

District: City of Holyoke
 School Name: H.B. Lawrence School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: August 22, 2018

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve Holyoke as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design for the construction of a new facility serving grades 6-8 on the Chestnut Street site and a new facility serving grades 6-8 to replace the William R. Peck School on the existing site, contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of each site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s preferred solution.

District Information	
District Name	City of Holyoke
Elementary School(s)	Maurice A. Donahue Elementary School (PK-8) Dr. Marcella R. Kelly Elementary School (PK-8) Lt. Elmer J. McMahan Elementary School (PK-8) Morgan Elementary School (PK-8) Lt. Clayre Sullivan Elementary School (K-8) E.N. White Elementary School (PK-8) Joseph Metcalf School (PK-2) H.B. Lawrence School (K-3)
Middle School(s)	William R. Peck School (4-8) Holyoke STEM Academy (6-8) (Opening Fall 2018)
High School(s)	Holyoke High School (9-12) William J. Dean Vocational Technical High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	H.B. Lawrence School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	K-3
Year Opened	1930
Existing Square Footage	64,025
Additions	N/A
Acreage of Site	2.63 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mechanical systems - Electrical systems - Plumbing systems - Windows - Roof - Accessibility In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported that the existing facility does not support the delivery of its educational program.
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2017-2018 Enrollment	278
Agreed Upon Enrollment	550

District Information	
Enrollment Specifics	The District and MSBA have mutually agreed upon a design enrollment of 550 students serving grades 6-8.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	N/A
Invitation to Feasibility Study	May 12, 2017
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On August 29, 2018 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on April 10, 2019
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	80.00%

Consultants	
Owner’s Project Manager (the “OPM”)	Pinck & Co., Inc.
Designer	Jones Whitsett Architects, Inc.

Discussion

In response to the critical need of the District and in support of the Level 5 District Turnaround Plan for the Holyoke Public Schools the Board voted on March 30, 2016 to allow the District to complete a Survey of the conditions at all of the District’s educational facilities as part of the Feasibility Study for the Lt. Elmer J. McMahon Elementary School. This survey considered three schemes for prioritizing and updating its aging school facilities based on: preserving the existing PK-8 grade structure, creating distinct middle schools, and establishing middle school spaces tied to the two existing high schools. Based on prior analysis, public hearings, and local discussions the District has determined that the existing PK-8 configuration is a significant barrier to improving educational outcomes and that the implementation of distinct, suitably-sized middle schools, with age appropriate scale and features will best serve the well-being of the District’s middle school aged learners. Given these challenges, the MSBA agreed to work with the District to study potential solutions to serve all of its middle school student population.

The existing H.B. Lawrence School is a 64,025 square foot three-story building located on 2.63 acres in the Churchill neighborhood of downtown, across from the Holyoke Public Library. The original school building was constructed in 1930 as a junior high school and later used as a K-12 school. The existing facility currently serves students in grades K-3 in its designated attendance zone, with students in grades 4-8 attending the William R. Peck School.

The William R. Peck School is a 177,015 square foot facility, originally constructed in 1973 as a middle school intended to serve 1,000 students. The three-story building sits on a 16-acre site in a residential neighborhood and currently serves fewer than 400 students, as the District has gradually reduced enrollment in the building due to difficulties with heating and cooling and challenges associated with student supervision created by the building layout.

The District identified numerous deficiencies in the Statement of Interest for both the H.B. Lawrence School and William R. Peck School associated with mechanical, electrical, and

plumbing systems; roof and windows; and accessibility constraints. Additionally, both schools have been recommended for discontinued use under the District’s current Turnaround Plan based on the physical deficiencies of each facility and strong community support for a District-wide grade reconfiguration from a K-8 model in favor of a K-5, 6-8 model.

In conjunction with its consultants, the District performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and the educational program and received input from educators, administrators, receiver, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied seven preliminary options that included two base repair options, two addition/renovation configurations and three new construction options as presented below.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options	Preliminary Construction Costs
0	Base Repair/Code Upgrade at Lawrence School	\$17,455,916
0	Base Repair/Code Upgrade at Peck School	\$45,626,897
1	Addition/Renovation at Lawrence School for 550 students	\$52,805,902
2	New Construction at Chestnut Street site for 550 students	\$50,579,910
3	Addition/Renovation at Peck School for 550 students	\$55,981,984
4	New Construction at Peck School for 550 students	\$52,166,488
5	New Construction at Chestnut Street site for 1,100 students	\$84,693,547

The District reported that both Base/ Repair Options do not support the educational needs or address the challenges of reconfiguring the existing schools from a K-8 district to a model based on elementary schools serving grades K-5 and middle schools serving grades 6-8. The existing H.B Lawrence School is ideally located and well-built, however, repair of this facility would not provide sufficient space for a middle school designed to serve 550 students. The existing William R. Peck School was determined to be too large to effectively serve 550 students and too small to effectively serve 1,100 students. The facility is poorly organized, difficult to navigate and supervise, and expensive to operate. Therefore, neither of these options were further developed in the Final Evaluation of Alternates.

“Option 1” – Addition/Renovation option at the existing H.B. Lawrence school could meet the basic goals of the District, however, the District did not recommend this option for additional consideration in the final evaluation of alternatives because of the challenges associated with renovating a historic structure and higher costs of this option.

