



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Testimony of Melody A. Currey Commissioner of Administrative Services Education Priority List Committee

Education Committee
January 23, 2019

Good morning Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty and distinguished members of the Education Committee.

My name is Melody Currey and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services ("DAS"). I am here before you pursuant to Section 10-283(a) (2) of the Connecticut General Statutes to present the 2019 School Building Project Priority List, which was submitted to Governor Malloy on December 13, 2018. I should also clarify, shortly after that submission, on December 21st; I sent a letter to the Committee notifying you of a necessary correction to the reimbursement rate applied to Bassick High School. The corrected information has been incorporated within the Priority List attachments that you have today.

By way of background, the projected costs used in this report are developed from the projected costs identified by the school districts in their applications. The DAS Office of School Construction Grant Review staff reviews the projected costs for statutory compliance for grant commitment purposes. We will engage in additional reviews of authorized projects prior to plan approval. Those additional reviews may lead to reduced total project costs and grant commitments.

In our letter to this committee, which is page 2 of the Priority List, you will find a description of the tables that comprise the School Building Project Priority Category List:

- Table 1 is an alphabetical listing of the eight projects with estimated project costs of \$229,037,398, which will have a grant impact of \$148,998,966. The eight projects consist of elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and a vocational agricultural project.

This is a short list compared to previous years. In my opinion, the primary reason for this is the fact that my staff meets with the school districts at the conceptual stage of their proposed plans and requires them to perform a district-wide analysis of their use of buildings as it relates to enrollment. As a result of this required analysis, districts are better prepared to have their projects proceed within the two years mandated by statute. This reduces the need for reauthorizations or requests to increase authorizations.



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- Table 1A summarizes projects by type, i.e., magnet schools, new construction and Vocational Agricultural schools, etc.
- Table 2 provides a detailed description of all the projects listed within Table 1, categorized by priority. The definitions of the priority categories are found on page 1-4 of the report. The School Construction Grants and Review staff reviewed each application and determined the appropriate placement category.

The descriptions in Table 2 are based upon the Educational Specifications submitted with the project applications and highlight the programmatic needs intended to be met.

- Table 3 provides a historical perspective by summarizing the costs for the priority lists of the past five years.

Section 10-283(a) (2) requires DAS to review enrollment projections for each eligible project to ensure statutory compliance. As is summarized in Attachment A, DAS reviews enrollment projections three times, including during the final review for compliance and costs conducted by the Director of the Office of School Construction Grants and Review, before they are submitted to me for my review and approval. All projects included in this report are in accordance with statutory and regulatory authority.

We would be happy to answer any specific questions you may have.