District: City of Medford
School Name: Medford High School
Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
Date: August 19, 2026

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the City of Medford (the "District"), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design for an addition and renovation project at the existing Medford High School facility serving students in grades 9-12, plus Pre-kindergarten. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District's Preferred Schematic.

Please note, the District's Schematic Design may include the installation of a subsurface geothermal well field, temporary parking, and a temporary construction laydown area on the site, all of which are currently being proposed for a deed restricted area which is subject to Article 97 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth and the Open Space Act. Therefore, the MSBA Board's authorization to enter a Project Funding Agreement with the District may be conditioned upon the District satisfying all of the requirements associated with Article 97, the Open Space Act, review of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office ("MEPA Review"), MSBA land ownership and control requirements, and any environmental approvals associated with the proposed project.

District Information	
District Name	City of Medford
Elementary Schools	Brooks School (PK-5) John J. McGlynn Elementary School (K-5) Milton Fuller Roberts (PK-5) Missituk Elementary School (PK-5)
Middle Schools	John J. McGlynn Middle School (6-8) Madeleine Dugger Andrews (6-8)
High Schools	Curtis-Tufts (9-12) Medford High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	Medford High School
Type of School	High School
Grades Served	9-12
Year Opened	1970
Existing Square Footage	522,200
Additions	2014 – Renovation of all science labs 2015 – Boilers replacement as part of MSBA's Accelerated Repair Program
Acreage of Site	29.4 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: – Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing systems – Building envelope – Windows – Roof – Accessibility

District Information	
	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 associated with the District's Career and Technical Education programs.
Original Design Capacity	3,500 students
2025-2026 Enrollment	1,210 students
Agreed Upon Enrollment	1,395 students
Enrollment Specifics	The District and MSBA have mutually agreed upon a design enrollment of 1,395 students serving grades 9-12, plus Pre-kindergarten.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	December 13, 2023
Invitation to Feasibility Study	February 26, 2025
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On August 26, 2026 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on April 28, 2027
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	53.32%

Consultants	
Owner's Project Manager (the "OPM")	Leftfield, LLC
Designer	Symmes Maini & McKee Associates, Inc.

Discussion

The existing Medford High School is a 522,200 square-foot facility, which includes an existing field house and natatorium, and is located on a 29.4-acre site, currently serving students in grades 9-12 and a portion of the District's Pre-kindergarten enrollment. The original school building was constructed in 1970, with a roof replacement in 2001 and boiler replacements in 2008, 2014, and 2021. Additionally, in 2014, a major renovation was completed to provide updated science labs and the pool building underwent renovations that included structural repairs to the pool deck and basin as well as the pool equipment. Several interior renovations of the Career and Technical Education ("CTE") spaces, including the Culinary Arts restaurant, the Cosmetology salon, and the Engineering and Robotics shop, were completed in 2018.

The District's Statement of Interest ("SOI") identified numerous deficiencies in the existing facility associated with outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; the building envelope; roof; windows; accessibility; overcrowding associated with the District's CTE programs; and deficiencies in existing spaces that are deemed incapable of appropriately 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 considered further evaluation and development of twenty-nine (29) preliminary options that included: one (1) code upgrade option with a total project cost of $437.1 million; twenty-five (25) addition/ renovation options with total project costs ranging from $807-$880 million; and three (3) new construction options with total project costs ranging from $859-$893 million. However, subsequent to MSBA's receipt of the District's Preliminary Design Program submission, the District voted to eliminate twenty-three (23) options and provided a detailed rationale describing why each of these options would not be considered for further evaluation.

