

May 26, 2026 MSAD 58 and Kingfield School Options Committee Negotiations Meeting

In attendance:

MSAD 58 Negotiations Sub-Committee: Laura Columbia (Superintendent), Jessie Stinchfield, Mary Lecours, Brad Orbeton, Danielle Vachon-Chair, Jennifer Pooler (Business Manager)
Kingfield School Options Committee Negotiations Team: Kim Jordan, Mathias Ringle, Kathy Houston (Martha Witham was out of town).

We wanted to give you an update about our negotiations meeting last week. We opened the meeting asking about unanswered questions from our last meeting, particularly if they had another option we could present to our community other than withdrawal? Laura Columbia, the Superintendent, replied that the board is looking into consolidation and has hired an architect to help with the process. No potential dates or cost were presented.

There were some agreements made, but still unsettled issues. We, and the MSAD 58 Negotiations Team agreed Kingfield would receive its school building and equipment (curriculum, furniture, maintenance, etc...) for approximately 100 students. That was all good news! Below is a chart of other items discussed. You may notice some "offers" have changed.

Items/Topic	Our Request/Our 2nd offer where necessary	MSAD 58 Response	Reasons	Final Decision
Accept our 9-12 students for tuition	Pay 103% of state rate 2nd offer - pay 104%	Accept students, pay 105% of state rate	What Eustis paid when they first withdrew Currently Eustis pays the state rate	
Equipment	Enough for 100ish students	Agree		Tentatively agreed upon
Buses	3 buses, a mini bus and a tractor 2nd offer: 3 buses and a mini bus	2 buses	There are 13 district buses with the potential of 2-3 more being purchased next year.	
Laura Columbia's contract	Pay 20% of her contract and "get" 20% of her time 2nd offer: Pay 20% of her contract and get 0% of her time	Pay 40% of her contract and get 0% of her time	MSAD 58 feels the district made a commitment to Laura and we are responsible for paying our proportional share, which is approximately 40%	
Outstanding debt	We pay approx 40% 2nd offer: We pay 35%. Our offer is directly related to our proportional share. We would also like our proportional share of assets.	2nd offer from MSAD 58: We pay 10% of outstanding debt , which will be approximately \$150,000 in 2027 unless more buses are purchased. *	This is the proportional percentage we are currently required to pay from the ED 279 *Bus purchases are reimbursed by the state the following year	
Liquid Assets or Undesignated Fund Balance	40% as our proportional share 2nd offer: 35% - this balance could be up to \$2,000,000.	10%	MSAD 58: our proportional share is irrelevant except in the case of Laura's contract	
Reserve Accounts	**MSAD 58 labels this and Undesignated fund balance combined as "Liquid Assets"			
Kingfield School	The town receives the school	Agreed		
MTA/other	Get appraisal			

After being told Kingfield has paid appx \$14,100,000 towards education in the past 7 years compared to the approximate \$8,700,000 and \$8,500,000 paid by Strong and Phillips respectively and the \$4,300,000 paid by Avon, the Superintendent stated the amount of money Kingfield has paid is simply part of how the state funding formula is designed and is not relevant to these negotiations. She also said little money has been put into maintaining the high school while lots of money has been put into the elementary schools, hence one of the reasons for the above percentage proposals.

The Kingfield School Options Committee will be meeting in Executive Session on Tuesday, June 2nd to continue our discussions. We believe it is important to get a fair deal for Kingfield, but also important that Mount Abram is sustainable and has necessary funding.

Due to multiple responsibilities including work, being a Franklin County Children's Task Force board member, being a Kingfield School Board member and a new puppy parent, Lilly Cheimis has decided to step down from the School Options Committee. We thank her for her time on the committee and her commitment to the district and wish her well. We welcome Mary Nodine as our School Board Representative and look forward to continuing to work together to *"To explore school configuration options that are sustainable and cost-effective while providing the vibrant, positive education Kingfield students have always known."*