

District: City of Chicopee
 School Name: Anna E. Barry Elementary School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: February 18, 2026

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the City of Chicopee (the “District”), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School with a new facility, serving students in Kindergarten through grade 5, plus Pre-kindergarten, on an alternate site adjacent to the Szetela Early Childhood Center. 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 this proposed project, and then is later considered by the Board for approval of a Project Scope and Budget Agreement and a Project Funding Agreement, the vote to approve a Project Scope and Budget Agreement and a Project Funding Agreement, will make the execution of the Project Funding Agreement contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site, unless this condition is met prior to such vote. The District’s preferred option requires a taking by eminent domain.

District Information	
District Name	City of Chicopee
Elementary Schools	Szetela Early Childhood Center (PK) Anna E. Barry Elementary School (K-5) Belcher Elementary School (PK-2) Bowe Elementary School (K-5) Bowie Elementary School (PK-5) Fairview Elementary School (PK-5) Gen John J. Stefanik Elementary School (K-5) Lambert-Lavoie Elementary School (K-5) Litwin Elementary School (K-5) Streiber Memorial School-ES (K-5)
Middle Schools	Bellamy Middle School (6-8) Dupont Middle (6-8)
High Schools	Chicopee Academy (6-12) Chicopee Comprehensive High School (9-12) Chicopee High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	Anna E. Barry Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	K-5
Year Opened	1963
Existing Square Footage	55,144
Additions	N/A
Acreage of Site	14 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: – Mechanical systems – Electrical systems – Plumbing systems

District Information	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Building envelope – Accessibility <p>In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported that the existing facility does not support the delivery of its educational program.</p>
Original Design Capacity	400 students
2025-2026 Enrollment	331 students
Agreed Upon Enrollment	340 students
Enrollment Specifics	The District and MSBA have mutually agreed upon a design enrollment of 340 students serving grades in kindergarten through grade 5, for a project that will serve grades PK-5.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	No

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	December 21, 2022
Invitation to Feasibility Study	February 28, 2024
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On February 25, 2026 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on August 26, 2026
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	80.00%

Consultants	
Owner’s Project Manager (the “OPM”)	Colliers Project Leaders NE, LLC
Designer	Caolo & Bieniek Associated Inc.

Discussion

The existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School is a 55,144 square foot facility located on a 14-acre site, currently serving students in Kindergarten through grade 5. The original building was constructed in 1963 and has not undergone any major additions or renovations. A subsequent improvement occurred with a roof replacement installed in 2003.

The District’s Statement of Interest (“SOI”) identified numerous deficiencies in the existing facility related to outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; building envelope; roof; windows; and accessibility issues. The SOI also identified deficiencies in existing spaces and notes that the spaces within the facility are not conducive to 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 incorporating input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied twelve (12) preliminary options that included: one (1) code upgrade option at the existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School, one (1) code upgrade option at the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center (included for cost comparison purposes only), three (3) addition/renovation options, and seven (7) new construction options. The invitation for the Anna E. Barry Elementary School did not include a potential consolidation with the Szetela Early Childhood Center; therefore, MSBA participation in

options that include the Szetela Early Childhood Center would be limited to the scope for the replacement of the Anna E. Barry Elementary School. The following is a detailed list of the preliminary options considered.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
Option A1	Code upgrade/base repair at the existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School with an estimated total construction cost of \$33.6 million and an estimated total project cost of \$44.6 million.
Option A2	Addition and renovation of the existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only), which proposes retaining a portion of the east academic classroom wing and adding an additional academic wing perpendicular to the existing facility. This option has an estimated total construction cost of \$82.4 million and an estimated total project cost of \$109.9 million.
Option A3	New construction (2-story with separated academic and community-shared programs) designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only), at the southeast corner of existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School site; with an estimated total construction cost of \$87.5 million and an estimated total project cost of \$116.5 million.
Option A4	New construction (3-story academic wing with a separate 1-story wing for community-shared programs) designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only), at the southeast corner of the existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School site; with an estimated total construction cost of \$86.2 million and an estimated total project cost of \$114.8 million.
Option B1	New construction (2-story with a centralized gymnasium) designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only), located on a shared site with the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center; with an estimated total construction cost of \$86.8 million and an estimated total project cost of \$114.0 million.
Option B2	New construction (3-story with a centralized gymnasium with an adjacent outdoor courtyard) designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only), located on a shared site with the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center; with an estimated total construction cost of \$84.5 million and an estimated total project cost of \$111.1 million.
Option B3	New construction (3-story with a centralized outdoor courtyard and two separate academic wings) designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only), located on a shared site with the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center; with an estimated total construction cost of \$84.5 million and an estimated total project cost of \$111.1 million.
Option B4	New construction (2-story with a separate wing for community-shared programs with two separate academic wings) designed for 340 students in

