

District: Town of Belchertown
 School Name: Jabish Brook Middle School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: December 6, 2023

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Town of Belchertown (the “District”), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Jabish Brook Middle School with a new facility serving grades 6-8 on the existing school site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s Preferred Schematic.

District Information	
District Name	Town of Belchertown
Elementary Schools	Cold Spring (PK-K) Swift River Elementary School (1-3) Chestnut Hill Community School (4-6)
Middle Schools	Jabish Brook Middle School (7-8)
High Schools	Belchertown High School
Priority School Name	Jabish Brook Middle School
Type of School	Middle School
Grades Served	7-8
Year Opened	1964
Existing Square Footage	69,430
Additions	N/A
Acreage of Site	14.98 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanical systems • Electrical systems • Plumbing systems • 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.
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2022-2023 Enrollment	338 students
Agreed Upon Enrollment	Study Enrollment includes the following configurations: Enrollment 320 (grade configuration 7-8) Enrollment 475 (grade configuration 6-8) - Preferred Schematic
Enrollment Specifics	Contingent upon the Board’s approval of the Preferred Schematic, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 475 students in grades 6-8.

District Information	
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	April 14, 2021
Invitation to Feasibility Study	April 27, 2022
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On December 13, 2023 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on June 26, 2024
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	59.21%

Consultants	
Owner’s Project Manager (the “OPM”)	Skanska USA Building Inc.
Designer	Lamoureux Pagano Associates Architects, Inc.

Discussion

The existing Jabish Brook Middle School is a 69,430 square foot two-story building located on a 14.98-acre site that currently serves 342 students in grades 7-8.

The District’s Statement of Interest (“SOP”) identified numerous deficiencies in the existing facility associated with the exterior envelope (windows, doors, roof), lack of accessibility compliance, out-of-date and failing mechanical, electrical, plumbing technology, data, security and communication systems, lack of an automatic fire suppression system, lack of a functioning emergency generator, lack of thermal insulation in walls and roofs. Academic areas are outdated and/or undersized and do not support the District’s educational program. Additionally, poor acoustical separations between education spaces exist, as well as the presence of hazardous materials.

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. To ensure that the feasibility study was sufficiently broad in scope to address existing issues regarding outdated structures, MSBA agreed to include two study enrollments. The following enrollment options were considered:

- Enrollment 1: 320 students in grades 7-8
- Enrollment 2: 475 students in grades 6-8

Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied (14) preliminary options that include: (1) code upgrade option, (7) addition/renovation options, and (6) new construction options, as presented below.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
Option BR	Code Upgrade/Base Repair for grades 7-8 with an enrollment of 320 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$54-\$58 million.
Option AR-1 (320 students)	Addition/Renovation (2-story Wing) for grades 7-8 with an enrollment of 320 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$75.6-\$80.8 million.
Option AR-1 (475 students)	Addition/Renovation (3-story Wing, with 6 th Grade at front) for grades 6-8 with an enrollment of 475 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$88.8-\$94.9 million.
Option AR-2 (475 students)	Addition/Renovation (3-story Wing, with 6 th Grade at rear) for grades 6-8 with an enrollment of 475 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$91.8-\$98.2 million.
Option AR-3 (320 students)	Addition/Renovation (2-story Wing at rear) for grades 7-8 with an enrollment of 320 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$81.9-\$87.6 million.
Option AR-3 (475 students)	Addition/Renovation (3-story Wing at rear) for grades 6-8 with an enrollment of 475 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$91.2-\$97.5 million.
Option AR-4 (320 students)	Addition/Renovation (Addition of 2-story Wing to the existing academic wing) for grades 7-8 with an enrollment of 320 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$83-\$88.8 million.
Option AR-4 (475 students)	Addition/Renovation (Addition of 3-story Wing to the existing academic wing) for grades 6-8 with an enrollment of 475 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School; with an estimated total project cost of \$91.9-\$98.3 million.
Option NC-1 (320 students)	New construction for grades 7-8 with an enrollment of 320 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School site (at Softball Fields); with an estimated total project cost of \$73.8-\$79 million.
Option NC-1 (475 students)	New construction for grades 6-8 with an enrollment of 475 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School site (at Softball Fields); with an estimated total project cost of \$81.9-\$87.6 million.
Option NC-2 (320 students)	New construction (Separation of “lower” and “upper” school) for grades 7-8 with an enrollment of 320 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School site (at Baseball Fields); with an estimated total project cost of \$75.4-\$80.6 million.

Option NC-2 (475 students)	New construction (Separation of “lower” and “upper” school) for grades 6-8 with an enrollment of 475 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School site (at Baseball Fields); with an estimated total project cost of \$83.4-\$89.2 million.
Option NC-3 (320 students)	New construction (Cafeteria on the South) for grades 7-8 with an enrollment of 320 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School site; with an estimated total project cost of \$75.7-\$80.9 million.
Option NC-3 (475 students)	New construction (Cafeteria on the South) for grades 6-8 with an enrollment of 475 students at the existing Jabish Brook Middle School site; with an estimated total project cost of \$83.4-\$89.2 million.

As a result of this analysis, the District determined that the following options would not be considered for further evaluation:

The District determined that “Option AR-1 (320)”, “Option AR-1 (475)”, AR-2 (475)”, “Option AR-4 (320)”, and “Option AR-4 (475)” are not considered viable options because they do not meet the needs of the District’s educational program and anticipate resulting less desirable locations for the 6th grade addition, less desirable locations of multiple small additions and poor adjacencies and overall building organization, when compared to new construction. Additionally, the District anticipates these options would result in the most disruptive to school operations including student arrival and dismissal and would add significant scope and cost because of the need to include temporary modular classrooms, and the proximity of construction activities to the public. Furthermore, the District determined that all addition/renovation options referenced above lack improved site and facility layout and overall value when compared to the other options.

