



Needham School Committee

Broadmeadow Performance Center

March 7, 2023

6:30 p.m.

Broadcast on the Needham Channel municipal and HD channels, live stream at:

<https://needhamchannel.org>

Please click the link below to access meeting for Public Comments:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83560986506?pwd=UmNqWjJ2TGNKdVA3UHBSTnZQSEphUT09>

Webinar ID: **83560986506**. Passcode: **391650**. Or One tap mobile: US: +16469313860



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023 6:30 p.m.

Broadmeadow School Performance Center

Next School Committee Meeting: March 21, 2023 6:30 p.m.

Broadcast on the Needham Channel municipal and HD channels, live stream at: <https://needhamchannel.org>

Please click the link below to access meeting for Public Comments:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83560986506?pwd=UmNqWjJ2TGNKdVA3UHBSTnZQSEphUT09>

Webinar ID: **83560986506**. Passcode: **391650**. Or One tap mobile: US: +16469313860

- 6:30 p.m. Public Comments**
- 6:35 p.m. School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates**
- 6:40 p.m. Superintendent's Comments**
- 6:45 p.m. Consent Item**
 - Minutes of Meetings of January 3, 2023 and January 17, 2023
- Discussion Items**
- 6:45 p.m. Portrait of a Needham Graduate - Student Presentation**
- 7:05 p.m. Newman School Improvement Plan**
- 7:55 p.m. Massachusetts School Building Authority Statements of Interest**
 - William Mitchell School
 - Pollard Middle School
- 8:20 p.m. Action Item**

Approve Middle School Baseball User Fee Proposal
- 8:30 p.m. School Committee Comments**



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **Public Comments**

Background Information:

- The School Committee Chair will offer the opportunity for the public to speak to the School Committee on issues not on the agenda.



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates**

Background Information:

- The Chair and subcommittee members may offer brief updates on issues not on the agenda.

Members of the School Committee available for comment:

Matthew Spengler, Chair

Andrea Longo Carter, Vice Chair

Connie Barr

Michael Greis

Elizabeth Lee

Michael O'Brien

Alisa Skatrud

Dilin Meloni, Student Representative member of School Committee



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **Superintendent's Comments**

Background Information:

Superintendent Daniel E. Gutekanst will apprise the School Committee of events, information, and matters of interest not on the agenda.



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **Consent Agenda**

- Approve Minutes of the Meetings of January 3, 2023 and January 17, 2023

Chair: “Does anyone wish to remove any item from the consent agenda?”

If none removed:

“There being no objection, these items are adopted by unanimous consent.”

Needham School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
January 3, 2023

Matthew Spengler, the Needham School Committee Chairman, called the January 3, 2023, meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. This meeting is broadcast on live stream at: <https://www.needhamchannel.org>. The meeting is accessible via Zoom for public comment.

Members of the School Committee present were:

Matthew Spengler, Chair	Elizabeth Lee
Andrea Longo Carter, Vice-Chair	Michael O'Brien
Connie Barr	Alisa Skatrud
Michael Greis	
Dilin Meloni (non-voting Student Member)	

Members of the Central Administration present were:

Dan Gutekanst	Alexandra M. McNeil
Anne Gulati	Carmen Williams
Mary Lammi	

Also present were:

Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager
David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Finance

Public Comments

Public Comments

Chairman Spengler offered the opportunity for members of the public to speak to the School Committee on issues not on the agenda, either in person or on the Zoom link. Chairman Spengler stated that members of the community could also contact the School Committee via email at schoolcommittee@needham.k12.ma.us.

There were no public comments.

School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates

School Committee
Chair and
Subcommittee
Updates

There were no School Committee Chair and Subcommittee updates.

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent's
Comments

Superintendent Gutekanst announced that the School Committee would hold a public hearing on the FY24 School Operating Budget on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 6:30 PM at the Broadmeadow Elementary School.

Superintendent Gutekanst stated that, once again, the Needham Quiz Bowl team has qualified for WGBH's High School Quiz Bowl. He stated that 65 schools entered qualification, but only 17 qualified, including Needham High School. He added that the first round is on Saturday, January 21, 2023, at 4 pm.

Superintendent Gutekanst wished members of the School Committee and families a Happy New Year.

Consent Item

Consent Item

1. Approve Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2022

Chairman Spengler removed this item from the Consent Agenda.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

FY24 Budget Consultation with Town ManagerFY24 Budget
Consultation
with Town
Manager

Dr. Gutekanst welcomed Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick and Assistant Town Manager David Davison to the table to consult with the School Committee on the FY24 Budget.

