

## **FUTURE MSAD 3 announces agreement with school board**

THORNDIKE - The nonprofit organization conducting a \$575,000 capital campaign for the Mount View Performing Arts Center has announced an agreement with SAD 3 that outlines the terms of their participation in and support for the project. FUTURE MSAD 3 (FUTURE) presented the memorandum of understanding (MOU) to the SAD 3 Board of Directors which unanimously approved the agreement at their Monday night meeting. The formal agreement details plans for cooperation on a variety of areas, including FUTURE's active participation in design, construction, and expenditure decisions regarding the performing arts center.

Steve Bennett, chair of the FUTURE board of directors acknowledged the significance of the MOU. "Our formal agreement with the school board gives our more than 200 donors, and prospective donors to the campaign complete assurance that their support will make the Mount View Performing Arts Center a reality," Bennett said. "We look forward with excitement to working with the administration, school board, building and facilities committees, and new school architect Oak Point Associates as the performing arts center takes shape," Bennett added.

By approving the MOU, the school board formally accepted FUTURE's offer to fund the Mount View Performing Arts Center and agrees to the following:

1. Guarantees that contributions raised by FUTURE will be used by the school board solely for the purpose of the performing arts center
2. Allows for FUTURE officials to be active participants with the SAD 3 administration, school board, building committee, and architect on the project
3. Outlines FUTURE's contribution payment schedule to SAD 3
4. Allows FUTURE MSAD 3 to request information on project expenses from SAD 3 to be accountable to their donors

“FUTURE and the SAD 3 Board of Directors share a common desire – to make the Mount View Performing Arts Center a reality for the students and residents of this district,” said Bennett, “and this agreement seals the deal.”

On November 16 the State Board of Education approved the design and funding for the new Mount View School complex serving approximately 1,068 students in Pre-K through grade 12. When constructed as part of the new school complex, the 300-seat performing arts center located adjacent to the high school lobby will provide a high-caliber performance space for all of the district’s students, and will enhance the development of student theatre programs in the elementary, middle, and high school.

In February 2006 the FUTURE board of directors formed a Performing Arts Center Committee (PAC) to begin reviewing the auditorium enhancements to be funded by the private fundraising campaign – sound and lighting systems, the electrical infrastructure, acoustics, a catwalk, mezzanine and control booth. In 2005 and 2006, the committee toured performing arts centers at schools in Deer Isle-Stonington, Camden, Winthrop, and Vinalhaven, and met with both school officials and those who privately raised the funds for the facilities. Chaired by Ginger Aldrich of Brooks, PAC committee members include Bob Brennan of Troy, Jim Clark of Montville, Betsy Garrold of Knox, Monica Wing of Belmont, and theatre consultants Nate Aldrich of Brooks and Joe Donovan of Dixmont, who have generously volunteered their time and talents to FUTURE. As outlined in the MOU, the PAC committee will now be actively participating with Oak Point Associates in the design/construction process of the new arts facility.

The capital campaign was launched on May 31 at Mount View High School with the announcement of a \$250,000 challenge grant from the Unity Foundation in honor of their founders, Bert G. and Coral B. Clifford. In less than six months, FUTURE MSAD 3 has already raised \$105,000 toward the \$250,000 Unity Foundation challenge grant, which matches contributions to the performing arts center dollar-for-dollar. FUTURE needs to raise an additional \$145,000 to complete the Unity Foundation challenge and meet the campaign goal. UNITEL President and COO Laurie Osgood and former MSAD 3 Superintendent Rod McElroy serve as Honorary Campaign Co-Chairs. Osgood graduated from Mount View in 1980. McElroy was the high school guidance counselor at Mount View when the school opened in 1963, and went on to serve SAD 3 for 23 years as principal and then superintendent. Osgood and McElroy have been instrumental in the campaign’s early fundraising success.

Under the MOU, FUTURE will make an initial contribution of \$167,105 to SAD 3 to fund the infrastructure that will help to transform the auditorium into a performing arts center. While the balance of more than \$332,000 will be payable to SAD 3 in mid-2009 prior to the opening of the new school, FUTURE officials are determined to raise the remaining \$145,000 to meet the Unity Foundation challenge as soon as possible, and move on to phase two of the capital campaign, to fund enhancements to Mount View's outdoor athletic complex. The scope and financial goal for the athletic campaign has not been determined.

Last month, the MSAD #3 Maine Education Association executive board unanimously approved a resolution endorsing FUTURE's campaign. Since November, FUTURE representatives have made presentations to 118 faculty and staff at five district schools, including SAD 3 bus drivers, seeking their financial support for the campaign.

SAD 3 employs 300 full-time and part-time staff at eight schools with a total enrollment of 1,550. SAD 3 serves the 11 towns of Unity, Brooks, Freedom, Jackson, Knox, Liberty, Monroe, Montville, Thorndike, Troy, and Waldo with a total population of 10,028. MSAD 3 is geographically one of Maine's largest and most rural school districts.