excited during our morning meetings and center time.

To add a little more fun, we had a color of the day for three weeks and enjoyed dressing up in different colors. Our journey was further enriched by reading many beautiful books about colors, which helped us to learn and appreciate them even more.

In addition to colors, we also learned about being good friends. During our morning, we discussed the qualities of being a good friend, which was an excellent opportunity to review and reflect on our friendships. We also read many great books about friendship, which taught us the importance of building and nurturing solid relationships with others.

We had an amazing time with the entire family coming to celebrate Valentine's Day. It was such a heartwarming occasion, and we're grateful families were able to join us. The excitement on the kids's faces was truly priceless, and it was evident that they were experiencing immense joy and love. We cannot thank parents/guardians enough for their assistance in putting each child's Valentine's card in their designated bag. It made the event run smoothly and allowed us to focus on creating wonderful memories with our loved ones. Witnessing families connect and come together was truly a beautiful sight to behold. Their presence help make a significant impact, and we appreciate it from the bottom of our hearts.





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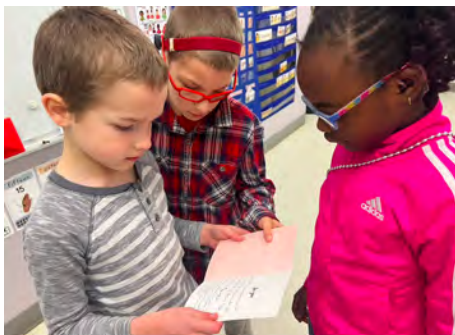
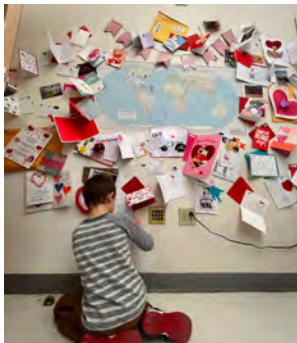
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Elementary - Melanie Bowlus, Coordinator

East End Community School

February has been an exciting month at East End Community School thus far! Students read the book “Love Around the World; Family and Friends Across the Globe” and learned about how people show and celebrate love in different places. Students then took part in an exciting project in which they sent a card to another school in Ohio, and waited for cards from all over the world to arrive! To date, we have received well over 70 cards from nearby and far places, including Armenia, Montana, Hawaii, and even the Netherlands! Students arrive eager each morning for their turn to open a card, and to use a push pin to locate where the card traveled from on the classroom world map! Thank you to all who helped us to spread the word to celebrate “Love Around the World.”

Our 3rd graders traveled to Maddy’s Theatre this month to see the showing of Knuffle Bunny with their classmates. They thoroughly enjoyed the show and we have incorporated the lessons learned at the play into our daily school activities. The students are learning about communication, misunderstandings, and being kind. It was a great experience for all!





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Brewer Community School

Second graders had to write the story of the three little pigs from one character's perspective. We used pictures drawn by a former student (more than a decade ago) to help organize our thoughts.

Third grade has been studying Maine. To learn rivers and mountains we made a topo map with clay and now he can ID all the features he needed to learn.

In the struggle to understand place value, two students have been working with a thousand chart. We played a game where they rolled dice to see if they needed to add ones, tens, or hundreds, then they needed to remember which way to move their piece. We showed the number with base ten blocks too. First one to 1,000 wins!

For the 100th day of school, pre-K could dress up as if they are 100 years old. Their teacher dressed in a curly gray wig and glasses on a chain. When I walked in the room several students shouted out that the teacher looked just like me (Linda Koehler). Yes, apparently I look 100 now.

😞 Children could also wear 100 things and our friend had glued 100 googly eyes on his shirt.

Both second and third graders got to learn about the Panawahpskek (Penobscot) people directly from members of the tribe. Three members came to school and gave an interesting presentation with beautiful artifacts to look at and touch.





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Middle School and High School - Erin Bunce, Coordinator

Happy March! The month of February went by quickly, especially since staff and students had a week off for February break. Before I sat down to type this, I was able to chat with a few students and asked about their breaks. Everyone said their break was "GOOD!" Many students shared that they played games and chatted with friends via video phones and/or Facetime. Several shared that they played basketball outside! Prior to the break, Shana Kelley-Cohen met with students at LMMS to discuss how to be good digital friends. The students have been learning about digital citizenship with Megan Garrity, Rob Gillies, and Shana throughout the year so it was awesome to see that the students discussed what they already learned! Being good digital citizens is an essential skill that all students need to be aware of and practice for the future, so I am grateful to Shana for taking the time to work with the students in this area. After the meeting, everyone - staff included! - worked on team building skills using Cat's Cradle! It was a fun filled activity that challenged us all to work together - including me!

At Portland High School the students are all adjusting to their new schedules for the new quarter nicely. Some of the students' elective classes changed and most are enjoying the new classes!

In other news, Lucky Iraoya was recently recognized as the SMAA All Academic Athlete for Unified Basketball at Portland High School! Congratulations, Lucky!





