

District: City of Westfield  
 School Name: Franklin Avenue Elementary School  
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic  
 Date: June 16, 2021

**Recommendation**

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the City of Westfield (the “District”), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School and the existing Abner Gibbs Elementary School on the site of the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School, contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s Preferred Schematic.

<b>District Information</b>	
District Name	City of Westfield
Elementary School(s)	Fort Meadow Early Childhood Center (PK) Abner Gibbs Elementary School (K-4) Franklin Avenue Elementary School (K-4) Highland Elementary School (K-4) Munger Hill Elementary School (K-4) Paper Mill Elementary School (K-4) Southampton Road School (K-4)
Middle School(s)	Westfield Intermediate School (5-6) Westfield Middle School (7-8)
High School(s)	Westfield Technical Academy (9-12) Westfield High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	Franklin Avenue Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	K-4
Year Opened	1953
Existing Square Footage	33,804
Additions	Window Replacement – 1992 Roof Replacement -- 2012
Acreage of Site	6 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>– Accessibility</li> </ul>
Original Design Capacity	300
2020-2021 Enrollment	191
Agreed Upon Enrollment	Study Enrollment includes the following configurations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 195 students in grades K-4 (Franklin Avenue Elementary Students)</li> </ul>

<b>District Information</b>	
	– 395 students in grades K-4 (Franklin Avenue Elementary School/Abner Gibbs Elementary School Students) (Preferred Schematic)
Enrollment Specifics	Contingent upon the Board’s approval of the Preferred Schematic, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 395 students in grades K-4, for a project that will serve grades PK-4.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	No

<b>MSBA Board Votes</b>	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	December 12, 2018
Invitation to Feasibility Study	December 11, 2019
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On June 23, 2021 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on October 27, 2021
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	71.24%

<b>Consultants</b>	
Owner’s Project Manager (the “OPM”)	P3
Designer	Caolo & Bieniek Associates, Inc.

## Discussion

The existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School is a 33,804 square foot facility located on a 6-acre site that currently serves students in grades K-4. The original school building was constructed in 1953, with upgrades and additions completed in 1992 and 2012.

The District’s Statement of Interest (“SOI”) identifies numerous deficiencies in the existing facility associated with outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; building envelope; accessibility issues; and existing spaces not conducive for delivering the District’s educational program.

As part of the Feasibility study, the MSBA accepted the District’s request to explore options that include consolidation of the students from the Franklin Avenue Elementary School and Abner Gibbs Elementary School resulting in the following study design enrollments: 195 students in grades K-4; and 395 students in grades K-4.

The existing Abner Gibbs Elementary School is a 32,136 square-foot facility located on a 1.7-acre site originally constructed in 1914. The facility currently serves students in grades K-4.

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, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied (10) preliminary options that include: (1) base repair option, (4) addition/renovation options and (5) new construction options as presented below.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
00	Base Repair for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 195 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$15.6 million.
01A	New Construction for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 195 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School site; with an estimated project cost of \$31.6 million.
01B	New Construction for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 195 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School site; with an estimated project cost of \$31.1 million.
01C	Addition/Renovation for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 195 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$27.1 million.
01D	Addition/Renovation for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 195 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$27.3 million.
02A	New Construction for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 395 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School site; with an estimated project cost of \$47.4million.
02B	New Construction for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 395 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School site; with an estimated project cost of \$48.0 million.
02C	Addition/Renovation for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 395 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$45.3 million.
02D	Addition/Renovation for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 395 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$46.3 million.
02E	New Construction for grades K-4 with an enrollment of 395 students (serving grades PK-4) at the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School site; with an estimated project cost of \$44.9 million.

As a result of this analysis, the District determined that “Option 00” is not considered a viable option because it does not meet the needs of the District’s educational program, would result in significant disruption to ongoing education during construction, and requires temporary modular classrooms to provide construction swing space. However, this option is included in the final evaluation of alternatives for cost comparison purposes only.

The District determined that “Options 01A and 01B” would not be considered for further evaluation because these options do not address the issues at the Abner Gibbs Elementary School, would result in significant disruption to ongoing education during construction, and the site constraints would result in a challenging construction site.

The District determined “Options 01C and 01D” would not be considered for further evaluation because these options do not address the issues at the Abner Gibbs Elementary School, would result in significant disruption to ongoing education during construction, the site constraints would result in a challenging construction site, and these options require temporary modular classrooms to provide construction swing space.

