

## Memorandum

To: Framingham City Council  
From: Joel G. Seeley  
Project: Feasibility Study for the Fuller Middle School  
Re: Feasibility Study Progress Information Packet  
Distribution: School Building Committee, JLA, (MF)

Date: 1/30/2018  
Project No.: 17050

---

This memorandum provides a brief summary of the Fuller Middle School Feasibility Study work performed to date and a look forward to upcoming steps.

Statement of Interest (SOI) – a document defining the need for a Feasibility Study, submitted to the MSBA by the School Committee and Board of Selectmen. The SOI described the physical deficiencies of the Fuller Middle School and was submitted to MSBA in 2013, 2014 and 2015. The MSBA approved the SOI in 2016. The SOI can be found at <https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/Page/6611>.

School Building Committee (SBC) – the committee formed in accordance with MSBA requirements to oversee the study and project on behalf of the community. The SBC has met approximately every two weeks since last fall and their meeting minutes can be found at <https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/Page/3002>. The committee membership is defined by MSBA's enabling legislation, CMR 963, an excerpt is attached.

Feasibility Study – a study consisting of an analysis of the existing conditions of the Fuller School, development of an educational program based upon an agreed upon design enrollment, and the development of cost effective, sustainable and educationally appropriate solutions following the prescribed procedures and requirements of the MSBA. Framingham and the MSBA entered into a Feasibility Study Agreement (FSA) in February 2017. The executed FSA can be found at <https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/Page/6611>

Owner's Project Manager – Symmes Maini and McKee Associates, hired June 27, 2017 to manage the project.

Architect – Jonathan Levi Architects, hired September 27, 2017 to design the project.

Design Enrollment – the student capacity that the school project is to be designed to accommodate. The City and MSBA have agreed to a design enrollment of 630 grades 6-8 students.

Educational Program – the document describing the instructional delivery of the school and the types and sizes of spaces required to meet that instructional delivery. The educational program can be found at <https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/Page/6599>. Fuller Middle School is in its fourth year of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). The school project is to be designed to facilitate and move this instruction forward utilizing the following design principles:

- Transdisciplinary Instruction – Connect multiple content areas by linking concepts and skills with a real-world context. Encourage and support Inquiry.

- Personalized and Collaborative Learning – Teach students to take charge of their own learning with “hands-on” projects that can correspond with their interests and needs.
- Whole Child, Whole Community – Actively support emotional and social foundations to improve academic success.
- Visible Learning – Inspire students to learn from each other through student collaboration, presentations, demonstrations, and ongoing works-in-progress.
- Community and Civic Hub – Continue existing use as central location for meetings, adult learning, school productions and recreational activities.
- Adaptability – This building will need to meet Framingham’s future needs, so must be versatile enough to accommodate different teaching methods, including traditional ones.

Preliminary Design Program (PDP) - the first of three submissions to the MSBA, submitted to the MSBA on December 20, 2017, which included an analysis of the existing conditions, the educational program, and preliminary design solutions and cost estimates. The full PDP submission can be found at <https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/Page/6602>. Eight options were included in the PDP submission and the following four were selected to be further refined. The four options are:



#### Option A – Renovations and Additions

This option renovates the existing auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria and constructs a new two-story classroom/administration wing along the southeast frontal boundary of the site. Swing space is required during construction.



#### Option B.2 – New Construction – Tree Branch Plan

This option constructs an all new school, including auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria. The two-story academic wings or “branches” emanate from a linear learning commons/cafeeteria core and are terminated by a medium size collaboration space which also serves for vertical circulation, connecting the first and second floors into one academic community. No swing space is required during construction.



**Option C.2 – New Construction – Folded Hands Plan**

All new three-story construction consisting of a convertible learning commons/cafeteria at the core surrounded by collaboration balconies fronting a perimeter of classrooms and new gymnasium. No swing space is required during construction. The architects are currently analyzing this option to include a new auditorium as well.



