District: Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical School District
School Name: Franklin County Technical High School
Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
Date: October 22, 2025

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical School District (the "District"), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Franklin County Technical High School with a new facility serving grades 9-12, on the site of the existing school. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District's Preferred Schematic.

It should be noted that the District's proposed project is subject to the review of (1) an ecological study to Mass Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species, and (2) the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office ("MEPA Review"). Should the District be approved by the Board to proceed into Schematic Design for this proposed project and then subsequently 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 meeting the Mass Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species and MEPA Review requirements to the extent applicable.

District Information	
District Name	Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical School District
Elementary Schools	N/A
Middle Schools	N/A
High School	Franklin County Technical High School
Priority School Name	Franklin County Technical High School
Type of School	High School
Grades Served	9-12
Year Opened	1976
Existing Square Footage	155,000
Additions	N/A
Acreage of Site	57 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: – Mechanical systems – Electrical systems – Plumbing systems – Building envelope – 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	642 students
2024-2025 Enrollment	643 students
Agreed Upon Enrollment	600 students

District Information	
Enrollment Specifics	The District and MSBA have mutually agreed upon a design enrollment of 600 students serving grades 9-12.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	December 21, 2022
Invitation to Feasibility Study	February 28, 2024
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On October 29, 2025, Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on April 29, 2026
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	60.42%

Consultants	
Owner's Project Manager (the "OPM")	Colliers Project Leaders NE, LLC
Designer	LaVallee Brensinger Architects

Discussion

The existing Franklin County Technical High School is a 155,000 square foot facility located on a 57-acre site, currently serving students in grades 9-12. The original school building was constructed in 1976, with the HVAC system upgraded in 2006 and the windows, doors, and roof replaced in 2013.

The District's Statement of Interest ("SOI") identified numerous deficiencies in the existing facility related to: outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; the building envelope; roof; and accessibility issues. The SOI also identified deficiencies in existing spaces that 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 and received input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied nine (9) preliminary options that included one (1) code upgrade option, two (2) addition/renovation options, and six (6) new construction options. The following is a detailed list of the preliminary options considered.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
Option 1	Code upgrade/base repair at the existing Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $129 million.
Option 2	Addition/Renovation ("Building Additions") at the existing Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $253 million.

Option 3	Addition/Renovation ("Campus Model") at the existing Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $248 million.
Option 4A	New Construction ("Campus Model with Pre-engineered Metal Outbuildings") at the existing athletic fields of the Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $246 million.
Option 4B	New Construction ("Campus Model with traditional construction Outbuildings") at the existing athletic fields of the Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $251 million.
Option 5	New Construction ("Courtyards") at the existing athletic fields of the Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $253 million.
Option 6	New Construction ("Compact Box") at the existing athletic fields of the Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $246 million.
Option 7	New Construction ("U Shaped") at the existing athletic fields of the Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $260 million.
Option 8	New Construction ("L Shaped") at the existing athletic fields of the Franklin County Technical High School facility, designed for 600 students in grades 9-12, with an estimated project cost of $249 million.

As a result of this analysis, the District determined that all nine (9) options would be considered for further evaluation. However, subsequent to the evaluation of preliminary options, the District determined that the following five (5) options would not be considered for further evaluation:

- The District determined that "Option 2" would not be considered for further evaluation due to anticipated poor performance on meeting sustainability and energy goals, extensive phasing with the most disruptive swing space needs of all the alternatives, and its high estimated cost without solving major educational, energy, and organizational goals.

- The District determined that "Option 4A" would not be considered for further evaluation due to the difference in pre-engineered construction methods when compared to "Option 4B". Additionally, the District determined this option is more cost-intensive and less energy efficiency compared to other options, and where future maintenance complexity regarding snow removal and site access and control are concerns.

- The District determined that "Option 4B" would not be considered for further evaluation as this option is more cost-intensive and less energy efficiency compared to other options, and where future maintenance complexity regarding snow removal and site access and control are concerns.