Ms. Fitzpatrick expressed her appreciation for consulting with the School Committee every year on the first Tuesday of January to discuss the School Committee's priorities for the School Operating Budget and ensure we are mindful of that together. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that there is nothing out of the ordinary in the revenue picture this year. She stated that she does not expect any significant revenue increases or extraordinary revenue growth. She noted that it is a typical year, except the state aid estimates will be late because of the new administration at the State House. Ms. Fitzpatrick commented that everything costs more, and revenue will not keep up. She noted that special education tuition costs and other programs are increasing, and this will be particularly difficult for the School Committee this year. Similarly, there are many of the same concerns on the town side. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the capital plan was distributed today. She pointed out that one of the things that she and her staff are very proud of is that in October of 2016, a Capital Facility Summit convened to work on renovating or replacing eight buildings. She added that with the advent of Emery Grover, we are down to one left. She stated that this was quite extraordinary. She noted the increase in high school classrooms, the cafeteria expansion, the Sunita L. Williams Elementary School, Fire Station 2, Fire Station 1, the Police Station, the Memorial Park Field House, and the Rosemary Pool and building, which have all been done since 2016. She stated that the challenges ahead after the last building, which is the public works building, are about the schools. She noted that the balance of this fiscal year and the next would be characterized by how we fund them. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the critical focus for Town Government this year is to improve the recruitment and retention of qualified employees at every level. She stated she is trying to find creative ways to get people to want to apply. She added that many of the items in her recommended budget or for the warrant would relate to that. She added that there would be many conversations about making some of our committee structures and working relationships more efficient. She stated that there's a whole list of budget priorities in the capital plan, which would be replicated in the operating budget. She noted that all department managers, boards, and committees had been asked for their input into the Select Board goals. She stated that she has received a lot of responses and that the Select Board will continue this tradition.

Vice-Chair Longo Carter stated that she is curious to know if town services or community needs are still significantly impacted by COVID and its aftermath.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the recruitment and retention issue clearly is the highest priority, as are health issues, particularly mental health. She noted that this is an issue the schools are wrestling with. She stated that she had added staffing to the departments significantly impacted by mental health concerns.

Michael Greis asked if there were any particular priorities, issues, or concerns that the Town Manager might have as she builds her budget.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the big picture is that we have a lot of buildings that need to be maintained, and we have a number

of schools that are new but are really 20 years old and need to be maintained. She stated that everything costs more. She stated that providing a dedicated revenue stream that supports the new buildings will be a challenge in the coming years. She added that compensating people willing to provide services going forward will also be a challenge.

Mr. Greis referred to the number of projects that are going on and asked if Steve Popper's position has been filled or if they are still down from when Mr. Popper retired.

Ms. Fitzpatrick responded that she is trying to balance the next project. She added that she would like to provide more support to that department. She is working on what could be recommended in FY24 at this point.

Mr. Greis referred to the Bulfinch project. He asked if there are things that the Town Manager is looking at in terms of being able to help them and hopefully have that move forward expeditiously, especially given the current environment. He added that support is needed to help them move forward because construction will bring new growth. Mr. Greis recommends working with all the boards and committees to create an actual dedication of that revenue so that we know we have it. It is in everyone's interest to make sure it gets built.

Elizabeth Lee stated that the situation with town buildings, including school buildings, is that there's always something on the verge of needing attention. She didn't know if that's true for all municipalities in the state and probably around the country. She asked if there was a way to not have buildings catch up to us instead we should be ahead of the buildings.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that we are further ahead than people might think. The building maintenance staff has a plan. They have an excellent inventory. They have a work order system, and preventive maintenance is done. Things will always need to be done, but we're in pretty good shape.

Alisa Skatrud asked Ms. Fitzpatrick what big-picture items concern her the most.

Ms. Fitzpatrick mentioned the unprecedented and enormous investment by the federal government through the state government in terms of its distribution of ARPA and CARES Act funding. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that Needham has had access to the ARPA money and CARES Act and many positions and programs are funded because of this, and we can't do without them. She added that we are planning how to ease them back in. How many full-time equivalent staff is the limit that we'll be able to afford that worries us? How to pay enough benefits that people will stay working here as the employer of choice.

Mr. Davison added that the next 12 to 24 months, the continued uncertainty with the war in Europe and how that can impact us. Financially, in terms of the cost of energy, if the war were to expand, that would bring a whole host of other problems that we would have to deal with. He stated that Storm Water is a regulatory nightmare for cities and towns across the country, and they're slowly moving forward to addressing them. Still, the deadlines are catching up with the workflow, which is taking longer because it involves change. Change that requires legislative action, change that requires regulatory action. Change that requires behavioral effort, and those are significant challenges. So that's what's keeping me up is the distractions.

Superintendent Gutekanst thanked Ms. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Davison, and the Select Board for funding, facilities leadership, and facilities management structure in a way that has not been funded in the past. Superintendent Gutekanst mentioned the unfunded mandate imposed upon local districts regarding the tuition increase of 14% by the Operational Services Division. He stated that one of the things principals and parents ask him is whether the legislature will step in and provide some funding in FY24. He noted that there seems to be an appetite among key legislators to make that happen. He stated that it is not going to be easy because the new governor has more time, and a budget likely isn't going to be passed until July. He stated that this is impacting the School Operating Budget plans by about \$1,000,000, and we're accounting for that in the budget that we'll move forward and ask the School Committee to vote on and, ultimately, Town Meeting to approve. Superintendent Gutekanst asked Ms. Fitzpatrick to describe what would happen if the legislature does decide to step in and provide some funding for local communities.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that there might be choices that we have to make that can't get funded in the schools or elsewhere. She added that if the funding does come in, we have the opportunity in the fall to balance those out. She stated that getting a 4th-grade teacher in October is not practical, but something else can be funded in October. We might have to delay until the fall.