As a result, the District identified six (6) preliminary options to be further evaluated that included: one (1) code upgrade option; three (3) addition/renovation options; and two (2) new construction options. The following is a detailed list of the preliminary options considered.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
Option A.1	Code upgrade at the existing Medford High School facility, with an estimated total project cost of $437.1 million.
Option B.1.2	Addition/renovation (on the existing building footprint), which proposes 141,510 sf of new construction above the existing Central Academic and Physical Education/Dining Wings, selective demolition of 23,835 sf of the existing Central Academic Wing to bring daylight into windowless classrooms, a light renovation of 36,902 sf of the existing Pool Wing, and a heavy renovation of 461,467 sf of the remaining existing school building; with an estimated total project cost of $824.8 million.
Option C.2.2	Addition/renovation (on the existing building footprint, on the hillside and parking lot to the west, and a portion of Edgerly Field to the north), which proposes 471,280 sf of new construction (5 stories) in place of the existing Arts Wing, Central Academic Wing, Western Academic Wing and Vocational Wings; proposes a light renovation of 36,902 sf of the existing Pool Wing; and proposes a heavy renovation of 131,697 sf of the remaining existing school building, with an estimated total project cost of $849.7 million.
Option C.3.4	Addition/renovation (on the existing building footprint, on the hillside to the west, and a portion of Edgerly Field to the north), which proposes 586,247 sf of new construction (4 stories) in place of the existing Arts Wing, Central Academic Wing, Western Academic Wing, Vocational Wings and Physical Education/Dining Wing; proposes a light renovation of 36,902 sf of the existing Pool Wing; and proposes a heavy renovation of 16,730 sf of the remaining existing school building, with an estimated total project cost of $832.1 million.
Option D.1.1	New construction (on the existing southern parking lot and the southern portion of the existing building footprint – the Arts Wing and the southern Vocational Wing), which proposes 607,250 sf (6 stories) and a new pool, with an estimated total project cost of $893.6 million.
Option D.2.1	New construction (on Edgerly Field and the adjacent hillside), which proposes 607,250 sf (6-stories) and a new pool, with an estimated total project cost of $859.4 million.

Subsequently, the MSBA requested that the District study at least one (1) option that does not include a Natatorium and aligns with the MSBA's guidance associated with projects that may include Central

Administration, Field House, and Natatorium components, in addition to the six (6) options listed above. Based on this request, the District developed the following two (2) options for further development and consideration:

- Option D.1.1NP: New construction (on the existing southern parking lot and the southern portion of the existing building footprint – the Arts Wing and the southern Vocational Wing), which proposes 607,250 sf (6-stories) without a pool, with an estimated total project cost of $870.5 million.
- Option D.2.1NP: New construction (on Edgerly Field and the adjacent hillside), which proposes 607,250 sf (6-stories) without a pool, with an estimated total project cost of $836.3 million.

Following the evaluation of preliminary options listed above, the District informed the MSBA of deed restrictions affecting portions of the site that prohibits construction in certain areas. As a result, the District eliminated "Options D.2.1 and D.2.1NP" from further consideration as these options were determined to be not viable given the proximity of the proposed building location(s) to the deed restricted portions of the property.

Additionally, to avoid the areas associated with the deed restrictions, the District further developed and renamed the following two options:

- "Option C.2.2 is now referred to as "Option C.2.2A"; and,
- "Option C.3.4 is now referred to as "Option C.3.4A."

It should be noted that each of the District's preliminary options propose inclusion of a significant number of community programs and associated square footage. To fully understand the potential impact of these programs to square footage and estimated cost, the MSBA encouraged the District to develop an option, or series of options, that includes only the programs required to deliver the high school curriculum. As a result, the District developed an option referred to as "Option C.2.2A-HS" for further evaluation.

MSBA staff and the District agreed to explore the following seven (7) 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; four (4) addition/renovation options; 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 A.1: (Code upgrade)	522,205	522,205 $803/sq. ft.	N/A	$14,064,640	$433,553,951 $830/sq. ft.	$528,935,820
Option B.1.2: (Addition/ renovation that reuses the majority	608,792	439,221 $795/sq. ft.	169,571 $1,483/sq. ft.	$43,419,923	$643,877,591 $1,058/sq. ft.	$809,050,661

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
of the existing building)						
Option C.2.2A: (Addition/ renovation that reuses the Gym, Pool, and a portion of Physical Education/Dining wings)***	***608,792***	***118,867 $935/sq. ft.***	***489,925 $1,006/sq. ft.***	***$47,333,468***	***$651,120,828 $1,070/sq. ft.***	***$794,367,410***
Option C2.2A-HS: (Addition/ renovation that reuses the Gym, Pool, and a portion of Physical Education/Dining wings and does not include community programs)	520,733	118,867 $935/sq. ft.	401,866 $1,029/sq. ft.	$47,333,468	$571,867,819 $1,098/sq. ft.	$697,678,739
Option C.3.4A: (Addition/ renovation that reuses the Gym and Pool wings)	608,792	83,720 $959/sq. ft.	525,072 $1,009/sq. ft.	$49,738,569	$659,869,838 $1,084/sq. ft.	$805,041,202
Option D.1.1: (New construction located on the parking lot and southern portion of existing building footprint)	577,663	N/A	577,663 $985/sq. ft.	$49,482,050	$618,199,760 $1,070/sq. ft.	$754,203,707
Option D.1.1NP: (New construction located on the parking lot and southern portion of existing building footprint with no Pool)	559,763	N/A	559,763 $982/sq. ft.	$49,482,050	$598,987,666 $1,070/sq. ft.	$730,764,952