**Option D – Construction – Butterfly Plan**

All new school consisting of two-story classroom wings terminated by medium size collaboration spaces and connecting to the convertible learning commons/cafeteria and new gymnasium. No swing space is required during construction. The architects are currently analyzing this option to include a new auditorium as well.

The total project cost to Framingham for just repairing the Fuller Middle School (Option 0.0) is estimated to be \$131 million dollars. This Option does not have any educational improvements and is not eligible for a reimbursement grant from the MSBA.

The cost to Framingham for the Renovation and Addition School Options range from \$62 to \$72 million dollars after the MSBA grant. The cost to Framingham for the New School Options range from \$48 to \$55 million dollars after the MSBA grant. The cost for swing space is not eligible for a reimbursement grant from the MSBA.

	Repair Only	Renovation Only	Renovation and Addition Options			New Construction Options		
	0.0	0.1	A	B.1	C.1	B.2	C.2	D
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$125M	\$123M	\$114M	\$116M	\$107M	\$95M	\$89M	\$89M
<b>Swing Space Cost</b>	\$6M	\$6M	\$6M	\$6M	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>MSBA Share</b>	\$0	\$53M	\$49M	\$50M	\$45M	\$40M	\$41M	\$41M
<b>Framingham Share</b>	<b>\$131M</b>	<b>\$76M</b>	<b>\$71M</b>	<b>\$72M</b>	<b>\$62M</b>	<b>\$55M</b>	<b>\$48M</b>	<b>\$48M</b>

\*costs are approximate and will be refined as the Feasibility Study progress

To: Framingham City Council  
Date: 1/30/2018  
Page: 4

---

Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) – the second submission to MSBA, scheduled for May 9, 2018. The PSR submission is to provide further analysis of the four options and culminate with the selection of a single preferred option. The MSBA Board of Directors will review and approve the submission and authorize the community to proceed into the Schematic Design Phase.

Schematic Design Phase (SD) – the final submission to MSBA, scheduled for September 12, 2018. The SD submission is to define all aspects of the preferred project including site, building, and systems design; sustainability; schedule; and cost. The MSBA Board of Directors will review and approve the submission at their October 31, 2018 meeting. The community will be required to appropriate the project funding and if required, vote to exclude the debt at a ballot vote within 120 days of the Board vote.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – some of the more frequently asked questions about this project have been answered in an FAQ sheet. The FAQ can be found at <https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/Page/6604> and a copy is attached.

## **Fuller Middle School Framingham Public Schools**

### **FAQs**

#### **1. Why are we performing a Feasibility Study?**

The 60 year old Fuller Middle School has served the community well. The school has reached a point that it no longer meets today's building codes, has structural deficiencies, inefficient and inoperable systems and does not adequately support our educational curriculum. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), the state agency charged with overseeing and supporting school improvement projects, has visited the school and agrees. The Feasibility Study is MSBA's initial step in partnering with the City of Framingham to investigate these conditions and develop a cost effective, sustainable and educationally appropriate solution to the aging Fuller Middle School. The School Building Committee has no preconceived solutions and they, over the last year have been investigating renovation, renovation and addition, and new construction options, all of which are required by the MSBA process. The MSBA process is rigorous and transparent, and with the approval of the MSBA, the state will provide a grant to support the cost of the project.

