

District: West Springfield
School Name: West Springfield High School
Category: Model School Program

Recommendation

That the Town of West Springfield be invited into the Model School Pilot Program to explore the potential to adapt and re-use a model high school design for the construction of a new West Springfield High School.

Background

The West Springfield Public Schools consist of six elementary schools, one middle school and one high school which serve a student population of over 3,983 students. The District submitted three SOIs and selected the High School as its priority.

West Springfield High School was built in 1955 on a 64-acre site along the west side of Piper Road, with an addition built in 1965. The school is 270,000 square feet, and the 2008 enrollment for the high school was 1,300 students. The school is bordered by residential homes to the north and south and backs onto the site of West Springfield Middle School. The building is worn and show signs of deterioration. Systems are often down, and only two of the four boilers are functional. The building systems have not been updated since the original construction of the building and they are at the end of their useful life and in need of replacement. The building layout is not ADA compliant. The District has identified limits to the delivery of its educational program that include: 1950's era science labs; an inaccessible, two-level library; a sprawling facility which is difficult to negotiate; and congested hallways and adjacencies which tend to alienate students and limit the opportunity to implement the District's House program.

The High School is located on a sloping site creating level changes and accessibility issues within the building and on the site itself. The extended layout of the building requires considerable travel distances, and the building is not well suited to allow upgrades for accessibility without considerable modifications. MSBA staff and its consultant performed a second site inspection in addition to the senior study performed. Based on an analysis of the High School's building and systems, staff have concluded that the building would require significant upgrades in order to meet its educational program, and the multi-level, non-ADA compliant building will not lend itself to a cost-effective renovation option.

Given the success of the Model School Pilot Program, MSBA staff recommend that, due to its enrollment and a site that provides two flat areas of sufficient size, that the Town of West Springfield be invited into the Model School Pilot Program to explore, in

collaboration with the MSBA, whether a Model School might be an educationally appropriate school and size for the Town of West Springfield.