- The District determined that although "Option 5" meets many of the project goals, including meeting the educational program needs and improving ease of future operations, this option

would not be considered for further evaluation due to lower anticipated performance in thermal massing and solar radiation tests and higher estimated construction and maintenance costs.

- The District determined that "Option 7" would not be considered for further evaluation due to the amount of the site required for the proposed building footprint and the inherent estimated cost associated with a single-story design, limited flexibility for site amenities, as well as the lower anticipated performance associated with sustainability standards.

Subsequent to the evaluation of preliminary options, the District renamed and further developed "Option 3" to "Option 3A"; and "Option 6" to "Option 6A"; and "Option 8" to "Option 8A".

MSBA staff and the District agreed to explore the following four (4) 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 two (2) 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 1 (Code Upgrade)	159,381	159,381 sf $598/sf	N/A	$7,394,979	$102,674,535 $644/sf	$128,343,169
Option 3A (Addition/Renovation)	220,900	152,725 sf $858/sf	68,175 sf $799/sf	$32,152,300	$202,239,079 916/sf	$252,798,849
Option 6A (New Construction)	220,900	N/A	220,900 sf $711/sf	$39,208,228	$196,219,530 $888/sf	$245,274,413
*****Option 8A (New Construction)***	***220,900***	***N/A***	***220,900 sf $714/sf***	***$39,490,569***	***$197,286,066 $893/sf***	***$246,607,583***

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

The District has selected "Option 8A" as its Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design, as the District determined this option to be the most efficient and cost-effective option. The District determined that this option also provides optimized solar orientation and an ideal educational layout of the Career and Technical spaces with preferred circulation flow through the "public street" between the shop spaces and shared use spaces including a preferred spatial experience of the exterior student courtyard.

"Option 1" was not selected by the District because this option did not meet the District's educational visioning and program requirements. Also, this option does not address the District's sustainability

goals, is not anticipated to reduce operational costs, and ultimately would not provide a long-term solution for the District.

"Option 3A" was not selected by the District because this option is anticipated to result in significant disruption to ongoing education during occupied phased construction and would require temporary modular classrooms for swing space. Additionally, this option was determined to be less spatially efficient, with higher estimated costs when compared to several of the new building options. The massing associated with this option was also determined to be less thermally beneficial, less energy efficient, and does not possess optimized solar orientation.

"Option 6A" was not selected as the District did not prefer the building shape, educational layout of the Career and Technical programs spaces, or the exterior circulation and spatial experience of the student courtyard when compared to "Option 8A".

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee ("FAS") on September 17, 2025. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed the following: appreciation of the District's Educational Program; DESE review of the District's Chapter 74 viability documentation and clarification of where the existing Veterinary Science and Aviation programs are located; proposed locations of Special Education spaces and the DESE review process following Schematic Design; appreciation of the simple design and massing; the proposed number of lunch seatings; considerations associated with the safe handling of hazardous materials and location of safety data sheets in associated classrooms, shops, and the main office; flexibility of the proposed Chapter 74 spaces to accommodate new technology and equipment as curricula evolve; potential opportunity for the Culinary program to share storage and infrastructure with the kitchen if appropriate; potential opportunity for science labs to share storage space and prep rooms where applicable; discussion of potential uses for rooftop space; clarification of site circulation and public access; interest in further development of geothermal energy plans; solar orientation, sustainability and resiliency considerations; the proposed use of interior glazing and opportunities to balance transparency, security and climate control; further development of the architectural design, including depth of the entrance awning and the relationship between the media center and the two-story volume of the central commons; estimated project cost; and importance of faculty and staff feedback as the design progresses, including input from facilities staff as it relates to maintenance considerations.

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 Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical School District be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Franklin County Technical High School with a new facility on the site of the existing school. MSBA Board authorization shall make the execution of a future Project Funding Agreement contingent upon the District fulfilling: (1) any applicable requirements associated with an ecological study to Mass Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species and (2) any applicable MEPA requirements associated with a MEPA Review.