#### **2. Is the current Fuller School safe?**

While the Fuller building has reached the end of its useful life, it remains safe for student occupancy and the district is closely monitoring the building to ensure that it continues to be safe for occupancy. Indoor air quality is always monitored, especially in those areas that have visible signs of water infiltration or other signs of deterioration. If an area of concern is identified, the district will relocate students and staff until the problem has been addressed. In 2015, the roof over the main classroom wing of the building (approximately 30% of the school's entire roof surface) was repaired by the manufacturer to extend its life expectancy until construction of the new building is completed. Furthermore, the district engaged a structural engineer to determine the integrity of the building's foundation and flooring. As a result, the district installed temporary structural supports in identified areas in 2016, primarily in the maintenance services garage where vehicles are stored. All of the building's mechanical systems are monitored, and the air handling system that ventilates the building has been set to run for extended periods of time to ensure the air in the building is satisfactory at all times. Many of these conditions have existed for some time at the Fuller building, and the district has responded appropriately to these challenges and will continue to do so as needed. Based on our experience and ongoing efforts, we are confident we can continue to maintain the Fuller building in a safe and secure manner until a new building is constructed under the proposed multi-year schedule.

#### **3. Will ongoing use of Fuller Middle School be impacted during construction of the project?**

Yes, however if a New Construction Option is selected, the distance between construction activity and the day-to-day functions of the existing school will be adequate to ensure safety in an effort to minimize any disruption of the educational process. A fenced-off construction zone, with dedicated construction and emergency vehicles access, will be constantly monitored for safety. The existing school building will be monitored daily for air quality while

construction is ongoing. As part of the construction building specifications, there will also be dust control measures put in place. As with any construction project of this magnitude, there will be noise and vibration. Those activities will be coordinated on the construction schedule so that the impact to the students and staff is minimized. If a Renovation and Addition Option is chosen, the construction will be phased and isolated to minimize impact on teaching and learning. This option would require the temporary relocation of students in order to ensure their safety and security. Please note that the proposed construction area for a new school option would be situated in such a way that any construction would be directly adjacent to sections of both Fuller and Farley schools where the classrooms would be effectively buffered by the non-classroom spaces in each building such as gymnasiums, cafeteria and auditorium. It is anticipated that any temporary parking would be located in the current field area behind Fuller, and the field activities for the school would be relocated to the adjacent Galvani field complex.

4. How long has the Feasibility Study been underway?

Our initial application for acceptance into the MSBA process commenced over 5 years ago in November 2013 with the submission of the Statement of Interest (SOI) for the Fuller Middle School to the MSBA by the Selectmen and School Committee. After receiving a deferral from MSBA in 2013 and 2014, the district filed a third SOI in 2015, which the MSBA reviewed and approved in May 2016 agreeing that a Feasibility Study should be undertaken on the Fuller Middle School. The City and the MSBA executed an agreement for the Feasibility Study in February 2017, which has been overseen by the MSBA required School Building Committee for the past year.

5. What is the role of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)

The MSBA is the state authority that administers and funds a program of grants for Massachusetts school projects. The MSBA mandates a multi-step rigorous study and approval process encompassed within the Feasibility Study and will provide Framingham a grant of up to 57.05% of the eligible Feasibility Study and eligible design and construction costs plus incentives.

6. What options have been studied?

Eight design alternatives were discussed and evaluated over the course of ten (10) School Building Committee meetings, several Academic Leadership Team meetings, and two (2) community forums. The committee focused on the following criteria when developing the options: educational benefits, cost, minimal disruption during construction, sustainability, community access, and transportation. The eight design alternatives explored were:

- Option 0.0 – Repair Only
- Option 0.1 – Renovation Only
- Option A – Renovations and Additions
- Option B.1 – Renovations and Additions – Tree Branch Plan
- Option B.2 – New Construction – Tree Branch Plan
- Option C.1 – Renovations and Additions – Folded Hands Plan
- Option C.2 – New Construction – Folded Hands Plan
- Option D – Construction – Butterfly Plan



Currently, the School Building Committee, as of January 2018 has narrowed the options down to four options, with the final selection scheduled to be made by May 2018.

The four are:

- Option A – Renovations and Additions

This option renovates the existing auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria and constructs a new two-story classroom/administration wing along the southeast frontal boundary of the site. Swing space is required during construction.

