



News Release

Contact:
Kevin Lambert (802) 828-6080
Kevin.Lambert@usda.gov

The Sharon Academy Receives \$1.9M USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan to Build Modern Arts & Science Wing

MONTPELIER, June 2, 2021 – Today, Acting State Director for USDA Rural Development in Vermont, Cheryl Ducharme, announced a \$1.9 million loan to The Sharon Academy in Sharon, Vermont, to fund the construction of a new science and arts wing. The addition will house modern classroom and laboratory space for students 7-12. USDA made project funds available through its [Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant program](#), the source of \$59.9 million in Vermont school investments over the last three years, including a \$57.8 million loan to the Winooski School District in 2020.

“Since its inception, The Sharon Academy has cultivated young minds by implementing the highest academic standards within a safe, engaging and stimulating learning environment,” said Ducharme. “This funding will expand the space, equipment and resources available for students to learn about the arts and sciences, offering them more opportunities to advance their education and explore new interests. Transformational projects like this reaffirm the Biden-Harris administration’s commitment to building up our rural communities through investments in education, job creation and modern, energy-efficient infrastructure—including schools.”

The Sharon Academy was founded in 1996 to provide an academic option for the town’s students and those in surrounding municipalities seeking alternative school options. The new 5,000 square-foot science and arts wing will include two large laboratories, a makerspace workshop, photography darkroom and two lecture spaces with soundproofed walls. The loan funds will also be used to expand the parking lot with EV chargers, add new fire sprinklers and a radiant ceiling heat system, update gym changing areas, set the foundation for an outdoor education barn, and create a commercial kitchen to support local food production. Before completion, the project could also include stormwater green infrastructure and dedicated distance learning space.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports housing, infrastructure improvements, business development, high-speed internet access, and community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov. If you’d like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

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