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

The District selected "Option C.2.2A" as its Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design, as the District has determined that this option best meets the needs of the District's educational program; allows for occupied phased construction designed to minimize disruption of ongoing school operations, avoiding the use of modular classrooms; and retains the existing Natatorium, Gymnasium,

and a portion of the Physical Education/Dining wings, as the District determined these components to be vital community resources.

"Option A.1" was not selected primarily because the District determined that this option does not meet the needs of the educational program and would not accommodate the future curriculum envisioned. Additionally, this option includes the need for modular classrooms during construction and would require a multi-year phased construction project within the occupied facility, anticipated to result in significant disruption to the students and staff, which was not desired by the District.

"Option B.1.2" resulted in the most retained square footage to be renovated and was mainly evaluated to demonstrate and compare the environmental outcome with salvaging the embodied carbon associated with existing structural steel and cast in place concrete. Although this option was considered capable of delivering the District's educational program, this option was not considered further as the need for temporary modular classrooms counterbalanced the potential embodied carbon benefits. The anticipated phased construction duration and associated higher estimated cost were also contributing factors in the District's decision.

Although there are many similarities and advantages of "Option C.2.2A-HS" when compared to "Option C.2.2A", "Option C.2.2A-HS" was not selected by the District primarily because this option does not respond to or include central administration and community spaces which the District has considered to be important components of the proposed project given the limited availability within the District to relocate these programs.

Although "Option C.3.4A" was considered capable of delivering the District's educational program, this option was not selected by the District due to cost drivers associated with construction logistics, resulting in a higher estimated total project cost as well as the anticipated challenges associated with facilitating oversight of the learning environment as a result of the proposed building geometry.

Although "Option D.1.1" was considered capable of delivering the District's educational program, this option was not selected by the District primarily because this option does not retain the existing Gymnasium square footage when compared to the addition/renovation scenarios. In addition, the District cited challenges associated with the building location/massing that pose safety and site circulation concerns as contributing factors which were deemed undesirable.

Although "Option D.1.1NP" was considered capable of delivering the District's educational program, this option was not selected by the District primarily because this option does not retain the existing Gymnasium square footage when compared to the addition/renovation scenarios and does not include a Pool. In addition, and similar to concerns cited with "Option D.1.1", the District cited challenges associated with the building location/massing that pose safety and site circulation concerns as contributing factors which were deemed undesirable.

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee ("FAS") on July 15, 2026. At that meeting, members discussed the following items: site topography, constraints, and overall complexity of the proposed project; inclusion of specialized programming, including substantially separate Special Education programs and clarification of proposed distribution and adjacencies; DESE review of the Special Education submission following Schematic Design; appreciation for the District's Educational Program and its goals of integrating CTE and

additional program elements into a unified high school, as well as the updates made since the original submission; opportunity to use the proposed construction duration to maximize professional development, staff engagement, and teacher planning time; suggestion to consider interdisciplinary learning opportunities, particularly for second-semester seniors to engage in seminars or exploratory projects; appreciation for the overall building design and organization, including the location of music spaces in relation to the existing gym, the main entry courtyard and smaller rear courtyards; opportunity to enhance the visibility of the auditorium entrance; interior circulation and vertical connectivity between the proposed Dining Commons and Media Center; the view of the building upon approach and the proposed parking area; variations from MSBA space guidelines associated with proposed District administration and community spaces and considerations for the Schematic Design phase; the proposed construction schedule and logistics, as well as the importance of forecasting construction costs; potential locations of geothermal wells on the site; clarification of the location and number of proposed elevators; and building geometry, orientation, and design considerations associated with preserving the building area proposed for renovation.

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, 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 and to communicate efforts associated the District's ongoing survey to understand potential alternative locations for community spaces currently being included in the proposed project and the impact to the design concept. The MSBA may request that the District be available to present an update at a future Facilities Assessment Subcommittee meeting if deemed necessary.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the City of Medford be approved to proceed into Schematic Design for an addition and renovation project at the existing Medford High School facility serving students in grades 9-12, plus Pre-kindergarten.