- Option B.2 – New Construction – Tree Branch Plan

This option constructs an all new school, including auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria. The two-story academic wings or “branches” emanate from a linear learning commons/cafeteria core and are terminated by a medium size collaboration space which also serves for vertical circulation, connecting the first and second floors into one academic community. No swing space is required during construction.

- Option C.2 – New Construction – Folded Hands Plan

All new three-story construction consisting of a convertible learning commons/cafeteria at the core surrounded by collaboration balconies fronting a perimeter of classrooms and new gymnasium. No swing space is required during construction.

- Option D – Construction – Butterfly Plan

All new school consisting of two-story classroom wings terminated by medium size collaboration spaces and connecting to the convertible learning commons/cafeteria and new gymnasium. No swing space is required during construction.

7. What is the academic focus of the Fuller School? Is it a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics School, or will all subjects be covered?

Fuller Middle School will continue to teach all core academic subjects. STEAM is primarily a way to teach how all the subjects relate to each other. Rather than the traditional “Sage on the Stage” model wherein a teacher does the talking and the students absorb the information, STEAM is more collaborative and project based. With an emphasis on project-based learning, students will be provided more opportunities to explore concepts and demonstrate their learning through hands-on, real-world applications. Whenever possible, these projects will be interdisciplinary. At all times, instructional units will continue to be aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

8. Why not just repair the Fuller School?

The repair-only option consisting of renovations to meet the building code, addressing the structural deficiencies and replacing the aged existing building systems is significantly more costly to the City than new construction or comprehensive renovation and additions, due to the size of the existing building. The repair-only option makes no educational improvements, therefore is not eligible for a reimbursement grant from the MSBA and would be solely funded by Framingham at a cost of \$131 million.

9. Why not just move the students into the Farley Building?

The Farley building has not functioned as a public school for over 23 years and, in that time, its occupant (MassBay Community College) has altered the interior of the building to suit its own needs. To reoccupy Farley would require significant renovation to reclaim the interior spaces for classrooms. Furthermore, the district would need to determine the extent of the upgrades necessary for the school to become usable as a middle school again, including lab space, fire suppression, life safety and handicap access. For example, the study of Farley’s sister-school, the Barbieri School, would indicate that the current bathroom facilities at Farley do not meet current handicap code. It should be noted that the entire cost to reopen Farley as a school would be at the expense of the City with no assistance from MSBA since all costs for creating “swing space” (space needed to house students temporarily during construction) are not reimbursable and must be totally borne by the City.

10. What will the Options cost?

The total project cost to Framingham for just repairing the Fuller Middle School (Option 0.0) is estimated to be \$131 million dollars. This Option does not have any educational improvements and is not eligible for a reimbursement grant from the MSBA.

The cost to Framingham for the Renovation and Addition School Options range from \$62 to \$72 million dollars after the MSBA grant. The cost to Framingham for the New School Options range from \$48 to \$55 million dollars after the MSBA grant.

	Repair Only	Renovation Only	Renovation and Addition Options			New Construction Options		
	0.0	0.1	A	B.1	C.1	B.2	C.2	D
<b>Fuller Middle School</b>	\$131M	\$76M	\$71M	\$72M	\$62M	\$55M	\$48M	\$48M

\*costs are approximate and will be refined as the Feasibility Study progress

11. What is included in the total project cost?

The total project cost estimate includes all construction costs - site work, playfields, and demolition of the existing school. It also includes design fees, construction-related testing costs, construction contingencies and new furniture and educational technology equipment.

12. Is now the right time to build?

Due to a slowly improving economy, borrowing costs are still at historic lows and, due to the very competitive building climate, construction costs remain low. These costs, however, are currently on the rise and a delay will increase project costs. While we do have a commitment from MSBA for 57.05% of eligible costs for this project, there is no guarantee of any level of state grant should the project not be approved and be required to start over.

