

COMMITTEE ON JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS

August 11, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Chairman O'Connell called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Bonilla, Fajardo
School Committee Members O'Connell, Turner

Absent: Alderman Thomas, School Committee Member Hamer

Messrs.: M. Lenfest

1. Presentation from LeftField regarding the School District Priority One Project to date.

Mark Lenfest, Senior Project Manager at LeftField: Jumping right in, you'll see the updated summary on completion. Modularity 100% complete. Beech reached the 95% bidding threshold and 5% of construction. The majority of that is site work within the footprint of the building as well as soil improvements. McLaughlin is 90%; Hillside is 75%. We'll talk more about those projects in a moment. Parkside and Southside are both tracking at 30%, which is on schedule. Jumping into the ongoing activities. In the last 60 days, we continued weekly OAC meetings, all projects. Group one, that is Hillside and McLaughlin, interior and envelope construction moved forward. If you've had an opportunity to get out there the progress has been incredible. He's done a fantastic job. I encourage everyone to get out and see. They resumed the group one site work and both furniture, fixtures and equipment, as well as technology. Meetings and procurement progressed. Summer work schedules and move ready planning and move procurement was wrapped up. So, we did the moves for all of those schools. We moved, as needed, teachers' belongings as well as furniture fixtures out of the construction areas. If you got a chance to get over there over at Hillside, it was quite the operation. McLaughlin was pretty substantial. The group two was less, but again very strategic. We did partner with Sterling and Wakefield. And that was successful. Group two schedule refinement progressed as well as procurement, renovation work continued at both of those as well as the addition envelope construction. Again, the envelope being the exterior framing, sheathing, as well as masonry work, at both those locations. Beech Street continued their procurement along with coordination with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, with the soil management coordination, the site improvements started. You saw that progress on the first grid. Then we continued logistics, development, coordination, cost management, schedule, refinement and communication with all stakeholders. And then that brings us into the next 30 days. We continue the weekly meetings. Group one occupancy for McLaughlin Middle School, that school will be turned over for full occupancy, both the addition and renovation for students, on September 3rd; teachers will be in on the 27th. There'll be some activities prior to that, but first day of school on September 3 in that building. Hillside Consigli was very aggressive. They did more than what was expected at Hillside for work, which is great. They'll be turning over more of a renovated area than originally planned, which is a project win. We will not be turning over the addition yet. That's scheduled for end of December. That is tracking ahead of schedule. It looks amazing. I think we're going to be scheduling some walks soon. So, if

you get a chance, it's an impressive space. Group one punch list. So, this is the little imperfections. When you wrap up construction, if there's some touch up, paint, some millwork, any odds and ends that need to be wrapped up, that'll be happening in the next 30 days as well as anything that tracked late for delivery, maybe a door, maybe we had to put in a temp door and we're waiting for the final door to show up. Things of that nature. Sometimes you'll be missing a window shade or whatnot. We will have a completed list. Consigli has already provided us with a draft, and we'll be scheduling that work around the occupancy of the school. So, nights, weekends, holidays. Furniture, fixtures and equipment and technology installation, we have a lot of furniture delivery and installation going on at McLaughlin. All the new desks, chairs. We start the technology installation this week. That was confirmed with Manchester School District I.T. department. They've been a fantastic partner. So, we'll be putting in the wireless access points at Hillside Middle School this week, and then moving over to McLaughlin the following week. Move management, which I'm going to say I'm very blessed, I work with a very talented gentleman, Josh Brewster, who handles most of that for me. It's like herding cats. He does an excellent job. So, we will be moving all four schools at the same time again. That being said, Parkside is about a half day move that will be happening just before school starts. So 25th, 26th. Southside will be wrapping up on the 24th. The two larger moves will start the end of next week into the week of the 24th. And again, that'll be McLaughlin and Hillside. Group two occupancy and phase one renovation, we had small renovation areas at both Parkside and Southside. Those are both scheduled to wrap up and be turned over for use. Harvey did a very good job with that, hitting those scheduled dates and good work quality. Very happy with those folks. Continued group two procurement. Again, that's winding down, but there are some odds and ends that are being coordinated and final purchase of those scopes. Rough insight work continues, envelope construction on the addition. Beech schedule refinement is ongoing. That'll be a big milestone. I know that Harvey is working hard with the school district and my counterpart, Hamdi, who couldn't be here this evening. Soil management coordination is ongoing. Site improvements will continue throughout the summer and through the fall. And then the standard continued logistics development for all projects, really with the exception of McLaughlin, we'll have that wrapped up. We'll have the new traffic pattern over there, full signage, everything will be striped and ready to go with the final landscaping. Cost management, we are within the \$306 million. So we are on budget, which is good to report. Schedule refinement, we are on schedule. Continued communication with all stakeholders has gone very well. You've heard me call out a few groups. Manchester School District has been great, very responsive and anything that we've needed, the IT department has jumped through hoops. Again, Consigli and Harvey, it's been good.

