

District: Town of Dracut
 School Name: Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: June 11, 2025

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Town of Dracut (the “District”), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design for a project that proposes to consolidate the student population of the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School and Greenmont Avenue Elementary School and construct a new facility serving Kindergarten through grade 5, plus Pre-kindergarten, on the site of the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s Preferred Schematic.

If the District is approved by the Board to proceed into Schematic Design for the proposed project, the approval will be conditioned upon the District providing documentation that proves and confirms the District has legal title to the property for the proposed project. Documentation must be received and reviewed by the MSBA in advance of the District submitting a Schematic Design for review and consideration for a vote to approve a Project Scope and Budget Agreement and a Project Funding Agreement.

District Information	
District Name	Town of Dracut
Elementary School(s)	Brookside Elementary School (PreK-5) Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School (PreK-5) George H. Englesby Elementary School (K-5) Greenmont Avenue Elementary School (K-5)
Middle School(s)	Richardson Middle School (6-8)
High School(s)	Dracut High School
Priority School Name	Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	PK-5
Year Opened	1973
Existing Square Footage	90,020
Additions	1980 – Roof repair 1996 – Additional (3.17 acres) acquired by the Town
Acreage of Site	14.17 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: – Mechanical systems – Electrical systems – Plumbing systems – Building Envelope – 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.

District Information	
Original Design Capacity	740 students
2024-2025 Enrollment	565 students
Agreed Upon Enrollment	Study Enrollment includes the following configurations: – 580 students in Kindergarten through grade 5, plus Pre-kindergarten, at the Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School – 860 students in Kindergarten through grade 5, plus Kre-kindergarten, in a consolidated Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School and Greenmont Avenue Elementary School (Preferred Schematic)
Enrollment Specifics	Contingent upon the Board’s approval of the Preferred Schematic, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 860 students in Kindergarten through grade 5, plus Pre-kindergarten.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	March 2, 2022
Invitation to Feasibility Study	August 30, 2023
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On June 18, 2025 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on October 29, 2025
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	57.74%

Consultants	
Owner’s Project Manager (the “OPM”)	LiRo-Hill Corp (formally known as Hill International)
Designer	Mount Vernon Group Architects, Inc.

Discussion

The existing Joseph A. Cambell Elementary School is a 90,020 square-foot facility located on a 14.17-acre site, currently serving students in Pre-kindergarten grade through 5. The original building was constructed in 1973, with a roof repair in 1980 and additional land acquisition by the Town of Dracut in 1996.

The District’s Statement of Interest (“SOI”) identified numerous deficiencies in the existing facility associated with outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; the building envelope and roof; windows; and accessibility. The SOI also identified deficiencies in existing spaces that are deemed incapable of appropriately 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 options associated with the Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School and the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School.

The existing Greenmont Avenue Elementary School is a 32,320 square-foot facility located on a 2.21-acre site, currently serving students in Kindergarten through grade 5. The original building was constructed in 1935 and includes 4 modular classrooms that were added in 1995.

The District identified deficiencies in the existing Greenmont Avenue Elementary School facility associated with the exterior envelope (windows and roof); lack of accessibility compliance; and outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The District also identified deficiencies in existing spaces that are deemed incapable of appropriately delivering the District's educational program.

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 eleven (11) preliminary options that included two (2) base repair options, two (2) addition/renovation options, and seven (7) new construction options, as presented below.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
Option CB-X	Code upgrade for 580 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$40.9 million.
Option CB-1	Addition/ renovation for 580 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the existing Joseph Campbell Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$90.3 million.
Option CB-2	New construction for 580 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School site; with an estimated project cost of \$122.5 million.
Option CB-3	Consolidated addition/ renovation for 860 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$113.8 million.
Option CB-4	Consolidated new construction for 860 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School site; with an estimated project cost of \$147.5 million.
Option GM-X	Code upgrade for kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the existing Greenmont Avenue Elementary School; with an estimated project cost of \$12.8 million.
Option GM-2	New construction for 580 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the existing Greenmont Avenue Elementary School site; as this was not considered a viable option an estimated cost was not established.
Option BW-2	New construction for 580 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at 1365 Broadway Road site; with an estimated project cost of \$114.3 million.
Option BW-4	Consolidated new construction for 860 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at 1365 Broadway Road site; with an estimated project cost of \$143.3 million.
Option PR-2	New construction for 580 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at 384 Proprietors Road site; with an estimated project cost of \$117.8 million.

