



NATIONAL NEW DEAL PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

July 25, 2007

*Ms. LaChance
FYJ*

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Susan A. Gendron
Commissioner of Education
Dept. of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0023

Dear Ms. Gendron,

In a past career, I was concerned about architectural accessibility and today my career focus is to encourage the preservation of buildings and their interior treasures that were created during the Depression Era or Roosevelt's New Deal accomplishments. Therefore I have an appreciation for the dilemma you are facing with regards to the future of the educational programs and the Nathan Clifford Elementary School in Portland, Maine.

As the Executive Director of the National New Deal Preservation Association, a private, non-profit organization, our national board of directors has asked me to let you know that we strongly recommend you put the state's educational efforts and money into the restoration of the 1907 building rather than build a new one. We encourage this not just because of the New Deal mural treasures within the building, but because of the fact that:

*reports indicate that the building can be renovated by experts that have experience with such projects and you will end up with 10,700 square feet more space which is always an asset for the present and the future,

*you will maintain an educational program that other reports indicate is an outstanding one which is a foremost consideration and should not be tampered with,

*most older buildings were built "better" than we are usually building facilities (or most anything else) today. Don't let yourself get sucked into the "throw away mentality" of today's society. You have a building made with quality materials that will continue to stand up for more service in the community longer than any "new" building based on it's superior 1907 start **unless** you have the funds to build now with that same superior quality of materials and methods. Most likely that will not be the case because it would increase the costs of a new building even more,

***the historical significance of the structure in the community also should be considered based on the stature of its namesake, its architect, and the thousands of children and families that got an excellent start there. Damaging that "whole cloth" can only damage the image of the state's education department, and**

***our particular interest in the two New Deal murals is strongly based on the fact that they have served the community in depicting the area's history in their subject matter and the quality of fine art provided by this medium in schools is often the first "good" art that young children are exposed to and begin to learn at some level to appreciate.**

No matter what you decide to do with the building, we strongly encourage you to protect those murals but if you don't plan to do that, then give them to some other public facility. This is assuming they are painted on canvas which can be removed and transported elsewhere. If they are painted on the wall itself, they can also be removed and transported to a site that appreciates them. Please do not let them be painted over or totally destroyed. We know of many such cases where that has happened for some of the most ridiculous reasons.

We would be happy to work with you on this matter directly particularly since we are encouraging all communities, government and private agencies, and organizations nationwide that have New Deal treasures to showcase them in 2008. This will be the 75th anniversary of the creation of all the New Deal programs including the public art program and the buildings programs which built and furnished thousands of schools nationwide. Most likely some in this community and numerous ones in your state for which you are responsible. . We invite you to join us in this commemoration and work with us now to develop ways you can feature your treasures, educate your children and the public about the New Deal historical accomplishments which for the most part, the public takes for granted—even those getting monthly Social Security checks which started with the New Deal.

Finally, it is our understanding that the national experts in preservation and restoration, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, have shared this same message with this community in person. They would surely have provided everyone, including you, with sound and valuable documentation because they have thousands of nationwide examples which defend this position. We sincerely hope that you listened and heard their wisdom on the subject. You may be able to use it in other situations also.

Best wishes with the solving of this situation. May you weigh all the facts with the guidance provided to you in the past months.

Respectfully,



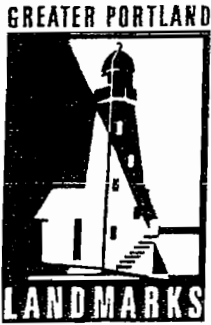
Kathryn A. Flynn
Executive Director
National New Deal Preservation Assoc.

