



**Town of Dighton**  
**Board of Selectmen**

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December 8, 2021

The Honorable Deborah B. Goldberg, State Treasurer and Chair  
Massachusetts School Building Authority Board of Directors  
State House, Room 227  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Treasurer Goldberg:

We write today to respectfully request that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Board of Directors extend the terms of the Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School District (B-P) Project Funding Agreement beyond the current 120 calendar day period for local approval as voted at the Board's October 27, 2021 meeting. We understand that the Board has an upcoming meeting on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 and ask that this request be placed on the Board's Agenda for consideration.

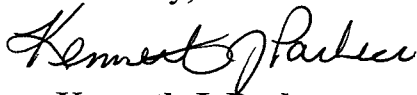
As you know, Section 10(c) of 963 CMR 2.10 provides the Board with the ability to allow for an amended time period to meet local approval requirements in order "to accommodate local meeting schedules." The financial parameters of B-P's \$305 million school building project have the ability to fundamentally shape the fiscal future of its member communities. The B-P School Committee last week set a limited, 4-hour special election for Saturday, January 29, 2022. However, recent reprecincting efforts at the state and local level have significantly impacted the ability of our local election officials to properly and sufficiently administer a narrowly-timed special election to comply with the local approval requirements on a ballot question with such financial magnitude.

Specifically, in the case of Dighton, recent U.S. Census and reprecincting efforts have led to the creation of a third voting precinct in our community, for which we need to procure and secure additional voting equipment and staff with trained election workers. Dighton is on track to have additional equipment and election workers in place for our annual town election in April 2022. Any election held before this date would force the Town to rely on our backup equipment to conduct an election with no spare or no additional backup scanning equipment available and with limited, untrained staff. Moreover, the reprecincting process requires twenty (20) days' notice to residents notifying them of their new voting precinct, but such notices cannot be sent until Dighton's new precinct maps go into effect after December 31, 2021. It would therefore be a literal race to the wire for Dighton to provide the statutorily-required notices to residents in our newly-established precincts, not even including the equipment and staff challenges that would be inherent in administering such a fast-tracked special election.

The above-referenced challenges outline the statutory and logistical issues involved in requiring a special election on January 29, 2022, but the full picture of the project's entire impact still fails to be clearly understood by residents and B-P's member communities alike. Dighton, like many communities in the current COVID-19 environment, is reassessing its operational sustainability and leveraging various funding streams to plan for current operational and long-term investments. To be quite frank, it has been difficult to anticipate or plan anything relating to B-P's proposed school building project due to the lack of information and engagement provided from B-P to the town and our residents about the project. We feel that it would be shortsighted, even disingenuous, for an election to proceed without Dighton town officials first having the opportunity to educate and inform our residents about the tax impact of such a ballot question, assess the need for a debt exclusion, and to evaluate the impacts of such a project on other town capital needs.

For these important reasons, we again ask the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Board of Directors to extend the terms of the Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School District (B-P) Project Funding Agreement beyond the current 120 calendar day period for local approval. As local officials, we take seriously our responsibility to guide Dighton's fiscal future based on information, engagement, and transparency to all. We respectfully seek your help so that can may continue doing so.

Sincerely,



**Kenneth J. Pacheco**  
Chairman



**Leonard E. Hull, Jr.**  
Clerk



**Brett R. Zografos, Ph.D.**  
Member

cc: State Senator Marc R. Pacheco  
State Representative Patricia A. Haddad