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
	Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only), located on a shared site with the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center; with an estimated total construction cost of \$82.9 million and an estimated total project cost of \$108.9 million.
Option C1	Code upgrade/base repair (focusing on addressing current issues of accessibility) at the existing Szetela Early Educational Center for Pre-kindergarten students; with an estimated total project cost of \$25.2 million. (Included for cost comparison purposes only.)
Option D1	Addition and renovation of the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center facility designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the entire Pre-kindergarten student population from the existing Szetela school), which proposes to retain the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center programs as a separate wing to a larger 2-story new construction addition with three distinct academic wings, with shared outdoor classroom spaces in between. This option has an estimated total construction cost of \$118.8 million and an estimated total project cost of \$155.5 million.
Option D2	Addition and renovation of the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the entire Pre-Kindergarten student populations from the existing Szetela school), which proposes to retain the existing Szetela Early Childhood Center programs as a separate wing to a larger 3-story L-shape new construction addition with a centralized gymnasium. This option has an estimated total construction cost of \$117.6 million and an estimated total project cost of \$154.0 million.
Option D3	New construction (2-story with a separate wing for community-shared programs with two separate academic wings for each school) designed for 340 students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (plus the entire Pre-kindergarten student population from the existing Szetela school), located on the existing footprint of the Szetela Early Childhood Center; with an estimated total construction cost of \$117.7 million and an estimated total project cost of \$154.2 million.

As a result of this analysis, the District determined that “Option A3” would not be considered for further evaluation primarily due to the constraints associated with the existing site. Additionally, the District determined that the proposed building footprint for this option would require a significant portion of the site, resulting in limited opportunities for future expansion.

The District determined that “Option B1” would not be considered for further evaluation primarily because the proposed building footprint would result in a proximity too close to the adjacent property lines, which the District found to be undesirable. Additionally, the District determined that certain programmatic spaces, such as the Music Classroom, Media Center, Resource Rooms and other Special Education support spaces, would likely result in limited access to natural light.

Although “Option B2” results in the District’s desired academic classroom wing organization, the District determined this option would not be considered for further evaluation primarily because the proposed building massing would not likely define the outdoor program areas as well as the other options considered. Additionally, it is anticipated that this option would allocate a significant portion

of the budget dedicated to fencing and other landscaping strategies to define these outdoor spaces, which the District considered to be less efficient. Furthermore, the District determined that an increased number of parking spaces proposed behind the new building would create challenges for staff, due to the increased walking distance to the building entrance.

The District determined that “Option B4” would not be considered for further evaluation because the proposed building layout of this option could potentially result in extended travel distances for students between academic programs and the Cafeteria, which was considered unfavorable by the District. Additionally, “Option B4” was anticipated to result in less advantageous outdoor spaces, parking distribution, program adjacencies, and daylighting when compared to “Option B3”.

The District determined that “Option C1” would not be considered for further evaluation because this option was included primarily for cost comparison purposes to inform the District of the impacts associated with bringing the Szetela Early Childhood Center facility up to code.

Additionally, the District determined that “Option D1” and “Option D2” would not be considered for further evaluation primarily because these options include the entire Pre-kindergarten student population when combined with the Szetela Early Childhood Center which results in the largest proposed building and the least cost-effective option for the District. Additionally, the District determined that the pre-kindergarten classroom proportions, and lack of fully-integrated extended learning spaces within neighborhoods inherent with the existing conditions, was considered unfavorable.