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Early Intervention and Family Services (EIFS) - Amy Spencer, Coordinator

EIFS continued supervision on the road this month which assists in continuing our goal of meeting fidelity in providing family centered early intervention that supports language acquisition for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The team is exploring some new resources for supporting families in reflecting upon their unique child's language acquisition by looking at their access to language, exposure, and the social connections they are able to make using their language skills.



EIFS is proud to announce that we are continuing our Pop Up Playgroups this Winter/Spring once a month on Saturdays. We are hoping this will decrease the barrier of weekday events and bring more families together with Deaf and hard of hearing children, from birth to age 5. The outings will be in four different parts of the state to offer options for families geographically. We are also so grateful to have been awarded money from the Percival Baxter Foundation to provide gas cards to families for whom travel expenses are a barrier to participating in these events, as well as the on island weekly playgroup.





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EIFS now has two openings on our team. Fortunately, we are able to contract with a former employee in the North to meet some family/child needs. The State of Maine is in the process of reflecting upon their CDS system and considering transition of Part B services to SAUs as well as potentially extending Part C services up to age 4. This will further burden our limited staff and increase the need for staff to support our ever growing population of families accessing early intervention. We are hopeful that given our positive regard nationally, as well as with spring transitions on their way, we will attract some ideal candidates to round out our team to provide necessary support and services to families with deaf and hard of hearing children in Maine.

Part B Outreach - Donna Casavant, Coordinator

Outreach staff is working on filling blanks in our Infinite Campus database so we can begin to make regular data pulls for IEP status. Thank you for your efforts.



Angel King worked with Hands and Voices to pull together the exciting skating event in Presque Isle, pictured above. Angel, thank you for your leadership with this.

Shannon Locke has been invited to connect some middle school students with peers from our site-based program. Fingers crossed that she can make this happen.



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Kindergarten transition time is upon us. Initial data shows that there are at least 33 students transitioning from CDS services to Kindergarten this fall. The season of transition IEPs is upon us.

Outreach will be busy because most of these students will be going to their mainstream schools. With 20 graduating seniors leaving, that's an increase of 13 students in K-12.

Maintenance Department - Steve Kimball, Supervisor

This month we are trying to figure out what month we are actually in - crazy weather. First, we are plowing snow then diverting rainwater. The good news is that D107 and D110 are now finished with new paint and flooring. Kiddos have been given the all clear to occupy building D (Greenlaw Hall). We continue to make progress on the bottom floor of building D and hope for an April opening of that area, fingers crossed.

Still cleaning up areas from recent windstorms. Now we are looking toward spring, hope to start sand removal and road repairs soon.

Special Education & Related Services - Kristen Q. Shorey, Coordinator

If you have been working in Maine as an educator or following discussions and decisions made at the legislative level in regards to public education, you may be aware that Child Development Services (CDS) provides special education under Part B, 619 of IDEA for children age 3.0 until they are eligible for Kindergarten and transition to public school. The Maine Department of Education has been deliberating whether to transition these CDS services to the School Administrative Units (SAU) for over 2 decades, which would align us with other states in the Nation. It appears they are taking steps and are mapping out a 3 year plan.

There was a public hearing in the Education & Cultural Affairs Committee on Tuesday, February 27 regarding the transition of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for 3-5 year olds.

The following document explains options being considered.

The outcome of this decision could impact our current Mackworth preschool program. I will keep you updated. Please reach out if you have any questions.

PART B §619 Alternative Plans: Recommendations That Could Be Implemented

Instead of moving forward with all of the recommendations, the Advisory Committee could consider one of the following alternative combinations proposed by PCG:

A. Move all CDS Admin. under DOE, and maintain CDS’ responsibility for Part B-619 service delivery statewide.		
Governance	Funding	Service Delivery
1.1. Designated state agency: DOE. 1.2. Admin office: OSS within DOE (with k-12) 1.3. 619 state staff in DOE 1.10. 619 representatives on early childhood planning initiatives.	2.1. Central billing system 2.2. MaineCare ‘special education services’ section 2.5. Review of current children with high costs	3.1. Training and professional development 3.2. Pyramid Model 3.3. Chapter 676 training 3.4. Use of developmental delay eligibility category

B. Maintain CDS as quasi-state agency with administrative and service delivery responsibility for Part B-619 statewide		
Governance	Funding	Service Delivery
1.10. 619 representatives on early childhood planning initiatives.	2.1. Central billing system 2.2. MaineCare ‘special education services’ section 2.5. Review of current children with high costs	3.1. Training and professional development 3.2. Pyramid Model 3.3. Chapter 676 training 3.4. Use of developmental delay eligibility category

C. Implement either alternative A. or B. (above) and require SAUs to contract with CDS / DOE for children in their catchment area – with per child monthly reimburse rate (utilizing state, Federal IDEA (611 and 619) and MaineCare - based on child’s eligibility)		
Governance	Funding	Service Delivery
1.10. 619 representatives on early childhood planning initiatives.	2.1. Central billing system 2.2. MaineCare ‘special education services’ section 2.5. Review of current children with high costs	3.1. Training and professional development 3.2. Pyramid Model 3.3. Chapter 676 training 3.4. Use of developmental delay eligibility category