Option PR-4	Consolidated new construction for 860 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at 384 Proprietors Road site; with an estimated project cost of \$139.3 million.
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The District determined that “Option GM-2” would not be considered for further evaluation because this option does not support the District’s desire to consolidate the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School and Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School student population into a single building. Additionally, the District indicated this option would not meet the needs of the District’s educational program.

The District determined that “Option CB-2” would not be considered for further evaluation because this option does not support the District’s desire to consolidate the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School and Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School student population into a single building.

The District determined that “Option BW-2” and “Option BW-4” would not be considered for further evaluation due to multiple site-related constraints at the Broadway Road site. The site presents a limited build zone, which is further constrained by 100-foot and 200-foot regulatory buffer zones. Additionally, the presence of wetlands and a nearby river significantly limits site development and accessibility. Compliance with environmental protection regulations, including the Rivers Protection Act, would further restrict construction activities. Furthermore, the land features a substantial grade change of approximately 70 feet from front to back, complicating site design and increasing construction complexity and cost. Lastly, “Option BW-2” does not support the District’s desire to consolidate the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School and Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School student population into a single building.

The District determined that “Option PR-2” and “Option PR-4” would not be considered for further evaluation due to significant site development challenges and potential community impacts. The site features a substantial slope of approximately 75 feet from Brentwood Drive to the lower portion of the property. This grade change would necessitate extensive terracing and the construction of multiple retaining walls to accommodate buildings, access roads, and site infrastructure, thereby significantly increasing complexity and cost. Additionally, there is no existing access to the site. While access could potentially be established through a vacant lot within a nearby residential neighborhood, doing so may present logistical and community concerns. Furthermore, the site is heavily wooded and located within a residential area and development would require substantial tree clearing to accommodate buildings, parking, roadways, and other amenities. This would likely reduce the privacy of adjacent properties and could generate opposition from nearby residents. Lastly, “Option PR-2” does not support the District’s desire to consolidate the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School and Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School student population into a single building.

As a result of this analysis, the District determined that five (5) options would be considered for further evaluation. However, following the evaluation of preliminary options, the District determined that “Option CB-4” would not be considered for further evaluation due to the District’s findings related to site boundaries and newly developed information concerning wetlands within the area. Additionally, the District developed three (3) additional new construction options, as described below:

- “Option CB-4B”: Consolidated New Construction (U Scheme) designed for 860 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the north corner of the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School site;

- “Option CB-4C”: Consolidated New Construction (Y Scheme) designed for 860 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the north corner of the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School site; and
- “Option CB-4D”: Consolidated New Construction (Linear Scheme) designed for 860 students in kindergarten through grade 5, plus pre-kindergarten, at the southeast corner of the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School site.

MSBA staff and the District agreed to explore the following seven (7) final options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below, including: two (2) base repair options, two (2) addition/renovation options, and three (3) 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 CB-X: (Code Upgrade at the Joseph A. Campbell ES)	90,020	90,020 \$410/sq. ft.	N/A	\$5,221,139	\$42,139,869 \$468/sq. ft.	\$55,624,627
Option GM-X: (Code Upgrade at Greenmont Avenue ES)	32,319	32,319 \$495/sq. ft.	N/A	\$2,201,223	\$18,193,874 \$563/sq. ft.	\$24,015,989
Option CB-1: (Addition/Renovation for 580 students at Joseph A. Campbell ES)	134,120	90,020 \$649/sq. ft.	44,100 \$810/sq. ft.	\$18,984,820	\$113,102,500 \$843/sq. ft.	\$149,295,300
Option CB-3: (Consolidated Addition/Renovation for 860 students at Joseph A. Campbell ES)	163,980	90,020 \$641/sq. ft.	73,960 \$733/sq. ft.	\$19,004,229	\$130,974,976 \$799/sq. ft.	\$172,886,968
Option CB-4B (U Scheme): (Consolidated New Construction for 860 at Joseph A. Campbell ES)	165,100	N/A	165,100 \$730/sq. ft.	\$20,552,709	\$141,167,5222 \$855/sq. ft.	\$183,517,012
Option CB-4C (Y Scheme): (Consolidated New Construction for 860 at Joseph A. Campbell ES)	165,100	N/A	165,100 \$733/sq. ft.	\$20,281,570	\$141,263,240 \$856/sq. ft.	\$183,642,212
Option CB-4D (Linear Scheme): (Consolidated New Construction for 860 students at Joseph A. Campbell ES) ***	165,100	N/A	165,100 \$694/sq. ft.	\$25,937,494	\$140,584,585 \$852/sq. ft.	\$182,759,961

