

District: New Bedford
School Name: John Hannigan Elementary School
Category: Feasibility Study

Recommendation

That the Statement of Interest (SOI) for the John Hannigan Elementary School located in the City of New Bedford be placed in the Feasibility Study category to study potential solutions to programmatic deficiencies and aging systems at the facility.

Background

The District submitted five Statements of Interest (SOI) for five elementary school facilities including one for the John Hannigan Elementary School, the District's priority SOI. The John Hannigan School, one of 22 elementary schools in the city, houses 313 students in kindergarten through grade five. The facility is a two-story brick building built in 1919 that opened in 1921. The building is approximately 53,422 square feet, not including the five portable classrooms located on-site approximately 20 years ago to increase the number of core classroom spaces.

In May, 2006, a ceiling in the auditorium collapsed. This, coupled with the results of a structural report commissioned just after the collapse noting several other issues throughout the building, caused the District to close the facility. The facility remains closed with the student population relocated to several locations in the city. Grade one through grade five students were transferred to the Sea Lab Facility on Portland Street, while special education, english as a second language and kindergarten students were transferred to two elementary schools in the city; the Gomes Elementary School and the Pulaski Elementary School.

According to the SOI, the District's specific goal is to re-open the John Hannigan Elementary School and bring it up to a level of functionality by addressing both programmatic and structural deficiencies. The District has identified a number of concerns supported in an accompanying report that suggests an inadequate structure for current seismic codes, water infiltration throughout the facility, inaccessibility, inadequate egress lighting, exit signs, fire detection, fire protection/suppression and annunciation systems throughout. Additional issues include inadequate ventilation and air quality, inadequate fire separations, ADA compliant issues, Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) in the building, and a kitchen that does not meet State Sanitary Code for food service areas.

Based on a recent visit to the John Hannigan Elementary School, MSBA staff recommends that the school be placed in the Feasibility Study category to further study the appropriate solution to the identified problems at the John Hannigan Elementary School.