D. SAUs have responsibility for Part B-619 but are allowed to contract with a regional or statewide entity such as CDS to coordinate and provide special education and related services to children 3-5 within their catchment area.		
Governance	Funding	Service Delivery
All Recommendations	All Recommendations	All Recommendations

E. Allow children to remain in Part C until the beginning of the next school year or the year in which the child is age eligible for Pre-K. Some additional funding is available through the IDEA extended Part C option (states can include in their annual application)		
Governance	Funding	Service Delivery
All Recommendations	All Recommendations	All Recommendations

Early Childhood Special Education (619) Recommendations

PCG recommends that all of the following changes be made in the interrelated areas of 1) governance and administration 2) funding and 3) service delivery of IDEA Part C early intervention services to children birth to 3 with developmental delays and disabilities. These recommendations are made based on PCG's evaluation of qualitative data collected from stakeholder feedback, review of program and cost data, interviews conducted with peer states, review of national literature and evidence-based practices and models and PCG's subject matter expertise.

Not all the recommendations require statute or policy changes, and the Phase II Implementation Report will provide more details on the steps Maine can take to successfully implement these changes.

PCG has provided a matrix (*Table 31* below) of alternative changes that could be made should the State decide not to follow the comprehensive set of recommendations listed below.

1. *Governance / Administration:*

PCG recommends:

- 1.1. ***Designated state agency:*** Designate in state statute the Maine Department of Education (DOE) as the state agency for the administration of Part B-619 services for children with developmental delays and disabilities 3 through 5. PCG recommends a transition period for this change of administration from CDS to DOE, as described in 1.6 below.
- 1.2. ***Administrative Office:*** Administration of Part B-619 services at the DOE to be within the Office of Special Services, along with K-12 special education services. Regular planning and coordination with staff from the Office of Early Childhood Education is also recommended.
- 1.3. ***619 state staff:*** Administration of Part B-619 services at the DOE to include a 619 Coordinator and team of early childhood special education specialist staff to assist in the statewide implementation of Part B-619 services by SAUs, including: 1) accountability and monitoring; 2) inclusion support and community systems building; and 3) training and technical assistance.
- 1.4. ***Designate SAUs to provide 619 services:*** Designate in state statute SAUs as responsible for the provision of Part B-619 services in accordance with federal and state regulations for all eligible children with developmental delays and disabilities ages 3 through 5 in their catchment area.
- 1.5. ***Revise state regulations:*** Revise the current Maine Unified Special Education Regulation (MUSER) to include the new administrative structure, including the provision of Part B-619 services by SAUs.
- 1.6. ***Transition Period:*** Establish a transition period of 3 full school / fiscal years (e.g. if legislation was passed in March 2021 – the transition period would be July 01, 2021 – June 30, 2024), providing support and direct funding options for 'early adopter' SAUs to provide IDEA 619 services to children 3-5 after 2 years.
- 1.7. ***State-level transition leadership team:*** Establish a state-level transition leadership team to work during the transition period to address identified state-level funding, facility, statute and policy changes, workforce and training and professional development, technical assistance. The state-level transition leadership team be assigned complete 'ECTA Systems Framework' IDEA Part B 619 self-assessment, including the governance, accountability & quality improvement and finance sections and using the results during the transition period as part of the implementation planning.
- 1.8. ***SAU Transition planning:*** Support all SAUs to develop a preschool special education transition plan in year 1 through a team process to include parents and community partners. Each transition plan to address: number of children 3-5 with disabilities projected to be served; their current placements; projected placements; community partner agreements with Head start and child care; opportunities to expand Pre-K; any needed space / facility needs; personnel needed (hiring / contracts); identification of technical assistance needs for topics such as, recommended practices for serving young children, early childhood outcomes, reporting required data and the use of the fiscal toolkit to address opportunities to braid funding.
- 1.9. ***Inclusive early childhood education guidance document:*** Develop state guidance document for SAUs and community early childhood providers regarding the implementation of inclusive early childhood services (drawing on national and other state documents).

- 1.10. **619 representation:** Ensure IDEA Part B-619 representation on the state IDEA panel, Children’s Cabinet and other early childhood planning initiatives.

2. **Funding:**

PCG recommends that Maine:

- 2.1. **Central billing system:** Develop a central billing system to process claims to MaineCare that maximizes revenue through automation and reduction in administrative burden on SAUs. Delivered services data (e.g. <number of minutes> of <service> provided on <date> to <child> at <location> by <therapist name> <therapist number>) from SAUs and any contracted providers would be collected through a central web-based electronic data system. The data is then converted and processed into claims by either state employees or through a billing agent. SAUs and contracted providers would receive payment directly from MaineCare.

Note: PCG also recommends that Maine consider a central claiming for K-12 special education that has the potential to generate significant review statement, due the current reluctance of many SAUs to process claims to MaineCare, citing the administrative burden and fear of audit paybacks. PCG was also informed of a current disincentive to MaineCare claiming in the EPS funding formula as a result of special education staff costs being reimbursed retrospectively.