MSBA staff and the District agreed to explore the following five (5) options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below, including: one (1) code upgrade option, one (1) addition/renovation option, 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 A1: (Code Upgrade at the Barry Elementary School)	55,144	55,144 \$631/sq. ft.	N/A	\$8,039,848	\$42,813,752 \$776/sq. ft.	\$53,517,190
Option A2: (Addition/ Renovation at the existing Barry Elementary)	95,689	26,782 \$631/sq. ft.	68,907 \$854/sq. ft.	\$21,824,286	\$97,546,851 \$1,020/sq. ft.	\$124,859,970
Option A4: (New Construction at the existing Barry Elementary School site)	97,107	N/A	97,107 \$830/sq. ft.	\$22,199,952	\$102,816,774 \$1,059/sq. ft.	\$125,520,967

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
<i>Option B3*** (New Construction at the Szetela Early Childhood Center site)</i>	96,461	N/A	96,461 \$823/sq. ft.	\$20,036,154	\$99,437,962 \$1,031/sq. ft.	\$124,297,453
Option D3: (New Construction Consolidation at the Szetela Early Childhood Center site)	125,643	N/A	125,643 \$763/sq. ft.	\$19,447,468	\$115,370,019 \$918/sq. ft.	\$144,212,524

* Marked up construction costs

** Does not include construction contingency

****District's Preferred Schematic*

The District has selected “Option B3” as its Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design, as the District determined that this option best meets the needs of the District’s educational program.

Additionally, the District indicated that this option is anticipated to improve traffic flow in the adjacent neighborhood and on the site by removing queued cars from residential streets and providing appropriate separation among parent vehicles, buses, and pedestrians, which is desired by the District. The District also indicated that traffic flow and pedestrian access along Granby Road is anticipated to improve with the introduction of traffic-calming measures and the addition of sidewalks along a portion on the east side of Granby Road. Lastly, the District indicated that locating the proposed building on an alternate site provides sufficient land for the City to plan for future expansion of other school facilities.

“Option A1” was not selected by the District primarily because the existing facility consists of insufficient square footage to meet the spatial needs of the District’s design enrollment and educational program. The District also indicated that this option would not allow for desired spatial adjacencies and would likely result in significant and undesirable disruption to ongoing education during the construction phase.

“Option A2” and “Option A4” were not selected by the District primarily due to existing site constraints and the existing school occupying a single parcel of land shared with Garrity Grove Park, which is designated as protected open space under Article 97. The District identified that segregating a portion of this parcel for school use would require legislative action and a proposed land swap through the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, which was not desirable. Furthermore, these options would require the acquisition of four residential properties, resulting in the displacement of at least four families, which was highly unfavorable to the District. Conversely, the proposed land acquisition by eminent domain at the Szetela Early Education Center site would not include residential properties. Lastly, the additional cost and schedule impact of Article 97 and the land acquisition process when compared to new construction on an alternate site were considered undesirable to the District.

Although “Option D3” aligns with the District’s educational program, this option was not selected by the District primarily because this option includes a proposed 300 student Pre-kindergarten population when combined with the Szetela Early Childhood Center which results in the largest proposed building and the least cost-effective option for the District.

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on January 14, 2026. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed the following: community outreach and support as well as funding strategies for the proposed project; appreciation of the Educational Program and clarification regarding grade level instruction; scheduling considerations as it relates to Science and Social Studies to allow sufficient time for student activities and exploration; ongoing review of class schedules across the District; the relationship between the existing Szetela Early Education Center and the proposed building; interior circulation, visual connections and opportunities for further development around the gymnasium; opportunities for outdoor learning and further development of the courtyard area; program and class size goals; discussion of MSBA space guidelines; and, DESE review of Special Education spaces in the Schematic Design phase.

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 Chicopee be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Anna E. Barry Elementary School with a new facility serving students in Kindergarten through grade 5, plus the Pre-kindergarten student population from the Barry neighborhood only, on an alternate site adjacent to the Szetela Early Childcare Center.

If the District is approved by the Board to proceed into Schematic Design for this proposed project, and then is later considered by the Board for approval of a Project Scope and Budget Agreement and a Project Funding Agreement, the vote to approve a Project Scope and Budget Agreement and a Project Funding Agreement, will make the execution of the Project Funding Agreement contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site, unless this condition is met prior to such vote. The District’s preferred option requires a taking by eminent domain.