

District: Town of Webster  
 School Name: Park Avenue Elementary School  
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic  
 Date: January 18, 2012

**Recommendation**

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Town of Webster, as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into schematic design to replace the existing Park Avenue Elementary School with a new PK-4 elementary school on the existing site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s preferred solution to replace the existing school with the construction of a new Park Avenue Elementary School on the existing site.

<b>District Information</b>	
District Name	Town of Webster
Elementary School(s)	Park Avenue Elementary School (PK-2)
Middle School(s)	Webster Middle School (3-6)
High School(s)	Bartlett Junior Senior High School (7-12)
Priority School Name	Park Avenue Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	PK-2
Year Opened	1960
Total Square Footage	61,600
Additions	None
Acreage of Site	10.2 acres
Building Issues	<p>The District identified deficiencies in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building envelope</li> <li>- Structural system (seismic upgrades needed)</li> <li>- Mechanical systems</li> <li>- Electrical systems</li> <li>- Roofing assemblies</li> <li>- Accessibility</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the physical plant issues, the District has reported the current classrooms are too small to deliver the desired educational program.</p>
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2010-2011 Enrollment	495
Agreed Upon Enrollment	720
Enrollment Specifics	<p>The proposed project includes a grade re-configuration that relocates the District’s PK-4 student population into the proposed new Park Ave Elementary School, converts the existing Middle School to grades 5-8, and converts the existing Junior High School to grades 9-12.</p>

<b>MSBA Board Votes</b>	
Invitation to Feasibility Study	September 30, 2009
Preferred Schematic Authorization	January 25, 2012
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on June 6, 2012
Reimbursement Rate Before Incentives	74.74%

<b>Consultants</b>	
Owner's Project Manager	R.F. Walsh Collaborative Partners
Designer	Dore & Whittier Architects, Inc.

## **Discussion**

The existing Park Avenue Elementary School is a 61,600 square-foot facility located on a steep, wooded ten-acre site with two levels. The School is divided into upper and lower buildings connected by a long enclosed stairway corridor. The existing facility currently houses grades PK-2.

The existing facility is virtually the same as originally constructed, with the exception of some maintenance improvements, and suffers from a number of problems. Classrooms are generally small and affect the ability to accommodate the District's current educational programs. The building has considerable handicapped accessibility issues, including but not limited to an existing 110-foot chairlift that provides the only interior access for handicapped students from the lower to upper level of the facility. The building is constructed of single-pane glass curtain wall and concrete tilt-up wall panels that are energy inefficient. Existing systems are functioning, but most are original to the building and have reached the end of their useful life.

In addition to resolving the physical issues associated with the building, the District would like to evaluate the existing PK-2 grade configuration at the Park Avenue Elementary School. The District has stated that the PK-2 grade configuration is an inappropriate grade structure for the existing building and for any potential future project.

In May 2011, the MSBA entered into a Feasibility Study Agreement with the District to further investigate the issues stated above and to evaluate potential options that respond to the needs of the Park Avenue Elementary School. As part of the study, the MSBA agreed to allow the District to evaluate various grade re-configuration scenarios within the District to determine the most fiscally responsible and educationally appropriate solution. For purposes of this study, and in addition to the Park Avenue Elementary School grade configuration, the grade configurations at the Webster Middle School and Bartlett Junior Senior High School were considered.

In conjunction with the design team, the District performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and the existing educational program and received input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its design team initially studied seven preliminary options; including three addition/renovation

options, three new construction options, and one no-build deferred maintenance code upgrade option. The following is a detailed list of the preliminary alternatives considered:

Option	Description
1	<b>New Construction</b> – New PK-2 Park Ave ES on existing site
2	<b>Addition/Renovation</b> – Add/reno to existing PK-2 Park Ave ES
3	<b>Addition/Renovation</b> – Additions and renovations to the Webster MS and Bartlett Jr/Sr HS. The existing Park Ave ES would be demolished and site would be repurposed. Middle School would become PK-5, and Jr/Sr HS would become 6-12.
4	<b>Addition/Renovation</b> – Additions and renovations to the Webster MS and Bartlett Jr/Sr HS. The existing Park Ave ES would serve PK through K only. Middle School would become grades 1-5, and Jr/Sr HS would become 6-12.
5	<b>New Construction</b> – New PK-3 Park Ave ES on existing site. Middle School would become grades 4-8 and Jr/Sr HS would become 9-12.
6	<b>New Construction</b> – New PK-4 Park Ave ES on existing site. Middle School would become grades 5-8, and Jr/Sr HS would become 9-12.
7	<b>No-build</b> – Deferred maintenance and code upgrade at the existing Park Ave ES.

