

District: City of Lawrence  
 School Name: Francis M. Leahy Elementary School  
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic  
 Date: December 9, 2020

**Recommendation**

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the City of Lawrence (the “District”), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Francis M. Leahy Elementary School with a new facility serving students in grades K-8 on the existing site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s Preferred Schematic.

<b>District Information</b>	
District Name	City of Lawrence
Elementary School(s)	Community Day Arlington (K-4) Edward F. Parthum (PK-3) Francis M. Leahy (1-5) Gerard A. Guilmette (1-4) James F. Hennessey (PK-2) John Breen School (PK-K) John K. Tarbox (1-5) Lawlor Early Childhood Center (K) Lawrence Family Public Academy (PK-K) Oliver Partnership School (1-5) Robert Frost (K-3) Rollins Early Childhood Center (PK-K) South Lawrence East Elementary School (1-5)
Middle School(s)	Alexander B. Bruce (3-8) Arlington Middle School (5-8) Emily G. Wetherbee (K-8) Frost Middle School (5-8) Guilmette Middle School (5-8) Parthum Middle School (5-8) Spark Academy (6-8) UP Academy Leonard Middle School (6-8) UP Academy Oliver Middle School (6-8)
High School(s)	High School Learning Center (9-12) Lawrence High School (9-12) School for Exceptional Studies (1-12)
Priority School Name	Francis M. Leahy Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	1-5
Year Opened	1922
Existing Square Footage	41,800
Additions	N/A
Acreage of Site	1.42 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas:

<b>District Information</b>	
	<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>- Windows</li> <li>- Roof</li> <li>- Accessibility</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported that the existing facility does not support the delivery of its educational program as well as existing and projected overcrowding.</p>
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2019-2020 Enrollment	462
Agreed Upon Enrollment	Study Enrollment includes the following configurations: Enrollment 1,000 (grade configuration K-8) (Preferred Schematic) Enrollment 500 (grade configuration 1-5)
Enrollment Specifics	Contingent upon the Board's approval of the Preferred Schematic, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 1,000 students in grades K-8.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

<b>MSBA Board Votes</b>	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	December 13, 2017
Invitation to Feasibility Study	February 13, 2019
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On December 16, 2020 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on April 14, 2021
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	80.00%

<b>Consultants</b>	
Owner's Project Manager (the "OPM")	Atlantic Construction and Management Inc.
Designer	Mount Vernon Group Architects, Inc.

## **Discussion**

Constructed in 1922, the existing Francis M. Leahy Elementary School is a 41,800 square foot building that currently houses grades 1-5. The building sits on 1.42 acres in the north central section of the City of Lawrence, surrounded by the Spicket River to the south and residences to the north, east and west.

The District identified numerous deficiencies in the Statement of Interest ("SOI") that are associated with structural integrity; mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems; envelope,

roofing and windows beyond their usable lifespan; accessibility constraints; and insufficient space to deliver its educational program. The District also identified overcrowding in the current facility.

As part of the Feasibility Study, the MSBA mutually agreed with the District to explore the following two enrollment options: 500 students in grades 1-5 (existing configuration), and 1,000 students in grades K-8.

Working 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 five (5) preliminary options that included one (1) code upgrade option, two (2) addition/renovation configurations, and two (2) new construction options. The following is a detailed list of the preliminary options considered.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Description of Preliminary Options</b>
1.1	Code Upgrade (500 students)
1.2	Addition & Renovation for grades 1-5 (500 students)
1.3	New Construction for grades 1-5 (500 students)
2.1	Addition & Renovation for grades K-8 (1,000 students)
2.2	New Construction for grades K-8 (1,000 students)

Upon further review, MSBA staff and the District agreed to further develop and consider each of these five (5) options in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below.

**Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing for Final Evaluation of Options**

<b>Option (Description)</b>	<b>Total Gross Square Feet</b>	<b>Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sf)</b>	<b>Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sf)</b>	<b>Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost*</b>	<b>Estimated Total Construction ** (cost*/sf)</b>	<b>Estimated Total Project Costs</b>
Option 1.1: Code Upgrade	45,220	41,800 \$341/sf	3,420 \$1,097/sf	\$2,590,580	\$20,615,717 \$456/sf	\$25,769,625
Option 1.2: Add/Reno for 500 students	89,650	41,800 \$365/sf	47,850 \$443/sf	\$2,586,118	\$39,013,460 \$435/sf	\$48,766,620
Option 1.3: New Construction for 500 students	83,410	n/a	83,410 \$469/sf	\$3,570,845	\$42,660,107 \$511/sf	\$53,325,280
Option 2.1: Add Reno for 1,000 students	169,751	41,800 \$373/sf	127,951 \$547/sf	\$2,738,775	\$88,280,406 \$520/sf	\$110,350,436
<b>Option 2.2: New Construction for 1,000 students***</b>	<b>173,415</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>173,415 \$431/sf</b>	<b>\$3,459,425</b>	<b>\$78,258,517 \$451/sf</b>	<b>\$97,606,507</b>

\* Marked up construction costs  
 \*\* Does not include construction contingency  
 \*\*\*District's Preferred Schematic

The District has selected “Option 2.2” as the Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design. The District selected “Option 2.2” because it meets the needs of the District’s Educational Program and serves the desired number of students in an “Educational Complex” model that has worked well in several other schools in the District. By combining grades K-8 in a single building, the District is able to provide a small school feel and distinct administrations for grades K-5 and 6-8 while also benefitting from spatial efficiencies (shared gymnasium, cafeteria, and other public spaces) and allowing for emotional and academic continuity as students progress through the grade levels.

“Option 1.1” was not selected because the District determined it would not provide the additional space needed to address overcrowding issues in the current facility.

“Option 1.2” and “Option 1.3” were not selected because the District determined that these options would not support the desired number of students and would not allow for the consolidation in a single building that would include Kindergarten, the Francis M. Leahy Elementary School (grades 1-5) and Up Academy Leonard (grades 6-8).

Although “Option 2.1” meets the needs of the District’s Educational Program, it was not selected because the District determined that this option is more costly than “Option 2.2.”

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on November 18, 2020. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed appreciation for the work associated with community outreach and the educational program, the proposed project’s effective separation of the lower and upper grades, the importance of distributing Special Education spaces throughout the building, the number of sinks in elementary grade classrooms to support project-based learning, building access and egress, appreciation for the incorporation of daylighting and the overall architectural plan, appreciation for the thoughtful approach to outdoor play space, variations to the MSBA space summary guidelines, and square footage comparisons to another MSBA project on a tight urban site. Members of the FAS also encouraged the District and its consultants to further consider the entryway design, and to consider involving maintenance staff in rooftop and courtyard planning and design.

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 Lawrence be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Francis M. Leahy Elementary School with a new facility serving students in grades K-8 on the existing site.