13. What if the project is not approved by the City?

The City would miss the opportunity to receive millions of dollars in state grant funding to resolve the deteriorating conditions of the 60 year old Fuller Middle School. The City would still have to spend over \$131 million in significant capital improvements in the upcoming years to address deficiencies and bring the building up to code without addressing educational programming. One hundred percent of these costs would be paid by the City.



Delaying the Fuller project will also have a domino effect, delaying other school projects expected in the future.

14. If the project does not pass, can we use the State money to just repair the existing building?

No, reimbursement from the MSBA is only intended for use on a building project that meets the MSBA requirements.

15. When will the City be voting to approve the project?

A City Council vote is anticipated in late Fall 2018 to approve the funding for the project. The ballot vote is anticipated thereafter to approve the exclusion of the costs from the so-called Proposition 2 ½ cap.

16. What happens if the project is approved by the taxpayers?

The project is moved into the design development phase during which the design and drawings are further refined. This is followed by the construction documents phase when the construction bid documents are prepared by the architect. Construction would start in early 2020 with completion date ranges from summer 2022 to 2023, depending on the option chosen.

17. Why can't the City start construction earlier?

If the City votes in late Fall 2018 for the project to move forward, it takes approximately 12 months to complete the design development and construction documents. After that, there is a bid/award phase that requires an additional 2 months. This results in an early 2020 construction start.

**For additional information, please visit the project website at:**  
<https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/site/Page/2997>

2.10: Application and Approval Procedures

The Authority shall not accept any complete Application prior to July 1, 2007.

(1) Application Approval.

(a) The Authority shall approve Applications in accordance with 963 CMR 2.00, the priority criteria established in M.G. L. c. 70B, including but not limited to, M.G.L. c. 70B, §§ 6, 8, and 9(a), and other policies, requirements and guidelines as the Authority may determine are necessary for the approval of a Proposed Project. The Authority may rescind approval of an Approved Project at any time, and collect any funds it has paid an Eligible Applicant if the Eligible Applicant, or his agent, does not comply with the statutes, regulations, guidelines and/or policies of the Authority.

(b) The Authority shall not accept an Application or approve funding for any Proposed Project from an Eligible Applicant that, in the reasonable judgment of the Authority, is the result of negligence or a lack of routine maintenance.

(2) Initial Compliance Certification Process.

(a) The Authority shall not consider an Application if an Initial Compliance Certification has not been properly submitted to the Authority by the Eligible Applicant in the format developed by the Authority. The Eligible Applicant shall certify in the Initial Compliance Certification current and future compliance with the provisions of the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the Authority.

(b) Any Eligible Applicant seeking funding from the Authority which has, prior to submitting any part of an Application to the Authority, sold, leased or otherwise removed from service any schoolhouse operated by said Eligible Applicant shall be eligible for such grant only if the Authority determines that the grant is not for the purpose of replacing a schoolhouse sold, leased, or otherwise removed from service in the past ten years or that the need for the Proposed Project covered by the grant could not have reasonably been anticipated at the time that such schoolhouse was sold, leased, or otherwise removed from service pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B, § 15 (c).

(c) Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B, § 8, the Authority shall not approve any Proposed Project for any school district that fails to spend in the year preceding the year of application at least 50% of the sum of said school district's calculated foundation budget amounts for the purposes of foundation utility and ordinary maintenance expenses, and extraordinary maintenance allotment as defined in M.G.L. c.70, for said purposes. From Fiscal Year 1999 forward, no school district shall be given approval for a Proposed Project nor receive any funding from the Authority unless said district has spent at least 50% of the sum of said district's calculated foundation budget amounts in each of the Fiscal Years including and succeeding Fiscal Year 1999.

(3) School Building Committee.

(a) The Eligible Applicant shall formulate a school building committee for the purpose of generally monitoring the Application process and to advise the Eligible Applicant during the construction of an Approved Project.