- 2.2. **MaineCare ‘special education services’ section:** Continue working with MaineCare to develop a new ‘special education services’ section of the MaineCare Benefits Manual that includes clear service definitions, billing codes, modifiers and rates for all special education and related services reimbursable services. These can be used within the central billing system to ensure that billing documentation and claiming processes meet MaineCare requirements and prevent audit exceptions. This will also ensure clear and consistent use of modifiers which is necessary for the accurate calculation of the state match (seed) associated with IEP authorized education services.
- 2.3. **Rate Study:** Work with MaineCare to conduct a rate study to determine the costs of providing reimbursable special education and related services.
- 2.4. **Funding of 619 services:** Fund 619 preschool special education services through SAUs utilizing either:
 - 2.4.1. EPS special education funding formula by SAUs – with use of the \$30 million state appropriation currently received by CDS to offset the local cost (no more than 50% local cost for special education). SAUs would also receive MaineCare; IDEA 611 and IDEA 619 funds and can utilize inclusive Pre-K, Head Start and child care placements.
 - 2.4.2. Per child allocation to SAUs utilizing the current \$30 million state appropriation currently received by CDS. SAUs would also receive MaineCare; IDEA 611 and IDEA 619 funds and can utilize inclusive Pre-K, Head Start and child care placements.
- 2.5. **Review of current children with high costs:** Conduct a review of the current children with high annual cost to determine the appropriateness of the intensity of services they are receiving and determine whether they could be served in a less restrictive environment. Currently, 785 children aged 3-5 eligible for IDEA Part B-619 have annual costs over \$20,000.
- 2.6. **Fiscal toolkit:** Develop a fiscal toolkit for SAUs to look at how to braid funding streams and maximize partnerships with other early childhood providers (Head Start, child care, Pre-K) and contracted providers to effectively serve preschool children with disabilities under IDEA Part B-619.

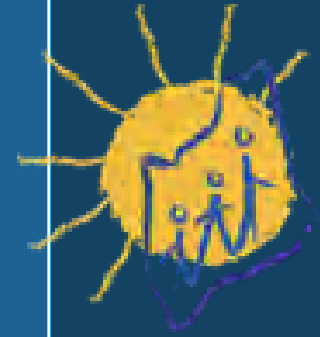
3. **Service Delivery:**

PCG recommends that Maine:

- 3.1. **Training and professional development:** Develop training and other professional development opportunities (webinars, online asynchronous course) on inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood education for a variety of audiences, including school administrators and boards; teachers and other instructional staff; parents and community partners. Training and professional development to include development of IEPs including the

special education and related services to address the individualized developmental needs of each child and the determination of the least restrictive environment / setting for the child.

- 3.2. **Pyramid Model:** Develop a cross early childhood program (Head Start, Pre-K, child care, IDEA Part B-619) leadership team to develop a plan for implementation of the Pyramid Model in order to promote the use of evidence-based practices for promoting young children’s healthy social and emotional development and effectively addressing challenging behaviors through a tiered intervention approach.
- 3.3. **Chapter 676 training:** Include in training consideration of Chapter 676 (which currently allows children who turn 5 between July 01 – Oct 15 to remain in IDEA Part B-619 services and to transition to Kindergarten the following year) as it applies to the IEP Individualized Education Program (IEP) decisions made individually for each child. With IDEA Part B-619 services provided through SAUs it is likely that fewer IEP teams will determine the need for a child to continue to receive 619 preschool special education rather than transition to Kindergarten.
- 3.4. **Use of developmental delay eligibility category:** Consider using the eligibility category of developmental delay more widely. Train and encourage evaluation teams in the use of the developmental delay category of eligibility.



The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing/ Governor Baxter School for the Deaf

Board Presentation March 7, 2024



BUDGET GENERAL FUND THRU FEBRUARY 28, 2024

	2024 YTD	2024 Budget	Budget Balance	% Collected or Spent vs. Anticipated
Revenues	\$8,082,543	\$11,416,045	\$3,333,503	Actual 71% Target 61%
Expenses	\$6,652,889	\$11,416,045	\$4,763,156	Actual 58% Target 63%

REVENUES GENERAL FUND



THE MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER
FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

	2024 YTD	2024 Budget	Budget Balance	% Collected vs Anticipated
Allocation ME.	\$7,217,461	\$9,912,244	\$2,694,783	73/61
CDS&LEA's	\$745,684	\$875,000	\$129,316	85/61
Mainecare	\$9,792	\$50,000	\$40,814	20/61
Facility Rental	\$31,987	\$90,000	\$58,013	36/61
Tuition Pre-K	\$11,046	\$40,000	\$28,954	28/61
Miscellaneous	\$57,419	\$33,000	\$-24,419	174/61
Fund Balance	\$0.00	\$415,801	\$415,801	0/61
Total	\$5,393,116	\$11,416,045	\$6,022,929	47/61

EXPENSES GENERAL FUND

	2024 YTD	2024 Budget	Budget Balance	% Spent vs Anticipated
Regular Instruction	\$0	\$0	\$0	0
Special Education	\$4,511,584	\$8,129,389	\$3,617,805	55/63
Vocational Education	\$0	\$0	\$0	0
Other Instruction	\$47,780	\$244,117	\$203,396	20/63
Student/Staff Support	\$90,742	\$119,242	\$28,500	76/63
System Administration	\$827,809	\$1,059,227	\$231,418	78/63
School Administration	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$0.00