After discussion with MSBA staff and further District evaluation of the preliminary alternatives, the District presented a modified list of alternatives in which three options remained as the most viable for consideration. Below is a summary of the preliminary design pricing for the three alternatives to be considered for further evaluation. The District’s preferred alternative is Option 6, the construction of a new PK-4 facility.

**Table 1 – Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing**

Option (Description)	Total Gross Square Feet	Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sf)	Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sf)	Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost*	Estimated Total Construction** (cost*/sf)	Estimated Total Project Costs
Option 1 (New PK-2 ES)	86,347	N/A	86,347 \$294.28/sf	\$3,600,000	\$29,010,000 \$335.97/sf	\$38.4m
Option 3 Add/reno (PK-5 ES) (6-12 M/HS)	266,950	207,500 \$188.70/sf	59,450 \$165.85/sf	\$5,525,600	\$54,540,000 \$204.31/sf	\$64.1m
<b>Option 6 (New PK-4 ES) Preferred Option***</b>	<b>110,640</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>110,640</b> <b>\$282.99/sf</b>	<b>\$3,730,000</b>	<b>\$35,040,000</b> <b>\$316.70/sf</b>	<b>\$44.2m</b>

\* Marked up construction costs

\*\* Does not include construction contingency

\*\*\* District’s preferred option

Although Option 1 would resolve current physical plant issues associated with the existing Park Avenue Elementary School and is a less-costly option, the District does not wish to continue to deliver its educational plan with a PK-2 facility. Although Option 3 consolidates the District-wide student population into two schools, this solution, the most costly option, would require extensive renovation and addition to the existing Bartlett Junior Senior High School in order to provide the appropriate desired educational program delivery and grade separation.

Through further evaluation of the three alternatives listed in Table 1, the District and its design team determined that Option 6, replacing the existing PK-2 Park Avenue Elementary School with a new school serving PK-4 on the existing Park Avenue site, will meet the needs of the educational program and allow the District to achieve its desired district-wide grade configuration. Additionally, the MSBA and the District mutually agree that any design or construction work that is performed at the Webster Middle School or Bartlett Junior Senior High School as a result of the grade re-configuration will be the sole responsibility of the District and will not be eligible for reimbursement by the MSBA.

MSBA staff have reviewed the conclusions of the Feasibility Study, all subsequent submittals, and the enrollment data with the District and found:

- 1) All initial paperwork required has been processed, including an executed Initial Compliance Certification, the composition of the School Building Committee, and study enrollment certification.
- 2) MSBA has completed a study enrollment projection for various grade configurations and has reached a mutual agreement with the District for a design enrollment of 720 students for grades PK-4 at the proposed new Park Ave Elementary School. The District will be required to execute a final design enrollment certification that will be provided by the MSBA.
- 3) MSBA reviewed the Feasibility Study and subsequent material and finds that the options investigated were sufficiently comprehensive in scope, the approach undertaken in this study was appropriate, and the District's preferred solution is reasonable and cost-effective and meets the needs identified by the District.
- 4) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget to the MSBA for review.
- 5) The District's schematic design submittal will be subject to final review and approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as part of the schematic design submittal prior to a Project Scope and Budget Agreement.
- 6) The MSBA will participate in a project that includes space that meets MSBA guidelines. Any design or construction work conducted at the existing Middle School or existing High School associated with the grade reconfiguration is outside the scope of work for this project, will not be reimbursable by the MSBA, and should be separated from the estimated total project budget.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the Town of Webster be approved to proceed into schematic design to replace the existing Park Avenue Elementary School with a new

elementary school serving grades PK-4 that meets MSBA space guidelines and is located on the existing site.