School Committee Member Turner: Thanks for the great update. I know we didn't meet in July, so we're getting doubly caught up. Super excited to hear that everything's moving better than expected. I think, if we're ahead of schedule, we're on budget or under budget and everybody's leaning in as much as they can to cooperate, so super exciting to hear all the updates. I have driven by Hillside; looks fantastic. I've looked at the slide deck that gets updated. I saw some brickwork and some drywall and it looks great. I guess my only question how do we get an invite to a scheduled walk? Is that something that we would wait to hear from you on?

M. Lenfest: I'm glad you're asking. We are scheduling with the superintendent's office now. This board will specifically be invited. I believe we're going to nail that down

tomorrow at the weekly meeting. And then that being said, there'll be very soon after a ribbon cutting and other ceremonies that you've all earned. We should have dates tomorrow, is my understanding, on the walk. That'll be all four locations. I like to champion my two schools and one of them is turning over now. There'll be an opportunity for all four locations.

Alderman Bonilla: I commend you all for the construction update section on the Beech Street website. I love it. As of July 20th it was updated and there's a fun little quiz for the kids. I love it. Thank you for doing that and for keeping us all updated on that.

M. Lenfest: I can't take the credit; we've had fantastic trade partners. Harvey's done a great job. Vance Freeman's with us tonight from Consigli. The time and effort these folks put in is impressive. Particularly my two jobs, they've been seven days a week to make this happen and still get the updates out and still be prepared for all of our weekly meetings.

Chairman O'Connell: I'd like to join the chorus of gratitude and recognition for people. It is amazing the amount of work that goes into these buildings and how complicated it is. The difference between new construction, which a lot of this is, but then the work going on, the retrofitting within the existing buildings. I saw the guys at Consigli last week, and they're creating new footings within the building to erect steel within a corridor of a building three floors high so that they can remove water, weight bearing walls to open up those breakout spaces. And on paper, it looks like, oh, we're going to do this. It's like saying, just move that over there. When you see the amount of engineering, man hours, and technical prowess it takes to achieve all that, it's a big deal. I'm glad you mentioned about the walkthrough. We should certainly do that. And we'll be planning that tomorrow. It's on the agenda for tomorrow's OAC meeting. There will be a ribbon cutting for McLaughlin. I think it's like a big trumpet, fireworks moment here, because the first of our five projects will be completed in two weeks' time. When the families and kids show up at McLaughlin on September 3rd, they're walking into a completely transformed building with new spaces, etc. For the public's edification, there will be a new traffic pattern there. The way in which students will be dropped off, that will be fully signposted, etc.. But there's a remarkable entrance to that school now. I was over there to look at it the other day and it's remarkable. We have on the first projects here that McLaughlin and Hillside is the work of Consigli. And then the other two are Harvey. I just want to add my voice to the recognition of the people on this project, particularly the primary people, the design by SMMA and the oversight of that design. It's been wonderful work. Jen, we're appreciative for everything you've done. I can't believe the hours and effort and time you put in. So, thank you to you and all your team. The other thing is that you represent a large team; I had the good fortune to visit with SMMA some months ago, and I was thinking there's going to be two guys and girls and women in there with a protractor and a pencil drawing something. There's a room full of people working on things. And then, of course, Consigli, who we've welcomed downtown this past year where they opened their new office just right across the road from where we're sitting today. And when I first met Vance, who's in the room tonight, these were still all potentials and what ifs. And here we are looking at the first of those buildings complete. I've said here again and again, and I think it's important, the fact that this is being done on budget or under budget and it's being delivered on time, and the third leg of that stool is it's being done while people are staying safe and going home to their wives and husbands and families every night. Those are the