EXPENSES GENERAL FUND



THE MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER
FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

	2024 YTD	2024 Budget	Budget Balance	% Spent vs Anticipated
Transportation	\$387,892	\$690,132	\$302,240	56/63
Facilities Maintenance	\$787,082	\$1,173,938	\$386,85	67/63
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$6,652,889	\$11,416,045	\$4,763,156	58/63

BUDGET NOTES-Revenues



- Mainecare will be under budget by as much as \$15K

- DRM will end it's lease on 4/1/24 Annual lease of \$75,006

- FY24 revenue decrease of \$18,750 (\$6,250 per month)

- Working with Kim Moody on a lease of smaller space

- Budget supplements have been approved in the amount of \$1,024,557

- Misc. revenue reflects investment income which has been positive thanks to a balanced approach

BUDGET NOTES-Expenses



- **Special Education –**
 - **Increased interpreting costs (more student services, more deaf staff)**
- **Extra-Curricular**
 - **Now paying for transportation costs if in students IEP**
 - **Now paying for interpreting if in students IEP**
 - **Baxter Foundation granted funding for support of basketball team through a donation from FEDEX**
- **Maintenance**
 - **Holding off on spending due to Utilization Plan**
 - **State of Maine BGS agreed to pay for remaining repairs to Building D**
- **Transportation**
 - **Now paying additional when cost goes above \$3.50 per gallon for gas**



**The Maine Educational Center for the
Deaf and Hard of Hearing / Governor
Baxter School for the Deaf
Strategic Plan**

2022-2024



**Empowering Children, Supporting Families,
Celebrating Differences**

Mission

In collaboration with families and professionals throughout Maine, we provide transformative learning, language-focused education, and opportunities for social-emotional growth, empowering Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals birth to 22 to reach their full potential.

Vision

A community where all individuals, families, and professionals are united in support of Deaf and Hard of Hearing success.

Values

Statewide Support & Collaboration

We believe in meeting all individuals' needs, no matter where in Maine they live, by partnering with peers, families, professionals, and local education agencies.

Compassion & Understanding

We act with compassion toward students, families, and each other, acknowledging that all individuals have different upbringings, lived experiences, and journeys.

Language Growth

We are dedicated to achieving significant developmental milestones, beginning with a solid language foundation and a language-rich environment for every child.

Family Involvement

We are committed to providing families of Deaf and hard of hearing students the knowledge, tools, and support that allows their children to thrive.

High Standards

We hold MECDHH/GBSD staff members and partners accountable for providing the best possible educational experience for our families and students.

Whole Child Approach

We champion what is best for each individual, their specific needs, and aspirations, supported by evidence-based research, MECDHH/GBSD's cumulative experience, and innovative practices.

Strategic Priorities & Goals

Revisit the educational and language philosophies, redefine them based on current practices as needed, and determine how to implement them based on relevant research and data.

1. By December 2022, SEFS will examine research and current practices that will be used to revisit the MECDHH/GBSD educational and language philosophies.
2. By June 2023, MECDHH/GBSD will utilize the discussion of the above-mentioned data to redefine the educational and language philosophies of MECDHH/GBSD.
3. By June 2023, MECDHH/GBSD will review existing curriculum to ensure reduction of bias/prejudice and promotion of diverse representation in materials and lessons.
4. By June 2022, EIFS will work to increase family and child programming both on island and across the state of Maine, working in collaboration with statewide organizations such as Maine Hands and Voices.
5. By June 2023, and annually there-after, EIFS will review and revamp the Exploring Language and Communication Opportunities "ELCO" process and subsequent documents as a team to ensure they are up to date with current practice and that this process is implemented based on relevant research and data.

Expand opportunities for family and peer programming within MECDHH/GBSD and in collaboration with local and statewide organizations and communities.

Peer Programming

1. By June 2022, SEFS will survey families, students and providers to collect data on what each group would like to see for student social emotional programming.
2. By August 2022, SEFS will provide 1-2 n Kids Like Me programs either virtually or in person for students in two regions in the state.
3. By September 2022, SEFS will survey families, students and providers to collect data on what each group would like to see for student social emotional programming.
4. By June 2023, SEFS will create a solid vision for the Kids Like Me Program that will include virtual and in-person events including weekend and summer camp opportunities.
5. By June 2023, SEFS will increase enrollment in Kids Like Me programming by offering regular virtual (weekly or monthly) along with 2-3 in person opportunities.

Family Programming

1. By June 2022, survey families on what they would like to see for family programming offered by MECDHH/GBSD and in collaboration with other agencies.
2. By June 2022, EIFS will work to increase family and child programming both on island and across the state of Maine, working in collaboration with statewide organizations such as Maine Hands and Voices.
3. By October 2022, In collaboration with Maine Hands & Voices, SEFS will hold its first meeting to develop a Parent/Teacher Association.
4. By November 2022, SEFS will add a “Parent Connections” program for parents to have the opportunity to connect with each other once monthly or bi-monthly virtually and in-person.