Upon further review and discussion, MSBA staff and the District agreed to four final options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below. Please note that the two Base Repair options were carried for comparison purposes only and were not further developed, but cost estimates were updated.

Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing for Final Evaluation of Options

Option (Description)	Total Gross Square Feet	Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sq. ft.)	Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sq. ft.)	Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost*	Estimated Total Construction ** (cost*/sq. ft.)	Estimated Total Project Costs
Option 0: Lawrence Base Repair	64,048	64,048 \$258/sq. ft.	0 \$0/sq. ft.	\$2,105,200	\$18,609,725 \$291/sq. ft.	\$24,190,000
Option 0: Peck Base Repair	170,000	170,000 \$332/sq. ft.	0 \$0/sq. ft.	\$4,335,955	\$60,839,341 \$358/sq. ft.	\$79,090,000
Option 2: New Construction at Chestnut St. for 550 students ***	105,909	0 \$0/sq. ft.	105,909 \$434/sq. ft.	\$3,563,297	\$49,561,208 \$468/sq. ft.	\$61,910,000
Option 4a: New Construction at Peck for 550 students ***	107,680	0 \$0/sq. ft.	107,680 \$439/sq. ft.	\$8,824,883	\$56,066,378 \$521/sq. ft.	\$69,930,000
Option 4b: New Construction at Peck for 550 students later construction start	107,680	0 \$0/sq. ft.	107,680 \$452/sq. ft.	\$9,084,453	\$57,715,478 \$536/sq. ft.	\$75,030,000
Option 5: New Construction at Chestnut St. for 1,100 students	187,885	0 \$0/sq. ft.	187,885 \$433/sq. ft.	\$3,552,270	\$84,901,970 \$452/sq. ft.	\$110,370,000

* Marked up construction costs

** Does not include construction contingency

*****District's preferred option is to construct two new equivalent middle schools at the same time**

The District has selected “Option 2” new construction of a 550-student middle school on Chestnut Street and “Option 4a” new construction of a 550-student middle school on the existing William R. Peck School site as its preferred solution to proceed into Schematic Design. The proposed two-school solution includes simultaneous design and construction, which would enable the District to complete its transition from a K-8 educational model to its desired elementary and middle school configuration. The District selected this two-school solution as its preferred solution because it best supports the District’s Turnaround Plan, and it improves the educational experience for all its middle school students (1,100 students) as quickly and equitably as possible. This solution provides two appropriately sized and similarly organized middle schools designed to meet the specific needs of the District’s middle school students and teachers. In addition to improving educational environments for its middle school students, the preferred solution allows the District to close three of its schools that are in the poorest condition, activates a vacant lot in the downtown area, and is reported to be more cost effective than the sequential design and construction option evaluated by the District and its consultants.

The two base repair options were not selected as they did not meet the educational needs of the District. “Option 4b” deferred new construction at the William R. Peck School site for 550 students was not selected because it increased the project cost. “Option 5” was carried for

comparison as well, and the cost estimate was updated. However, the District strongly believes that one larger school would not be in line with the Turn Around Plan and would present too many operational challenges for both the District and the City.

The District presented its proposed two-school solution to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on August 8, 2018. At that meeting, members of the FAS and the District discussed their mutual appreciation for the challenges the District is striving to overcome in its Turn Around Plan and the unique advantages as well as the challenges of funding and managing the proposed solution of two schools, the educational program and its focus on an equitable middle school experience for all students, community outreach and support for the proposed reconfiguration from K-8 schools to a middle school model, need for additional development of the site plans in particular how the buildings connect to the site, efficiencies of a single design adapted to each site, securing ownership, control, and exclusive use of each site, flexibility of academic clusters and possibility of mixed grade-level clusters, existing dual language programs and potential future expansion, on-going implementation of the Newcomer Program, the use of separate construction contracts for each school, media center location, staffing and curating of materials, teacher certifications, team teaching and launch of middle school STEM Academy, current use of the Holyoke High School and Dean Technical High School facilities, project schedule, energy rebates, capacity of the consultants to complete the work required for a Schematic Design submittal that incorporates two separate buildings, and the need for continued discussion regarding the financial capacity of the City of Holyoke and its readiness for funding the preferred two-school solution.

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

- 1) MSBA staff’s recommendation to the Board for approval of the District’s preferred solution is contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site. The MSBA will not sign a Project Funding Agreement and will not reimburse the District for any costs incurred beyond the Feasibility Study Agreement without all land use issues being resolved.
- 2) 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.
- 3) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget statement for MSBA review.
- 4) 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.
- 5) Subject to Board approval, the MSBA will participate in a project that includes spaces that meet MSBA guidelines, with the exception of variations previously agreed to by the MSBA. All proposed spaces will be reviewed during the Schematic Design phase.
- 6) As part of the Schematic Design phase, the District will work with the MSBA to determine a mutually agreeable methodology to differentiate eligible costs from ineligible costs.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the City of Holyoke be approved to proceed into Schematic Design for the construction of a new facility serving grades 6-8 on the Chestnut Street site and a new facility serving grades 6-8 to replace the William R. Peck School on the existing site, contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of each site.