The District determined “Option 02A” would not be considered for further evaluation because this option would result in significant disruption to ongoing education during construction and the tight site constraints would result in a challenging construction site

The District determined “Options 02B and 02C” would not be considered for further evaluation because these options would result in significant disruption to ongoing education during construction, the site constraints would result in a challenging construction site, and these options requires temporary modular classrooms to provide construction swing space.

Subsequent to the evaluation of preliminary options, the District further developed “Option 02D”, which is now referred to as “Option 02D.1”. Additionally, “Option 02E” was further developed into (4) design alternatives referred to as “Options 02E.1, 02E.2, 02E.3, and 02E.4”.

MSBA staff and the District agreed to explore the following (6) options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below, including: (1) base repair option, (1) addition/renovation option, and (4) new construction options.

### 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 00: Base Repair	33,033	33,033 \$345/sq. ft.	N/A	\$4,784,079	\$16,189,697 \$490/sq. ft.	\$20,237,121
Option 02D.1: Addition/ Renovation	95,195	29,716 \$684/sq. ft.	65,479 \$466/sq. ft.	\$5,519,384	\$56,324,381 \$592/sq. ft.	\$66,462,770
Option 02E.1: New Construction	88,014	N/A	88,014 \$573/sq. ft.	\$5,248,049	\$55,664,573 \$632/sq. ft.	\$65,684,196
Option 02E.2: New Construction	88,995	N/A	88,995 \$545/sq. ft.	\$5,352,207	53,892,916 \$606/sq. ft.	\$63,593,641
Option 02E.3: New Construction	88,562	N/A	88,562 \$515/sq. ft.	\$5,751,525	\$51,353,246 \$580/sq. ft.	\$60,596,830
<b>Option 02E.4***: New Construction</b>	<b>88,227</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>88,227 \$506/sq. ft.</b>	<b>\$5,761,962</b>	<b>\$50,442,405 \$572/sq. ft.</b>	<b>\$59,552,038</b>

\* Marked up construction costs

\*\* Does not include construction contingency

\*\*\***District’s Preferred Schematic**

The District has selected “Option 02E.4” as its Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design. The District selected “Option 02E.4” because this option best meets the needs of the District’s educational program, limits the disruption to ongoing education during construction,

does not require phased move-in, maximizes opportunities for outdoor learning, and is the lowest estimated cost option explored.

“Option 00” was not considered a viable option by the District because this option does not support the desired enrollment and does not meet the educational needs and was only included for cost comparison purposes.

“Options 02D.1 and 02E.1” were not selected by the District because these options propose a larger building footprint resulting in limited outdoor space, result in increased area of exterior wall and roof surface adding construction costs for foundations and roofs, the design provided opportunity of energy loss over the life of the building, and would require phased move-in.

Although “Option 02E.2” includes many of the attributes proposed in the Preferred Schematic, this option was not selected by the District because this option results in a slightly larger building footprint contributing to increased costs and does not allow for completion of the new building in a single-phase building and would require phased building completion and move in.

“Option 02E.3” was not selected by the District because this 3-story building would require additional square footage and associated cost dedicated to vertical circulation. Additionally, the scale of this option would result in a disproportionate massing when compared to residential abutters.

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on May 19, 2021. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed the following items: site circulation; appreciation for the separation of the parking from the main entrance; clarification of the massing; the building’s civic presence and character of the school on Franklin Street; appreciation for the educational program; consideration for environmental concerns related to flooding associated with the nearby river and permeability of hard and softscapes; access to the building and outdoor play spaces for individuals with limited mobility; outdoor learning spaces; the location and means of egress relating to the maker spaces/STEAM rooms; appreciation of dedication to a licensed librarian in the Library/ Media Center; number of sinks in each classroom; consideration for flexible or retractable walls in adjoining classrooms; appreciation of the kiln room redesign to address potential chemical safety concerns; appreciation for the distribution of Special Education spaces; and, clarification regarding the design of the small group rooms.

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

- 1) The options investigated were sufficiently comprehensive in scope, the approach undertaken in this study was appropriate, and the District’s Preferred Schematic is reasonable and cost-effective and meets the needs identified by the District.
- 2) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget statement for MSBA review.
- 3) The District’s Special Education submission will be subject to final review and approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as part of the Schematic Design submittal, which is prior to executing a Project Scope and Budget Agreement.

- 4) Subject to Board approval, the MSBA will participate in a project that includes spaces that meet MSBA guidelines, except for variations previously agreed to by the MSBA. All proposed spaces will be reviewed during the Schematic Design phase.
- 5) 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 Westfield be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School and the existing Abner Gibbs Elementary School on the site of the existing Franklin Avenue Elementary School, contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site.