Community Partnerships

1. By June 2022, MECDHH/GBSD audiologists will investigate partnerships with clinical audiologists statewide to utilize existing audiology equipment (including auditory brainstem response (ABR) technology) to provide improved access to pediatric audiology services in rural areas of the state.
2. MECDHH/GBSD will hold an annual Community Stakeholder meeting each year in the Spring to share updates with MECDHH/GBSD and gather input and ideas from the community.
3. By June 2024, MECDHH will ensure that family and peer programming is culturally responsive and available to all students and families of diverse cultural, social-economic, and hearing status backgrounds.

Expand opportunities for additional, high-quality site-based programming and educational service provision statewide in collaboration with local education agencies.

1. By June 2022, the MECDHH/GBSD MOU's with Child Development Services, Brewer Community School, and Portland Public Schools will be finalized for the next two years.
2. By June 2022, the preschool team will complete the DHHS licensing, CDS Program Approval and NAEYC accreditation process.
3. By June 2022, SEFS will develop a structure to support staff with IEP writing and monitor IEPs to ensure all IEPs are compliant and include data-driven present levels and goals.
4. By June 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will utilize the State of Maine Language and Communication Plans with every child and family.
5. By August 2022, the EIFS team will finalize the first publication of the Exploring Language and Communication Opportunities “ELCO” Process
6. By August 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will establish a process to implement the Kindergarten Readiness Legislation.
7. By September 2022, a Part B version of ELCO will be developed.
8. By June 2022, SEFS will develop a collaboration between the two MECDHH/GBSD Site-Based Programs.
9. By August 2022, SEFS will develop a process for student enrollment into site-based programs.
10. By April 2022, teachers and therapists will receive 1:1 technical assistance on IEP development, including developing present levels, writing data-driven goals, and data collection.

11. By June 2022, EIFS will document work with agencies such as CDS and other contracted DHH specialists to provide high quality programming for the families and children we serve.
12. By August 2022, a process will be put in place to ensure smooth transition from Part C to Part B and to and from Outreach to Site based programming.
13. By September 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will support The Maine Department of Education and Department of Licensure to determine a pathway for interpreters to become licensed interpreters.
14. By December 2022, referral process and caseload distribution will be analyzed and a plan in place for ensuring appropriate service provision.
15. By June 2023, EIFS will work to identify ways children and families in rural communities can be better identified and served by our team members throughout the state.
16. By December 2023, have a plan in place for implementing the JCIH guidelines for 0-2 services.
17. By June 2023, MECDHH/GBSD will develop a process to implement a statewide language/literacy assessment process for K-12 grade students.
18. By June 2023, have a plan in place for educating children that are Deaf with additional disabilities throughout Maine.
19. By January 2024, SEFS will explore the possibility of establishing additional Pre-K Site Based Program with local preschool programs.
20. By June 2024, MECDHH will investigate the feasibility of staffing the northern office with an educational audiologist to support the educational audiology needs of the northern half of the state.
21. By June 2024, MECDHH will aim to increase oversight of hearing assistive technology statewide.
22. By June 2024, MECDHH/GBSD will have a plan in place for implementing the NASDSE Deaf Education Guidelines.

Build a new database to effectively track student-specific needs and work collaboratively with partners and staff to ensure a seamless educational experience.

1. By June 2022, EIFS will work to close the loop with documentation within the Maine Newborn Hearing Program Database that tracks the 1-3-6 outcomes of the children and families we serve.
2. By June 2022, MECDHH/GBSD supervisors will have a process in place for support and training for staff and oversight of CDS documentation (activity forms and CINC entry).
3. By June 2023, MECDHH/GBSD will have a process in place for onboarding new staff that will involve base training on existing databases.
4. By June 2024, MECDHH will consolidate our 3 current systems (CINC, Google Baxter Drive, Infinite Campus) into a usable, uncomplicated repository for all of our students' demographic information, legally required student documentation, and employee/provider caseload information; allowing us to access all the student information we need in one system (Infinite Campus).

Establish MECDHH/GBSD as a desired destination for Deaf education professionals through professional development opportunities, employee recognition, and partnerships with local, national, and international agencies and teaching preparation programs.

1. By February 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will establish various committees to provide the Leadership Team with staff input and involvement on organizational processes and new initiatives.
2. By March 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will implement a new website and social media presence.
3. By June 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will have staff recognition awards at the end of year all staff meeting.
4. By June 2022, EIFS will share ways they have provided high level EI services for children who are DHH and their families across the state of Maine and throughout the country to their peers.
5. By August 2022, the certification process will be analyzed and a plan put in place to support staff with obtaining and renewing certification.
6. By August 2022, a new supervision and evaluation process will be piloted for the 2022-2023 school year.
7. By August 2022, a professional development plan will be implemented and shared with staff for the 2022-2023 school year.
8. By December 2022, each department will have a visible presence on the MECDHH/GBSD website and social media platforms.
9. By December 2022, SEFS will share ways they have provided high level Deaf education services for students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and their families across the state of Maine and throughout the country to their peers.

