District: Town of South Hadley
School Name: Mosier Elementary School
Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
Date: August 19, 2026

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Town of South Hadley (the "District"), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Mosier Elementary School with a new facility serving grades 1 through 5 on the site of the existing school. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District's Preferred Schematic.

District Information	
District Name	Town of South Hadley
Elementary Schools	Plains Elementary School (PK-1) Mosier Elementary School (2-4)
Middle School	Michael E. Smith Middle School (5-8)
High School	South Hadley High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	Mosier Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	2-4
Year Opened	1969
Existing Square Footage	62,237
Additions	1998 – addition of four modular classrooms
Acreage of Site	12 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: – Mechanical systems – Electrical systems – Plumbing systems – Envelope – Accessibility 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 overcrowding.
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2025-2026 Enrollment	375 students
Agreed Upon Enrollment	Study Enrollment includes the following configurations: – 590 students in grades 1-5 (Preferred Schematic) – 360 students in grades 2-4
Enrollment Specifics	Contingent upon the Board's approval of the Preferred Schematic, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 590 students in grades 1-5, relocating grade 1 from the MSBA-funded Plains Elementary School and grade 5 from the Smith Middle School.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	December 13, 2023
Invitation to Feasibility Study	October 30, 2024
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On August 26, 2026 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on December 9, 2026
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	61.32%

Consultants	
Owner's Project Manager (the "OPM")	Skanska USA Building Inc.
Designer	Mount Vernon Group Architects, Inc.

Discussion

The existing Mosier Elementary School is a 62,237 square foot facility located on 12-acre site, currently serving students in grades 2 through 4. The original building was constructed in 1969, with the addition of four (4) modular classrooms in 1998.

The District's Statement of Interest ("SOI") identified numerous deficiencies in the existing facility related to outdated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; building envelope; accessibility issues; and overcrowding. The SOI also identified deficiencies in the existing spaces and notes that the spaces within the facility are not conducive to delivering the District's educational program.

As part of the Feasibility Study, the MSBA accepted the District's request to explore the following two (2) study enrollment options:

- 360 students in grades 2-4 at the Mosier Elementary School, and;
- 590 students in grades 1-5 at Mosier Elementary School that relocates grade 1 from MSBA-funded Plains Elementary School (Renamed: Henry J. Skala School) and grade 5 from Michael E. Smith Middle School. (Preferred Schematic)

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 seven (7) preliminary options that included: one (1) code upgrade option, two (2) addition/renovation options, and four (4) new construction options. The following is a detailed list of the preliminary options considered.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
Alternate 1	A Code Upgrade for grades 2-4 with an enrollment of 360 students at the existing Mosier Elementary School; with an estimated total project cost of $48.2 million.
Alternate 2	Addition / Renovation for grades 2-4 with an enrollment of 360 students at the existing Mosier Elementary School; with an estimated total project cost of $81.2 million.
Alternate 3	Addition / Renovation for grades 1-5 with an enrollment of 590 students at the existing Mosier Elementary School; with an estimated total project cost of $115

	million. This option results in the relocation of grade 1 from the MSBA-funded Plains Elementary School and grade 5 from the Michael E. Smith Middle School.
Alternate 4	New Construction for grades 2-4 with an enrollment of 360 students at the existing Mosier Elementary School site; with an estimated total project cost of $95.1 million.
Alternate 5	New Construction for grades 1-5 with an enrollment of 590 students at the existing Mosier Elementary School site; with an estimated total project cost of $125.5 million. This option results in the relocation of grade 1 from the MSBA-funded Plains Elementary School and grade 5 from the Michael E. Smith Middle School.
Alternate 6	New Construction for grades 2-4 with an enrollment of 360 students at the Michael E. Smith Middle School site; with an estimated project cost of $96.2 million.
Alternate 7	New Construction for grades 1-5 with an enrollment of 590 students at the Michael E. Smith Middle School site; with an estimated project cost of $121.6 million. This option results in the relocation of grade 1 from the MSBA-funded Plains Elementary School and grade 5 from the Michael E. Smith Middle School

As a result of this analysis, the District determined that all seven (7) options would be considered for further evaluation. However, subsequent to the evaluation of preliminary options, the District developed one (1) additional new construction option referred to as "Alternate 8", described below:

- Alternate 8: New Construction for grades 1-5 with an enrollment of 590 students built on the footprint of the existing Mosier Elementary School, requiring the relocation of the current student population during construction in order to demolish and construct a new facility on this site. This option also results in the relocation of grade 1 students from the MSBA-funded Plains Elementary School and grade 5 students from the Michael E. Smith Middle School.