three major and important things. It's important to note that the Manchester School District is overseeing the largest education construction project in the history of the State of New Hampshire, and it's going on noiselessly and without enough recognition. The fact that it's going on and the Manchester School District and the taxpayers of Manchester have not had a single person added to the staff of the Manchester School District to manage this, Karen DeFrancis, the Finance Director of the Manchester School District, is managing this. And her staff, they issued checks, they do the work of managing a huge project. Another city in another town with less fiscal constraints would have hired a team of people to manage this project. But we're able to do that in part because Leftfield is here as the owner project manager. Mark, your staff doing what they're doing, you're the eyes and ears of the board, of the taxpayers, and of the school district out in the street. So, if this sounds too saccharine and too sweet and too nice for some ears, people also know me well enough that when the time comes to throw out some barbs or criticisms or questions, I'm very happy to do that. Not happy to do it, but I do it; it's not lost on me. It might sound that way, but I think it's important to recognize the work. As an example, Hillside, there were 227 tradespeople working at Hillside last Friday. That's 235 men and women being paid properly, doing their professional work and being employed here in Manchester in the State of New Hampshire. Most of them are New Hampshire people, and these are New Hampshire businesses, tens and tens of them who are delivering their bottom line, who are keeping jobs and work and the economy going in the southern part of the State of New Hampshire. And again, we, the people of Manchester, should be proud in our contribution to that, that we are employing these wonderful people. And that's just at Hillside; that's repeated at Parkside, Southside, at McLaughlin, the people who are doing the work at Beech Street right now. It's a huge amount of economic work and responsibility. We'll take a moment when we cut a ribbon at McLaughlin in a month, but it's important that we recognize great work when we see it. So, thank you guys and ladies for everything you do.

M. Lenfest: We appreciate that. I'm a New Hampshire lifelong resident. I feel privileged to be part of this. I'm very glad that you mentioned SMMA. They've been involved seven days a week. Those footings don't happen without them standing there, and overseeing it. Anybody that gets a chance to drive by McLaughlin; that is impressive. When buildings come together, it's beautiful. It is an awesome design. I want to thank DPW. I'm glad you mentioned Karen DeFrancis, we mentioned the superintendent's office in Manchester. It's been phenomenal. But the DPW, Sean Collins, the poor guy is trying to juggle cleaning behind the spaces that we're building with his vendors, as well as Josh Gagne. The effort between Tim Clougherty and his folks top to bottom has been fantastic.

Chairman O'Connell: Thank you for pointing that out because that was a faux pas, because they have been central to all of this 100%. And you're exactly right, thank you for pointing it out. The other thing is the cooperation between other departments in the city; aldermen on this board, you know the amount of work the Fire Department is involved with on a regular basis in different ways. The Police Department, the Traffic Department, they're constantly having meetings; they're there. There's just a lot of work going on. It's seamless without argument or contention. People get in rooms, they get stuff done, and they move on. I talked about Vance and Consigli coming to town and consolidating their presence by opening an office right here across the street. But of course, SMMA, we've welcomed SMMA to the city, too. They've got a beautiful office on the other side of the

street here. Lots of great things happening. Thank you, guys. Hope you have a great summer, and I look forward to seeing you here next month.

2. Monthly status and financial report submitted by LeftField for the period ending July 2026.

*On motion of **School Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **Alderman Bonilla**, it was voted to accept the report and submit it to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Board of School Committee for informational purposes.*

Chairman O'Connell: It turns out that due to the upcoming State Primary Election is going to be on our normal meeting date on Tuesday, September 8th. So, this committee's next meeting will be on the following Tuesday. It will move to Tuesday, September 15th at the usual time. So, it'll be delayed by one week, if you want to make a note of that.

Alderman Fajardo: September 15th, is that not a regular city meeting date?

Michael Intranuovo, Assistant City Clerk: No. The BMA will still be on the summer schedule.

Chairman O'Connell: I was reliably informed by the Clerk's Office that this was a good date.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Fajardo**, duly seconded by **School Committee Member Turner**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.



Clerk of Committee

Meeting Start Time: 5:00PM
Meeting End Time: 5:21PM
Minutes Prepared By: Michael Intranuovo