10. By February 2023, a plan will be put in place to bring back the MECDHH/GBSD webinar series and at least one webinar will be produced by June 2023.
11. By August 2023, a professional development plan will be implemented and shared with staff for the 2023-2024 school year.
12. By June 2023, MECDHH will ensure that it is a safe, healthy, and attractive workplace for employees of all socio-cultural backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, and other identities held by current and prospective staff.
13. By June 2023, MECDHH/GBSD will establish two new partnerships with teacher preparation programs.
14. By January 2023, identify state and national conferences to have staff presentations on the various MECDHH/GBSD programs to highlight our programming and staff.
15. By June 2023, MECDHH/GBSD will create a library of resources on its website (e.g., ASL videos) and will promote this free resource nationally, creating more website traffic, increasing our visibility nationally.
16. By June 2023, The Director of HR will map out a plan for recruitment and retention.
17. By June 2023, The Business office will have a plan in place for the creation of a new Employee Handbook. The Handbook will be completed by June 2024.
18. By June 2024, The Business Office/Technology Department will develop, implement, assess and improve internal electronic processes to increase efficiency and save resources.



2022
2024

Articulate a vision for how MECDHH/GBSD will fund, revitalize, and maximize use of the Mackworth Island facilities to benefit students, families, and community.

1. By June 2022, EIFS will work as a collaborative team to brainstorm innovative ideas on how the various spaces on island can be used to benefit children and families in early intervention.
2. By June 2022, the SEFS team will work as a collaborative team to brainstorm innovative ideas on how the various spaces on island can be used to benefit students ages 3-22.
3. By June 2022, the Maintenance department will create a "Vision for Building and Grounds" Spreadsheet featuring "at a glance" overview of each buildings pertinent information.
4. By August 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will work with The Foundation to explore grant funds for historical renovations to the Mansion.
5. By June 2023, a committee will be formed to explore grant or other funding possibilities for island-based programming.
6. By August 2022, MECDHH/GBSD will be an active participant in the Bureau of General Services "Utilization Plan for Mackworth Island" and keep the School Board and staff informed as the process progresses.

STAFF, FAMILIES & COMMUNITY Were Invited to Participate



Dear Friends of MECDHH/GBSD,

Deaf Education is evolving and changing. With these changes it is important that Maine’s Leading Deaf Education Agency, MECDHH/GBSD evolve as well. MECDHH/GBSD staff, families, Board and community members spent one year developing this new Strategic Plan to guide our work into 2024. This plan is focused on the needs of Deaf and hard of hearing children throughout the State of Maine identified by stakeholders statewide.

This plan will be a living document leading us in ways that will be articulate, transparent and forward-thinking. Your ongoing feedback and involvement is appreciated and valued as we implement this plan.

We wish to thank all of you who took the time to participate in this important work on behalf of Deaf and hard of hearing children throughout Maine. We also wish to thank Shane Feldman and Davin Searles from Innivee Strategies for their guidance and leadership throughout this process.

Karen Hopkins
Executive Director

Ad Hoc Committee Members

Roxanne Baker Board Member	Karen Hopkins MECDHH/GBSD Executive Director	Darleen Michalec MECDHH/GBSD Staff
Kevin Bohlin MECDHH/GBSD Staff	Corda Kinzie Board Member	Kristen Shorey MECDHH/GBSD Staff
Darlene Freeman Parent		

MECDHH/GBSD Board Members

Roxanne Baker	Paula Matlins	Anna Perna
Lisette Belanger	Tommy Minch	Mike Pulsifer
Jason Bubier	Terry Morrell	Elizabeth Seal
Jennifer Gaulin	Amber Oakes	Sandra Wood
Corda Ladd Kinzie		

Gateway Envisioning Session

The Maine Educational Center
for the
Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Governor Baxter School for the Deaf