(b) The school building committee shall be formed in accordance with the provisions of the Eligible Applicant's local charter and/or by-laws and it is recommended that the city, town, regional school district, or independent agricultural and technical school make a reasonable effort to include one or more of the following individuals: the local chief executive officer of the Eligible Applicant, or, in the case of a town whose local chief executive officer is a multi-party body, said body may elect one of its members to serve on the school building committee; the town administrator, town manager, or city manager, where applicable; at least one member of the school committee, as required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 68; the superintendent of schools; the local official responsible for building maintenance; a representative of the office or body authorized by law to construct school buildings in that city, town or regional school district, or for that independent agricultural and technical school; the school principal from the subject school; a member who has knowledge of the educational mission and function of the facility; a local budget official or member of the local finance committee; members of the community with architecture, engineering and/or construction experience to provide advice relative to the effect of the Proposed Project on the community and to examine building design and construction in terms of its constructability.

## 2.10: continued

(c) The Authority may hold “best practices” information sessions at varying geographic locations in the Commonwealth for the purposes of keeping school building committees up to date on regulatory and policy activities of the Authority.

(d) The Eligible Applicant shall submit to the Authority for its approval, a written statement describing the composition of the school building committee and the role of the school building committee in monitoring the Application process and advising the Eligible Applicant during the construction of the Approved Project. The written statement shall be in a format prescribed by the Authority.

(e) The Authority shall approve the composition and role of the school building committee which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld. The Authority’s approval will be based on several factors, including, but not limited to:

1. past performance of the school building committee, the building committee, whether temporary or permanent, or any other committee responsible for the oversight, management, or administration of the construction of public buildings, the composition of the school building committee and qualifications of its individual members, the powers and duties of the school building committee; and the school building committee’s procedures for conducting its meetings; and
2. the extent to which there is representation of the municipal government, school district personnel with management, educational and maintenance expertise, and representation of members of the local community with design and construction experience.

After the approval of the school building committee by the Authority, if any, the Eligible Applicant shall notify the Authority in writing within 20 calendar days of any changes to the membership or the duties of said committee. The Eligible Applicant shall make a reasonable effort to ensure the continuity of membership of the school building committee throughout the life of an Approved Project.

(4) Design and Educational Program and Budget Statement for Educational Objectives.

(a) If the Authority determines that the Proposed Project has been deemed to merit further consideration, the Authority may require that an Eligible Applicant submit, in the format prescribed by the Authority, a Design and Educational Program, and a Budget Statement for Educational Objectives. The Eligible Applicant shall outline the specific educational program goals for a Proposed Project and how the Eligible Applicant proposes to align those goals with the operating budget for the District and Proposed Project.

(b) The following spaces shall be categorically ineligible for Authority funding: swimming pools, skating rinks, field houses (only to the same extent as gymnasias), district administrative office space, indoor tennis courts, and other spaces which may be determined ineligible by the Authority.

(c) The Design and Educational Program shall be subject to the approval of the Authority. The Authority may provide, when in the discretion of the Authority it is necessary, technical assistance to the Eligible Applicant with the development of Design and Educational Program elements. The Authority shall review the Budget Statement for Educational Objectives in the context of the Design and Educational Program, and the Authority may consult the Division of Local Services at the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. The Authority may require that the Eligible Applicant make changes, adjustments or modifications to the Design and Educational Program or the Budget Statement for Educational Objectives in order to receive approval from the Authority.

(d) After approval of the Design and Educational Program by the Authority, the Eligible Applicant shall certify to the Authority, in the manner prescribed by the Authority, that the local school committee has voted to approve the Design and Educational Program and the Budget Statement for Educational Objectives in a manner prescribed by the Authority and provide the Authority with a copy of the local school committee vote.

(5) Educational Facilities Master Plan.

(a) An Eligible Applicant shall have a current educational facilities master plan that includes both a long term and a short term plan for facilities and an updated building inventory, in accordance with the Educational Facility Master Plan Guidelines established by the Authority.