

BUILDING BETTER BEGINNINGS



Campaign for the Skowhegan Area Early Childhood Education Center

Campaign Committee

Sam Hight

Campaign Chair

*Principal, Hight Family of
Dealerships*

Tracy Fortin

Campaign Director

*Chief Operating Officer,
KVCAP Child & Family Services
and Educare Central Maine*

Chelsey Carrier

*Lawyer; Member, Carrier
Chipping; Committee Chair,
Skowhegan Backpack Program*

Nicole Chaplin

*Program Director, Early
Childhood, KVCAP Child &
Family Services*

Gail Gibson

*Veterinarian, Animal Medical
Clinic; Member, KVCAP
Board of Directors*

Michael Lambke

*Physician, Redington-Fairview
General Hospital*

Erin Merrill

*Senior Director of Major Gifts,
Thomas College*

Jonathan Moody

*Superintendent, Maine School
Administrative District #54*

Richard St. Pierre

*CPA, CFO; Member, KVCAP
Board of Directors*

Suzanne Walsh

Chief Executive Officer, KVCAP

Dear Community Member,

We are writing today to share some great news. In September 2022 we kicked off a Capital Campaign to raise \$3M to support the **early childhood wing for the new Margaret Chase Smith Community School**. We knew it would be a challenge but we also know this community and how when we work together, we can accomplish anything.

At the onset, 100% of our committee donated early to support the project and we have been asking others to join us. Since then, some of our closest partners including Skowhegan Savings Bank, Ware Butler, Franklin Savings Bank, Hammond Lumber, the Damon family, Don and Kate Skillings, and State Farm have joined us with generous donations. **To date, the campaign has raised more than \$2 million in pledges from 57 donors.**

“We are fortunate to live in a community that values Early Childhood Education and workforce development. Since returning home fifteen years ago, I have been focused on helping develop a vibrant, enriching, progressive, and successful community. **Children, especially young children, play the largest role in the generational success of a community.** This project, influenced by Educare Central Maine, ensures that more children will have access to quality childcare and preschool educational programs.”

~Sam Hight, Campaign Chair

This new school will be the **first of its kind in Maine** to have early childhood programming beginning with infants, embedded in the building. Further, the new school will be critical to support economic growth in our community. It will help us **attract and retain workers**, address the needs of employees to have reliable and excellent childcare for even the youngest children, and will enable a child to be at the same school from birth through fifth grade, providing stability and building community.

The outpouring of support has been gratifying and includes a recent pledge from Stephen Blatt, the architect for the project, who has agreed to **match all donations** made by MSAD #54 staff. This is truly a group effort being led by community members.

At a recent Business After Hours event, Don Skillings echoed Sam's thoughts on the importance of this project, expressing, **“It's not often in life when you have the opportunity to absolutely change someone else's life.** This new school will enable all children in MSAD #54, regardless of household income, the opportunity to receive

an excellent foundational early educational experience, and includes support for families. As community members, we are given this once in a lifetime opportunity to help, whether it's \$100 or \$1 million, because every single dollar will contribute to the success of this project. I cannot think of a more transformative donation a person can give. This is why our family chose to support this project.”

Early Childhood is an economic development issue. *This school will change the demographics in the greater Skowhegan area. The impact on our community will be realized when the doors open in 2025 and for years to come.*

We are asking for you to join us in achieving our goal for the community. As of March, 2023, **we are 71% there!** In the upcoming weeks, we will be reaching out to give you updates and answer any questions you may have about the project, the timeline, or your consideration of your own pledge. Our goal is to **ensure everyone in the community** has the opportunity to be a part of this project.

We look forward to connecting soon and having you join us in supporting Skowhegan’s children and families.

Sincerely,

The Building Better Beginnings Campaign Committee:

Sam Hight, Chair
Chelsey Carrier
Nicole Chaplin
Tracye Fortin
Gail Gibson

Mike Lambke
Erin Merrill
Jonathan Moody
Richard St. Pierre
Suzanne Walsh

Enclosure: Pledge Form