February 27, 2024

AGENDA

- Introductions
- Goals for the Campus Gateway
- Precedents
- Discussion



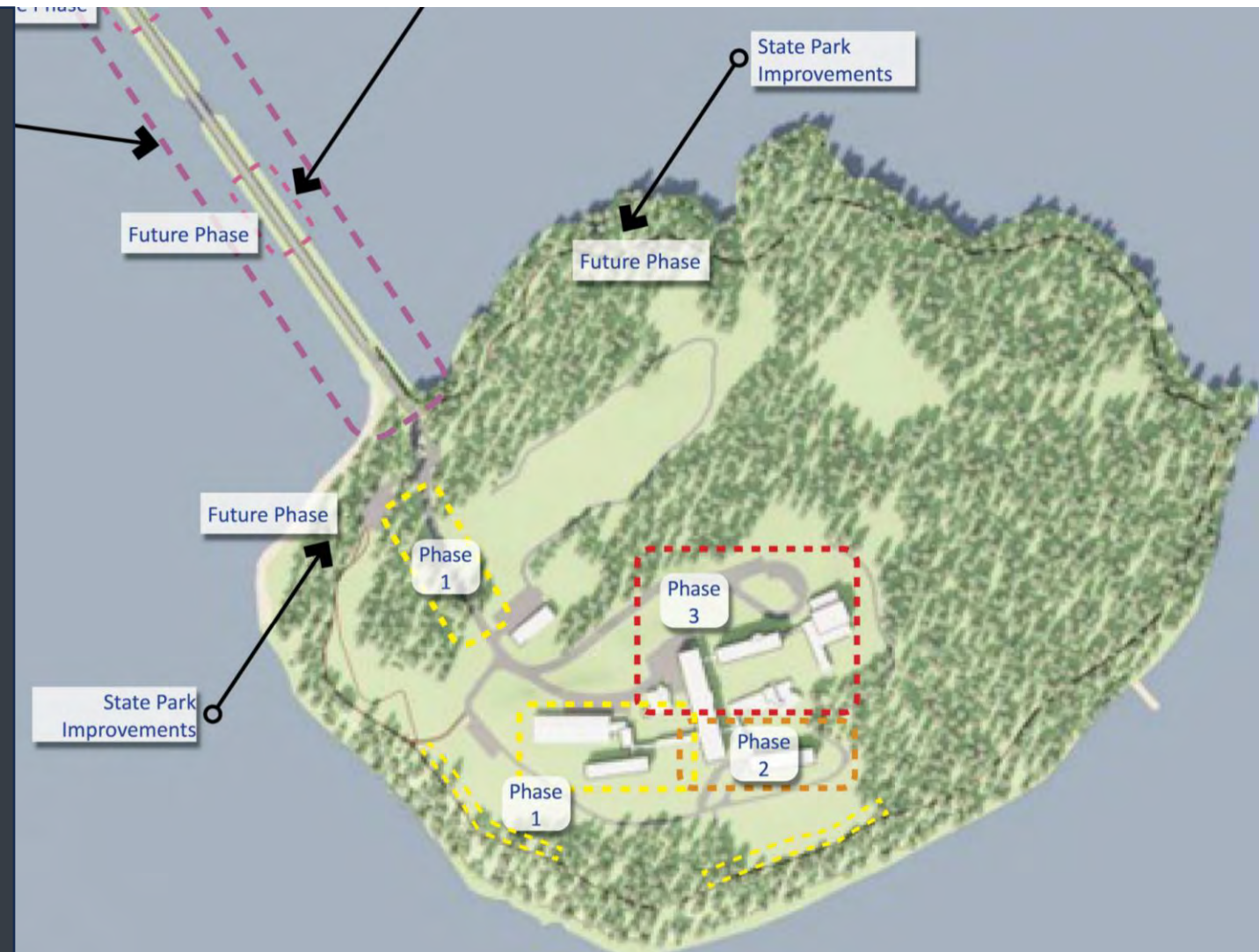
Phase 1 Context

Master Plan Drivers

- **Maintain Mackworth as home for Deaf**
- **Honor history/legacy of Deaf community**
- Right-size campus for programs
- Address building operations & maintenance

Issues and Considerations

- Baxter Mansion is hidden Jewel
- **No public Front Door to the school**
- **Poor wayfinding**
- Inefficient use of space
- No distinct perimeter of school campus
- Deferred maintenance/condition of buildings



Existing Main Entry to MECDHH/GBSD Campus



General Location of New Gateway

Goals for the Campus Gateway

- **Statement**

Welcoming
Boundary
Signage

Form Messaging
Scale and Visibility
Pedestrian vs. Vehicle

- **Security**

Operations Schedule
Physical Gate
Hard Barrier

Controls
Monitoring
Soft Barrier

- **Aesthetics**

Traditional
Academia
Historic

Materials
Inspirational
Contemporary

Precedents



Metals
Masonry
Wood



Precedents



School Name

Seal/Logo/Emblem/Dedication



Pedestrian and Vehicles

Vegetation



An aerial photograph of a small, forested island. The island is densely covered with trees in various shades of green and brown, suggesting an autumn setting. In the center of the island, there is a cluster of several buildings, including a large, multi-story structure and several smaller, white buildings. A road or path winds through the trees, leading towards the buildings. The island is surrounded by a body of water, and a long, narrow pier or road extends from the top left corner of the frame towards the island.

Discussion

Thank You

Development Committee Meeting

February 26, 2024

Start time: 5:03 PM

Participants:

- Lisette Belanger
- Anna Perna
- Kim Spencer
- Sandra Wood
- Shane Feldman
- Cid Pollard

Objectives of Retreat

- Work to become a strong, cohesive group. Ethics, confidentiality, etc.
- Discuss onboarding process for new board members
- Team-building
- Review what each board member brings to the board
- Cleanup with regard to committees/Talk about goal or purpose of each committee
- Review mission and values and what they mean for the board
- Build trust between staff and board - how does the board connect with staff
- Role of ED and role of board
- Shane will attend the March 7 board meeting to help him get some info about the board
- Kim send Shane Zoom link for board meeting
- Kim will send prior agendas to Shane as well
 - Draft with goals for retreat with agenda
- Shane & Kim will develop team activity/orientation for Friday night board meeting, April 5

Meeting end time: 6:00pm