Cc: Supt. ^{Mary}Jo O'Connor
Portland Public Schools
196 Allen Ave.
Portland, Maine 09103

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
Director
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
55 Capitol Street
65 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Glenn Cummings
Speaker of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

✓ Anita LaChance
Assistant City Manager
City Manager's Office
Portland City Hall
Room 208
Portland, Maine 04101



July 23, 2007

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www.portlandlandmarks.org

Susan A. Gendron, Commissioner of Education
State of Maine, Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron:

I enclose a letter expressing the concerns of the historic preservation community regarding the future of the Nathan Clifford School in Portland. We urge you to reconsider your position, and to support the renovation of the school

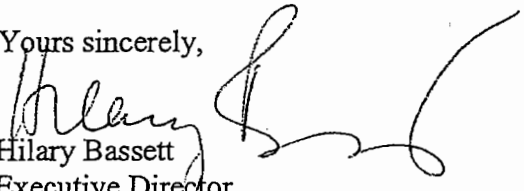
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Breda M. White

Earle Shettleworth, Director, Maine Historic Preservation Commission; Roxanne Eflin, Executive Director, Maine Preservation; Roberta Lane, Program Officer and Regional Attorney, National Trust for Historic Preservation, and I believe that this historic school building can be updated and adapted successfully so that it can continue to be used as a neighborhood school, serve an ethnically and economically diverse student body, and meet today's curriculum goals.

Thank you for considering our views.

Yours sincerely,


Hilary Bassett
Executive Director

Encs.

John C. Knox
President

Hilary D. Bassett
Executive Director

July 23, 2007

Susan A. Gendron, Commissioner of Education
State of Maine, Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron:

Portland's Nathan Clifford School is an award-winning neighborhood school that is housed in an historically significant building designed by Maine's premier architect of the late 19th and early 20th century, John Calvin Stevens. It serves a mixed income community of families and reports consistently high levels of educational achievement among its students. Many families choose the neighborhood precisely because of the school, which is within walking distance of their residences, and supports a close knit group of families who are engaged in the school's activities and committed to its continued success.

We have recently become aware of your letter of June 26, 2007 to Mary Jo O'Connor, Superintendent of the Portland Public Schools, withdrawing support for the renovation of the Nathan Clifford School. We are concerned that the School Facilities Team has rendered an opinion prior to the completion of the local "3 x 3 process," in which Portland citizens and city councilors are evaluating findings of an architectural review comparing renovation with a new school. A preemptive decision could compromise the State's credibility with citizens and community leaders who take their engagement with the school's future very seriously.

We respectfully ask you to reconsider the School Facilities Team's decision for three reasons:

1) we believe it is important to allow the community review process, now in progress, to be completed; 2) we believe that the rationale for the decision, as presented in the letter of June 26 is flawed; and 3) we believe that the community process can be completed and a decision made to renovate in time to meet your March 2008 deadline.

To elaborate, we believe that the reasons for the State's determination to build new rather than renovate, are flawed:

- The size of the site will support all of the functions needed for a successful school; in addition, its proximity to Deering Oaks offers extensive recreational opportunities, and its location in a predominately residential area means that more than 50% of the students can walk to school. Note that the site of the new East End School is smaller than the state guidelines call for, but received approvals (with the added benefit of the proximity to Eastern Promenade recreational opportunities). Clearly, site size is not a determining factor.
- The building, once renovated, will meet all current codes. State policies allow for school renovation.
- The \$3.2 million in additional costs cited by the architects reflects several factors, that when further considered, will equalize the analysis,
 - The square footage of a new school cited in the analysis is 52,000 square feet; while a renovated Clifford School is 62,760 square feet. A new school of 62,760 square feet would cost \$21,032,402, which is more than the \$20,681,895 quoted for a renovated Clifford. (see comparison attached)

- The comparison does not reflect the difference in quality of the materials used in the Clifford School, which is constructed of the finest materials, brick and stone.
- The comparison does not reflect site issues of new construction.
- Renovating the school is far more environmentally-friendly than new construction on an open site.

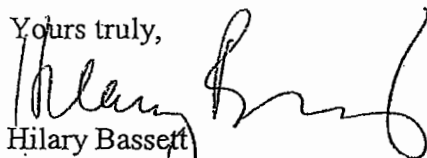
As preservationists, we are convinced that this historic school building can be updated and adapted successfully so that it can continue to be used as a neighborhood school, serve an ethnically and economically diverse student body, and meet today's curriculum goals. The building is in good condition and its classrooms and hallways are expansive, light-filled spaces which teachers and parents report are highly conducive to successful teaching and learning.

