

District: City of Peabody  
 School Name: J. Henry Higgins Middle School  
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic  
 Date: July 18, 2012

### Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to accept the City of Peabody's proposed preferred solution, as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to replace the existing J. Henry Higgins Middle School on the existing site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District's preferred solution to replace the existing J. Henry Higgins Middle School on the existing site. Staff also recommends that the Executive Director be authorized to review and evaluate whether a Model School might be appropriate for the replacement of the J. Henry Higgins Middle School, prior to authorizing the City of Peabody to proceed into schematic design.

<b>District Information</b>	
District Name	City of Peabody
Elementary School(s)	John E. McCarthy School (PK-5) South Memorial School (PK-5) William A. Welch (PK-5) Captain Samuel Brown School (K-5) Center School (K-5) John E. Burke (K-5) Thomas Carroll (K-5) West Memorial (K-5)
Middle School(s)	J. Henry Higgins Middle School (6-8)
High School(s)	Peabody Veterans Memorial High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	J. Henry Higgins Middle School
Type of School	Middle School
Grades Served	6-8
Year Opened	1972
Total Square Footage	147,333
Additions	N/A
Acreage of Site	44 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structural integrity</li> <li>- Mechanical systems</li> <li>- Electrical systems</li> <li>- Plumbing systems</li> <li>- Envelope</li> <li>- Windows</li> <li>- Roof</li> <li>- Accessibility</li> </ul> In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported that the existing facility does not support the delivery of its educational program and overcrowding.
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2011-2012 Enrollment	1,360

<b>District Information</b>	
Agreed Upon Enrollment	1,340
Enrollment Specifics	The District and MSBA have mutually agreed upon a design enrollment of 1,340 students serving grades 6-8.

<b>MSBA Board Votes</b>	
Invitation to Feasibility Study for Repair	August 8, 2008
Invitation to Feasibility Study (re-categorization)	March 30, 2011
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On July 25, 2012 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on November 14, 2012
Reimbursement Rate Before Incentives	53.32%

<b>Consultants</b>	
Owner's Project Manager	Daedalus Projects, Inc.
Designer	DiNisco Design Partnership

## Discussion

The existing J. Henry Higgins Middle School is a sprawling, 228,441 square-foot building on a 44-acre site located in central Peabody and accessed via King Street or Perkins Street. The existing facility currently serves grades 6-8.

The original school building was constructed in 1964. Upgrades and additions were completed in 1980, 1999, and 2001. The District identified numerous deficiencies in the Statement of Interest. The existing building requires replacement of the window, roof, heating, ventilation, and electrical systems and has significant accessibility limitations. The District has reported that, in general, the existing classrooms are undersized and that the core spaces and the general layout of the building affect the District's ability to deliver its educational program.

In 2008, the MSBA invited the District to collaborate on a study for repairs to the facility. During initial discussions, the District expressed concerns regarding the potential cost of major repairs to such a large facility and requested that the study review the overall condition of the building and its ability to support delivery of the District's educational program. The District also requested that the MSBA consider the District for an Invitation to Feasibility Study that limited the scope of the study to options for repairs/renovations and minor additions achievable within a budget of \$42 million. The District, in conjunction with its consultants, performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and the educational program and received input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on these findings, the District and its consultants studied three preliminary options that included two addition/renovation options and one repair option, as presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Preliminary Options**

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
1	Addition/Renovation – Replace the existing Voc-Tech space with a new classroom wing and cafeteria. Relocate media center to existing cafeteria and demolish existing media center. Renovate remainder of building.
2	Addition/Renovation – Construct an addition to provide a new cafeteria while converting the existing Voc-Tech wing into classroom space. Relocate media center to existing cafeteria and demolish existing media center. Renovate remainder of building.
3	Repair – Repair or replace systems and envelope as necessary. Provide required code and accessibility upgrades. No change to programmatic space or function.

Upon reviewing these options, the District realized that it could not address all of the facility’s needs within a \$42 million budget, so District officials met with the MSBA to propose studying additional options, namely a larger project that would more fully address the District’s educational programmatic needs as well as facility deficiencies. In developing these additional options, two areas that required further discussion with the MSBA as spaces that are either larger than guidelines or not included in middle school guidelines were the gymnasium and the auditorium. Based on a design enrollment of 1,340 students, the District demonstrated the need for additional space above that allowed in the MSBA’s guidelines for a middle school to provide the required number of teaching stations to deliver the physical education curriculum. In addition, the existing facility has an auditorium that the District considers to be valuable space that supports delivery of the educational curriculum and is a community asset. The MSBA’s guidelines do not provide for an auditorium in middle schools, but city officials, school committee members, and members of the public consider the auditorium a critical feature that must be part of the preferred solution. To allow for a reasonable comparison between an addition/renovation option that would retain the auditorium and a new construction option, the District proposed, and the MSBA agreed, to include an auditorium in a new construction option with the understanding that all costs associated with the auditorium would be ineligible for reimbursement by the MSBA.