* Marked up construction costs

** Does not include construction contingency

***District's Preferred Schematic

The District has selected “Option CB-4D” as the Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design as the District determined that a scenario that proposes to consolidate the Joseph A. Cambell Elementary School and the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School into a single building best meets the needs of the District and their educational program. Additionally, the District determined this option anticipates providing the preferred grade-level neighborhoods and adjacencies that supports delivery of the District’s educational program. This option also provides additional fields that could provide separate play areas, for Pre- Kindergarten and Kindergarten students, and a desired distributed parking area that could potentially allow separate drop off and pick up areas for the Pre-Kindergarten population and grades Kindergarten through 5.

“Option CB-X” and “Option GM-X” were not selected by the District because these options do not support the District’s desire to consolidate the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School and Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School student population into a single building and do not meet the District’s educational program needs. Additionally, it is anticipated that both options would result in undesirable and significant disruption to ongoing education during construction.

“Option CB-1” was not selected by the District because this option does not accommodate the District’s desire to consolidate the Joseph A. Cambell Elementary School and the Greenmont Avenue Elementary School.

Although “Option CB-3” results in the desired consolidation of the student population of the Campbell ES and Greenmont ES, this option was not selected by the District because this option would not accommodate the necessary educational needs and required space adjacencies. Additionally, the District indicated that this option is anticipated to require a substantial amount of construction phasing, which is anticipated to not only extend the timeline of the project but is also anticipated to result in significant disruption to ongoing education during construction while providing limited swing space.

Although “Option CB-4B” and “Option CB-4C” result in the desired consolidation of the student population of the Campbell ES and Greenmont ES, these options were not selected by the District because, in order to allow roads and sidewalks to exist around the perimeter of the proposed buildings while respecting the site boundary, the classroom wings would have to be positioned in ways that would require wetlands replication. Additionally, these options were not selected by the District due to the close proximity to the existing school building that could potentially result in significant disruption to ongoing education during construction. Furthermore, both options are more expensive than “Option CB-4D” and would require an additional road to and from the wooded area within the site to allow for adequate queuing length, which is not desirable to the District.

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) May 14, 2025. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed the following items: the importance of professional development for staff in preparation for the transition to a new facility and opportunities for faculty feedback and engagement as the design progresses; considerations associated with the proposed consolidation of elementary schools including maintaining small neighborhood scale, sharing resources, and school culture; suggestions for incorporating the cultures of the District’s growing English Learner population into art and music curricula; clarification of media center staff responsibilities; appreciation for the District’s Educational Program; distribution of Special Education spaces and DESE review process; appreciation of the simple and efficient building layout; site constraints, topography, and building orientation; opportunities to further refine the site plan and proposed indoor/outdoor connections as the design progresses; interior connections and transparency

in the proposed academic neighborhoods; and the District's ongoing effort associated with confirming ownership of the proposed site.

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) As stated above, if the District is approved by the Board to proceed into Schematic Design for this proposed project, the approval will be conditioned upon the District providing documentation that proves and confirms the District has legal title to the property for the proposed project. Documentation must be received and reviewed by the MSBA in advance of the District submitting a Schematic Design for review and consideration for a vote to approve a Project Scope and Budget Agreement and a Project Funding Agreement. The MSBA will not accept a Schematic Design submittal until this condition has been satisfied.
- 3) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget statement for MSBA review.
- 4) 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.
- 5) 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.
- 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 Town of Dracut be approved to proceed into Schematic Design for a project that proposes to consolidate the student population of the existing Joseph A. Cambell Elementary School and Greenmont Avenue Elementary School and construct a new facility serving Kindergarten through grade 5, plus Pre-kindergarten, on the site of the existing Joseph A. Cambell Elementary School.

As stated above, if the District is approved by the MSBA Board of Directors to proceed into Schematic Design for this proposed project, the approval will be conditioned upon the District providing documentation that proves and confirms the District has legal title to the property for the proposed project. Documentation must be received and reviewed by the MSBA in advance of the District submitting a Schematic Design for review and consideration for a vote to approve a Project Scope and Budget Agreement and a Project Funding Agreement.