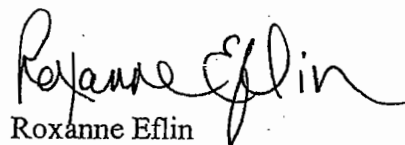
Designed by John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens in 1906, the Nathan Clifford School is one of the finest educational buildings that Stevens planned during his notable sixty-year career as an architect in Portland. When constructed in 1907, this impressive white brick neo-classical building was considered a model of grammar school design, being featured in such national publications as William G. Bruce's 1910 "School Architecture."

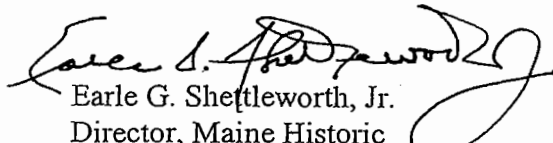
The loss of historic neighborhood schools nationwide prompted the National Trust for Historic Preservation to name them to America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. Maine Preservation followed suit, naming neighborhood schools to Maine's Most Endangered Historic Properties list and citing the need to retain smaller schools within walking distance in neighborhoods for healthy communities. Numerous examples exist nationwide of successful historic school renovations meeting safety needs while expanding to incorporate new infrastructure, technology and modern access. The Nathan Clifford School inspires civic pride as the anchor of its neighborhood, and has great potential to demonstrate, by example, how Portland respects not only its historic landmarks but also its stated goals in support of preserving neighborhoods.

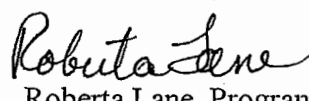
As representatives of the preservation community, we believe that preserving buildings such as Nathan Clifford School offers an important link to our architectural and social history, while meeting the needs of families and students today and in the future. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Yours truly,


Hilary Bassett
Executive Director
Greater Portland Landmarks


Roxanne Eflin
Executive Director
Maine Preservation


Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
Director, Maine Historic
Preservation Commission


Roberta Lane, Program Officer and Regional Attorney
Northeast Office
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Cc: Mary Jo O'Connor; Portland School Committee members; Portland City Council



Portland School Department
 Elementary
 Grades K-5
 Enrollment 400
 Area per Student 157

Clifford

WBRC Architects-Engineers, Inc.
 Site Comparison Budget
 March 21, 2007

	Major Capital Improvement Program			Other Funding
	State/ Local	Local Only	Total	Me.High Perf. Schools
A CONSTRUCTION				
1 New Construction	77,400 sf \$ 165 \$/sf		\$2,821,500	\$0
2 Renovations	45,660 sf		\$8,119,741	\$0
3 Built in Equipment	6%		\$656,474	\$0
4 Technology & Communications Infrastructure	3%		\$328,237	\$0
5 Site Development	10%		\$1,094,124	\$0
6 Temp. Classrooms & Phasing	4%		\$437,650	\$0
7 Sewer & Water	Is	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$0
8 Off Site Improvements	Is	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$0
9 Demolition/Hazardous Removal			\$710,000	\$0
Subtotal			\$14,327,726	\$0
B ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS & RESERVE				
10 Land		\$0	\$0	\$0
11 Moveable Equipment	6%	\$748,572	\$748,572	\$0
12 Technology	3%	\$429,832	\$429,832	\$0
13 Advertising/Insurance/legal	Is	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0
14 % for Art	Is	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0
15 Bid Contingency 5%	5%	\$716,386	\$716,386	\$0
16 Construction Contingency 5%	7.5%	\$1,074,579	\$1,074,579	\$0
17 Design Contingency	10%	\$1,432,773	\$1,432,773	\$0
Subtotal		\$4,552,142	\$4,552,142	\$0
C FEES AND SERVICES				
18 Architect/Engineer	8.0%	\$225,720	\$225,720	\$0
19 Architect/Engineer Concept (Renovation)	9.5%	\$1,093,091	\$1,093,091	\$0
20 A/E Reimbursable		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0
21 Environmental Permitting		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0
22 Life Cycle Cost Analysis		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
23 Commissioning	1%	\$28,215	\$28,215	\$0
24 Surveys/Soils/Testing		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0
25 Owners Representative		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0
26 Clerk of the Works		\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0
Subtotal		\$1,802,026	\$1,802,026	\$0
D PROJECT TOTALS		\$20,681,895	\$20,681,895	\$0
E TOTAL PROJECT COST	(Including All Available Project Funds)		\$20,681,895	