The District and its consultants investigated various sites within the City as potential locations for new construction and concluded that the existing site, although challenging, provides the only viable area for new construction. Further investigations by the City and its consultants revealed that the existing football field is the most favorable location on the existing site, as it would allow for optimal building orientation while mitigating many constraints associated with the overall drainage patterns and the steep slope of the site.

MSBA staff and the District agreed to five options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing for Final Evaluation of Options**

<b>Option (Description)</b>	<b>Total Gross Square Feet</b>	<b>Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost <sup>1</sup>/sf)</b>	<b>Square Feet of New Construction (cost <sup>1</sup>/sf)</b>	<b>Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Estimated Total Construction<sup>2</sup> (cost <sup>1</sup>/sf)</b>	<b>Estimated Total Project Costs</b>
Option 1: Addition/ Renovation	233,378	178,535 \$207/sf	54,843 \$303/sf	\$10,626,238	\$63,967,135 \$274/sf	\$84,757,385
Option 2: Addition/ Renovation	231,588	215,604 \$207/sf	15,984 \$348/sf	\$11,014,414	\$61,177,625 \$264/sf	\$81,474,963
Option 3A: Repair	231,962	231,962 \$192/sf	N/A	\$11,114,088	\$55,568,149 \$240/sf	\$74,972,621
Option 3B: Repair/Cafeteria Expansion	226,258	225,055 \$195/sf	1,203 \$376/sf	\$11,110,927	\$55,525,280 \$245/sf	\$74,865,134
<b>Option 4: New Building<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>224,000</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>224,000</b> <b>\$285/sf</b>	<b>\$10,715,188</b>	<b>\$74,451,784</b> <b>\$332/sf</b>	<b>\$89,647,480</b>

<sup>1</sup> *Marked up construction costs*

<sup>2</sup> *Does not include construction contingency*

<sup>3</sup> *District's preferred option*

Although Options 3A and 3B for repairs were the least expensive options, the District stated that these failed to adequately address the educational needs of the District. Although Option 4, New Building, has a higher total project budget than the other options, the District selected this option as its preferred option because, according to the District, it:

- provides appropriately purposed and located educational spaces for delivery of the District's middle school educational program;
- minimizes the disruption to students and staff that would occur with addition/renovation options that have estimated phased construction schedules of 36 to 38 months;
- provides greater certainty, at this conceptual phase, for estimated construction costs, with fewer change orders, than a renovation option;
- eliminates the need for the relocation of central administration, busing, or the moving of existing vocational high school students, all of which would be required as part of a phased renovation/addition construction project and are ineligible for MSBA funding.

The District presented its preferred alternative to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee ("FAS") on June 27, 2012. At that meeting, members of the FAS raised a number of concerns, including site limitations, the estimated costs that would be 100% borne by the City in a potential phased construction project, the usage and size of the proposed courtyard, and connecting hallways in the new option with emphasis on the effect on overall efficiency of the building. The District and its consultants have provided supplemental information addressing most of the issues raised at the FAS meeting and have expressed the District's resolve to address the remainder as the

project moves forward. MSBA staff will continue to work with the District and its consultants early in schematic design to resolve all concerns regarding the layout and efficiency of the proposed facility.

MSBA staff 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 the enrollment information.
- 2) MSBA has completed an enrollment projection and has reached a mutual agreement with the District for a design enrollment of 1,340 students for the J. Henry Higgins Middle School.
- 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 meets the needs identified by the District.
- 4) The District will submit an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget for MSBA review.
- 5) Upon completion of the MSBA's evaluation of whether a Model School might be appropriate for the replacement of the existing J. Henry Higgins Middle School, an additional vote by the MSBA Board of Directors would be required to authorize the next step for the District and/or to authorize the District to proceed into schematic design.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the Executive Director be authorized to accept the City of Peabody's proposed preferred solution, as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to replace the existing J. Henry Higgins Middle School on the existing site. Staff also recommends that the Executive Director be authorized to review and evaluate whether a Model School might be appropriate for the replacement of the J. Henry Higgins Middle School, prior to authorizing the City of Peabody to proceed into schematic design.