The District determined that “Options NC-3 (320)” and “Option NC-3 (475)” would not be considered for further evaluation because both options are very similar to “Options NC-2 (320)” and “NC-2 (475)” and any beneficial aspects from these two options will be incorporated into “NC-2 (320)” and “NC-2 (475)” that were selected to be further developed in the Preferred Schematic phase.

MSBA staff and the District agreed to explore the following (7) options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below, including: (1) code upgrade option, (2) addition/renovation options, 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 BR Base Repair (Grade 7-8, 320 students)	69,430	69,430 \$1,070/sq. ft.	N/A	\$0	\$74,297,737 \$1,070/sq. ft.	\$89,157,285

Option AR-3 Addition/Renovation - 2-story Wing at rear (Grade 7-8, 320 students)	97,000	21,555 \$745/sq. ft.	75,445 \$770/sq. ft.	\$26,968,067	\$101,094,942 \$1,042/sq. ft.	\$121,313,930
Option AR-3 Addition/Renovation - 3-story Wing at rear (Grade 6-8, 475 students)	119,000	21,555 \$745/sq. ft.	97,445 \$738/sq. ft.	\$25,739,226	\$113,736,584 \$956/sq. ft.	\$136,483,901
Option NC-1 New Construction - at Softball Fields (Grade 7-8, 320 students)	93,900	N/A	93,900 \$788/sq. ft.	\$14,607,914	\$88,560,737 \$943/sq. ft.	\$106,272,884
Option NC-1 New Construction - at Softball Fields (Grade 6-8, 475 students)	112,500	N/A	112,500 \$799/ sq. ft.	\$10,959,720	\$100,835,970 \$896/sq. ft.	\$121,002,948
Option NC-2 New Construction - Separation of “lower” and “upper” school (Grade 7-8, 320 students)	93,900	N/A	93,900 \$819/sq. ft.	\$12,804,842	\$89,713,637 \$955/sq. ft.	\$107,656,364
<i>Option NC-2 New Construction - Separation of “lower” and “upper” school (Grade 6-8, 475 students)</i>	<i>112,500</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>112,500 \$804/ sq. ft.</i>	<i>\$11,261,488</i>	<i>\$101,742,988 \$904/sq. ft.</i>	<i>\$122,091,586</i>

* *Marked up construction costs*

** *Does not include construction contingency*

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

The District has selected “Option NC-2”, as the Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design as the District determined that this option best meets the needs of the District’s educational program and supports the desired 6-8 grade structure. Additionally, the District determined that this option best aligns with the desired building organization and adjacencies with the highest potential to meet all of the programmatic requirements. Furthermore, the site plan in this option proposes to locate the building further away from the existing building, which is anticipated to result in less disruption to the students during construction.

“Option BR” was not selected by the District due to the fact that this option does not support the desired 6-8 grade configuration and would represent a significant cost to the district without any of the desired/required programmatic improvements.

“Option AR-3 (320)” was not selected by the District due to the fact that this option does not support the desired 6-8 grade configuration, anticipates considerable disruption to the students and staff in the

occupied building, and was estimated to be more costly than comparable new construction options due to existing building and site conditions. Additionally, the constraints associated with the existing building are anticipated to result in compromised and less desirable adjacencies.

“Option AR-3 (475)” was not selected by the District because this option is anticipated to result in considerable disruption to the students and staff in the occupied building and was estimated to more costly than comparable new construction options due to existing building and site conditions. Additionally, the constraints associated with the existing building are anticipated to result in compromised and less desirable adjacencies.

“Option NC-1 (320)” was not selected by the District because this option does not support the desired 6-8 grade configuration and was determined to result in a complex location in terms of topography, ledge excavation, building retaining walls and waterproofing/drainage. Additionally, this option results in the less desirable location of the gymnasium on the lower floor, and remotely located STEM spaces. Lastly, the proposed site plan does not accommodate an overlapping baseball field, which is a desired site program feature and the proposed location of the building for this option was the closest to the existing school, which would represent additional disruption and phasing complexities during construction.

“Option NC-1 (475)” was not selected by the District because this option was determined to also result in a complex location in terms of topography, ledge excavation, building retaining walls and waterproofing/drainage. Additionally, this option results in the less desirable location of the gymnasium on the lower floor, and remotely located STEM spaces. Lastly, the proposed site plan does not accommodate an overlapping baseball field, which is a desired site program feature and the proposed location of the building for this option was the closest to the existing school, which would represent additional disruption and phasing complexities during construction.

“Option NC-2 (320)” was not selected by the District because this option does not support the desired 6-8 grade configuration. Additionally, this option would require the relocation of vehicular circulation/parking and site utilities which were considered undesirable and costly.

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on November 8, 2023. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed the following items: appreciation of the District’s educational program; appreciation of the logical and compact building design; distribution of Special Education spaces and DESE submittal process; Science Technology and Engineering spaces and their conformance to MSBA guidelines; site circulation and user experience of entry to the building; approach to the proposed drop-off zone; building massing, site development and opportunities to further define outdoor learning spaces; opportunities to connect the educational program to outdoor spaces; and, proposed layout of the main lobby.

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 Town of Belchertown be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Jabish Brook Middle School with a new facility serving grades 6-8 on the existing school site.