* Due to the fact that "Local Only" money is in the project a portion of this line item will be at local expense

** Due to the fact that "Local Only" money is in the project a portion of this line item may possibly be at local expense



Portland School Department
 Elementary
 Grades K-5
 Enrollment 400
 Area per Student 130

New K-5

WBRC Architects-Engineers, Inc.
 Site Comparison Budget
 March 21, 2007

	Major Capital Improvement Program			Other Funding	
	State/ Local	Local Only	Total	Me.High Perf. Schools	
A NEW CONSTRUCTION					
1 New Construction	52,000 sf \$ 165 \$/sf	\$8,580,000	\$0 *	\$8,580,000	\$0
2 Renovations	sf \$ na	\$0	\$0 *	\$0	\$0
3 Built in Equipment	6%	\$514,800	\$0 *	\$514,800	\$0
4 Technology & Communications Infrastructure	3%	\$257,400	\$0 *	\$257,400	\$0
5 Site Development	30%	\$2,574,000	\$0 *	\$2,574,000	\$0
6 Sewer & Water	ls	\$50,000	\$0 **	\$50,000	\$0
7 Off Site Improvements	ls	\$100,000	\$0 **	\$100,000	\$0
8 Demolition/Hazardous Removal		\$400,000	\$0 **	\$400,000	\$0
Subtotal		\$12,476,200	\$0	\$12,476,200	\$0
B ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS & RESERVE					
9 Land		\$0	\$0 **	\$0	\$0
10 Moveable Equipment	6%	\$748,572	\$0 *	\$748,572	\$0
11 Technology	3%	\$374,286	\$0 *	\$374,286	\$0
12 Advertising/Insurance/legal	ls	\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000	\$0
13 % for Art	ls	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$0
14 Bid Contingency 5%	5%	\$623,810	\$0 *	\$623,810	\$0
15 Construction Contingency 5%	5%	\$623,810	\$0 *	\$623,810	\$0
16 Design Contingency	10%	\$1,247,620	\$0 **	\$1,247,620	\$0
Subtotal		\$3,768,098	\$0	\$3,768,098	\$0
C FEES AND SERVICES					
17 Architect/Engineer	7.0%	\$873,334	\$0 *	\$873,334	\$0
18 Architect/Engineer Concept (Renovation)		\$0	\$0 *	\$0	\$0
19 A/E Reimbursable		\$100,000	\$0 **	\$100,000	\$0
20 Environmental Permitting		\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$0
21 Life Cycle Cost Analysis		\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0
22 Commissioning	1%	\$85,800	\$0 **	\$85,800	\$0
23 Surveys/Soils/Testing		\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000	\$0
24 Owners Representative		\$50,000	\$0 *	\$50,000	\$0
25 Clerk of the Works		\$150,000	\$0 *	\$150,000	\$0
Subtotal		\$1,414,134	\$0	\$1,414,134	\$0
D PROJECT TOTALS		\$17,658,432	\$0	\$17,658,432	\$0
E TOTAL PROJECT COST	(Including All Available Project Funds)			\$17,658,432	

* Due to the fact that "Local Only" money is in the project a portion of this line item will be at local expense.

** Due to the fact that "Local Only" money is in the project a portion of this line item may possibly be at local expense.