



Josh Geballe
Commissioner

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Department of Administrative Services

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May 20, 2019

Representative Gregory Haddad
54th Assembly District - Mansfield
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Proposed New Mansfield K-4 School

Dear Representative Haddad,

I am in receipt of your letter dated May 14, 2019 requesting the department's position on aspects of statutory, regulatory and/or policy requirements in the Office of School Construction Grants and Review (OSCG&R).

It should be noted the goals of OSCG&R are to:

1. Ensure right size schools
2. Control costs of alterations, extensions, renovations and new construction
3. Limit new construction as a last resort approved by the agency
4. Ensure the programmatic needs of the children are met, and
5. Protect taxpayer investments with industry best practices.

Furthermore, the mission of OSCG&R is to ensure the timely delivery of safe, secure, healthy and educationally suitable school facilities that are sustainable and fiscally sound.

I fully concur that accurate information is critical for the general public to make informed decisions. I will answer your questions in the order of your letter.

1. The legislature has enacted legislation providing reimbursement rates for each community based upon a complex formula beginning with the equalized net grand list as one component. Director Kosta Diamantis has informed me that he provided you with the statutory requirements of this formula. For Mansfield on the assumption that an application is filed and the funding authorization is in place today, the reimbursement rate would be 75.72%.

The rate applies to all projects eligible in OSCG&R. If the project is for new construction, the statute requires a ten percent reduction in the reimbursement rate. The legislature's rationale is there are fewer ineligible costs in a new project than a renovation project, which provides a greater return for the district.

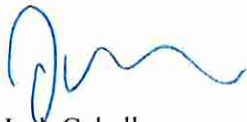
The primary focus of OSCG&R is to consolidate and renovate existing buildings and right-size schools. The staff of OSCG&R goes to great lengths to review information provided by the district, including but not limited to, enrollment studies, number of schools, facilities maintenance costs and existing conditions, and facilities studies. The information is utilized to determine the viability of renovation versus the need for a new school building.

An existing conditions and facilities study was provided to Director Diamantis and his team which was carefully reviewed. A field visit was conducted by the Director and a determination was made as follows:

- a. The studies accurately reflected the conditions of the three schools and the OSCG&R concurred that the buildings have outlived their life span. It was also concluded that the outbuildings on one campus were built with better materials than the school itself.
 - b. The critical mass necessary in each building did not exist. In two schools the population was under 200 students, and one school under 300 students.
 - c. It is in the best interest of the state taxpayers and the students of Mansfield that a new school be built consolidating the student body and financial resources to one building.
 - d. A reduction in transportation costs would occur.
 - e. Modern security techniques would be applied.
 - f. A greater possibility of net-zero energy costs would occur.
2. The Department's authority to accept or reject an application for State reimbursement is clearly established in Section 10-284 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Section 10-283 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Section 10-287c-21 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies also demonstrate that this authority rests with the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services.
3. The Department has funded geo-thermal heating systems, solar panels and glazing as part of the State's efforts to assist districts in reducing energy costs. Those savings benefit all taxpayers. Projects are always reviewed in totality for their eligibility.

Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me or Director Diamantis as you have in the past.

Sincerely,



Josh Geballe
Commissioner

cc: Kosta Diamantis, Director, Office of School Construction Grants & Review
Noel Petra, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Construction Services
Kelly Lyman, Mansfield Superintendent of Schools