Upon further review, MSBA staff and the District agreed to the eight (8) final 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, two (2) addition/renovation options, and five (5) 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
Alternate 1: Code Upgrade for 360 students in Grades 2 - 4 (Mosier ES)	62,237	62,237 $370/sq. ft.	N/A	$24,832,745	$47,857,323 $769/sq. ft.	$59,821,654
Alternate 2: Addition / Renovation for 360 students in grades 2 – 4 (Mosier ES)	76,025	50,025 $351 /sq. ft.	26,000 $561 /sq. ft.	$31,525,824	$63,694,289 $838/sq. ft.	$79,617,861

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
Alternate 3: Addition / Renovation for 590 students in grades 1-5 (Mosier ES)	115,775	38,766 $342 /sq. ft.	77,009 $534/sq. ft.	$39,892,731	$94,298,932 $815/sq. ft.	$117,873,666
Alternate 4: New Construction for 360 students in grades 2 – 4 (Mosier ES site)	73,494	N/A	73,494 $550/sq. ft.	$31,063,292	$71,455,594 $972/sq. ft.	$89,319,493
Alternate 5: New Construction for 590 students in grades 1 – 5 (Mosier ES site)	116,790	N/A	116,790 $499/sq. ft.	$36,882,001	$95,187,073 $815/sq. ft.	$118,983,841
Alternate 6: New Construction for 360 students in grades 2-4 (Smith MS site)	80,200	N/A	80,200 $542/sq. ft.	$37,456,731	$80,947,587 $1009/sq. ft.	$101,184,484
Alternate 7: New Construction for 590 students in grades 1-5 (Smith MS site)	119,000	N/A	119,000 $513/sq. ft.	$43,783,928	$104,796,418 $881/sq. ft.	$130,995,523
Alternate 8: New Construction for 590 students in grade 1-5 (on existing Mosier ES footprint) ***	***113,745***	N/A	***113,745 $501/sq. ft.***	***$36,174,295***	***$93,210,588 $819/sq. ft.***	***$114,800,000***

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

The District has selected "Alternate 8" as the Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design. The District determined that this option best meets the needs of the District's educational program and is anticipated to provide adequate and appropriate special education spaces to meet the District's needs. In addition, this option anticipates the potential for an energy efficient design that maximizes natural daylighting and provides an indoor environment conducive to teaching and learning. This option also offers opportunities for community use and allows for future expansion, which was desired by the District. Furthermore, this option is anticipated to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation, enhancing access to the building and play fields for students, staff, and the broader community.

"Alternative 1" was not selected by the District primarily because this option did not adequately address the District's educational program requirements, overcrowding concerns, or long-term facility needs. Additionally, this option did not support the District's preferred grades 1-5 configuration and is anticipated to require ongoing repairs and future capital improvements that could potentially result in increased costs and continued disruption to the educational environment.

"Alternate 2" and "Alternate 4" were not selected by the District because these options did not support the District's preferred grades 1-5 configuration model. Additionally, "Alternate 2" would require

temporary swing space and multiple phases of construction that could potentially cause significant disruption to daily school operations. For "Alternate 4", the proposed building location generated significant neighborhood opposition due to proximity to homes and traffic concerns.

Although "Alternate 3" accommodated the District's preferred grades 1-5 configuration model, this option was not selected by the District because it required extensive renovations to the existing facility which was not desired by the District. This option would require significant structural modifications to the existing masonry building and upgrades to the utilities that would necessitate multiple phases of construction in an occupied facility. The District determined that these improvements are anticipated to result in significant disruption to the educational program.

Although "Alternative 5" was considered a viable option because it met the District's educational goals and accommodated the grades 1-5 configuration model, this option was not selected by the District due to extensive feedback from neighboring residents who expressed concerns about the building's proximity to homes, potential impacts on property values, and increased traffic.

"Alternate 6" and "Alternate 7" were not selected by the District due to operational, safety, and site-related concerns associated with placing a new elementary school on the Smith Middle School campus. Additionally, these options generated concerns from the District regarding emergency response, evacuation procedures, traffic management, and simultaneous school events. Furthermore, these options reduced the athletic and recreational fields used by both schools, making them undesirable solutions for the District.

The District presented its proposed Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee ("FAS") on July 29, 2026. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed the following items:

- The District's Educational Program and previous feedback communicated as part of MSBA's review of the Preliminary Design Program regarding proposed scheduling as it relates to the implementation of project-based learning, use of the proposed Science and Technology/Engineering ("STE") room, and proposed professional development opportunities;
- Appreciation for the building design concept that incorporates entry into a large forecourt with two wings;
- Suggestion to consider plantings and opportunities to extend green space between the building and proposed parking area;
- Opportunity for transparency and visual connection from the building entry to the cafeteria; and,
- Distribution and location of Special Education classrooms, particularly those proposed at the end of hallways in classroom neighborhoods, and the DESE review process associated with the Schematic Design submission.

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 to be completed 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 Town of South Hadley be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Mosier Elementary School with a new facility serving students in grades 1 through 5 on the site of existing school.