Mr. Greis asked what kind of work is going on as you think about how we deal with the changing climate and some of the things that will be thrown at us.

Ms. Fitzpatrick referred to the Local Emergency Planning Committee. She stated that this is a robust committee of town staff involved in Emergency Management and many community partners. She stated that we meet monthly and have an identified list of things we're the most worried about and how to handle them. She noted that the Climate Action Plan Committee is specifically charged with what is in that plan.

Ms. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Davison appreciated the opportunity to consult with the School Committee this evening.

FY24 Budget Discussion - Program Improvement: Counseling Services

FY24 Budget
Discussion-
Program
Improvement:
Counseling
Services

Dr. Gutekanst stated that School Committee met with the Finance Committee earlier today to discuss aspects of the budget. He noted that Ann Gulati's charts about ratios were quite compelling when you look at how Needham is positioned relative to its overall staff and special education staff.

Dr. Gutekanst invited Mary Lammi, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services, to present the FY2023-2024 budget request to update additional counseling services. Ms. Lammi presented a comprehensive report that is available online at www.needham.k12.ma.us. Discussion followed.

ACTION ITEMS

Approve Transportation Drivers Retention Incentive

Approve
Transportation
Drivers
Retention
Incentive

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Needham School Committee votes to support a financial incentive for the transportation driver.

Michael Greis moved, and Connie Barr seconded the motion to approve Transportation Drivers Retention Incentive.

The motion carried the vote was 7-0-0.

Approve the 2023-2024 School CalendarApprove the
2023-2024 School
Calendar

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Needham School Committee approves the calendar for the 2023-2024 school year as submitted.

Michael Greis moved, and Andrea Longo Carter seconded the motion to approve Transportation Drivers Retention Incentive.

Discussion:

The motion carried the vote was 7-0-0.

School Committee CommentsSchool Committee
Comments

Alisa Skatrud commented that the MLK Celebration is on Monday, January 16, 2023. More information is available at www.needhamdiversity.org.

A list of all documents used at this School Committee meeting is available at:

A List of
Documents

[http://www.needham.k12.ma.us/districtinfo/schoolcommittee/packets 2022-2023.](http://www.needham.k12.ma.us/districtinfo/schoolcommittee/packets%202022-2023)

A motion was
made:

At approximately 8:25 p.m., Michael Greis moved, and Alisa Skatrud seconded the motion to adjourn the January 3, 2023, School Committee Meeting.

Adjournment

The motion carried the vote was 7-0-0.

Minutes Prepared by,
Cheryl Gosmon

Needham School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
January 17, 2023

Matthew Spengler, Chairman of the Needham School Committee, called the January 17, 2023, meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. This meeting is broadcast on live stream at: <https://www.needhamchannel.org>. The meeting is accessible via Zoom for public comment.

Members of the School Committee present were:

Matthew Spengler, Chair	Elizabeth Lee
Andrea Longo Carter, Vice-Chair	Michael O'Brien
Connie Barr	Alisa Skatrud
Michael Greis	
Dilin Meloni, (non-voting Student Member)	

Members of the Central Administration present were:

Dan Gutekanst	Alexandra M. McNeil
Anne Gulati	Carmen Williams
Mary Lammi	

Also present were:

Lisa Messina, Director of Literacy K-8
Caren Firger, Assistant Principal of Newman Elementary School
LeeAnn Sutton, Director of Fine and Performing Arts
Elizabeth Zajac, Director of World Languages

Public Comments

Public Comments

Chairman Spengler offered the opportunity for members of the public to speak to the School Committee on issues not on the agenda, either in person or on the Zoom link. Chairman Spengler stated that members of the community could also contact the School Committee via email at schoolcommittee@needham.k12.ma.us.

Chairman Spengler recognized Needham High School seniors, Claire Skatrud, Isabella Gilchrist, and Brian Curry.

Students reported that they have been active with music and theatre at Needham High School. Students referred to the performing arts budget request and school master plan. Students expressed their concern for the lack of adequate equipment, performance, and rehearsal spaces. Students would like more consideration given to the School Master Plan and additional auditorium space. Students noted that Needham High School has a very involved number of student performers but that the space and resources provided don't match the level of engagement. Students expressed that as the School Master Plan is being discussed they would like the consideration of having more than one functional auditorium. Students mentioned their involvement with the Theatre, Light and Sound Study and expressed their appreciation to the district and the town on this project. Students encouraged the district and town to continue working towards adequate resources for performing arts programming.

Public Hearing on the FY24 Budget

Public Hearing
on the FY24
Budget

Chairman Spengler opening the Public Hearing on the FY24 School Operating Budget Request. He stated that this is an opportunity for the public to voice opinion, ask questions, and raise any concerns they have regarding the proposed FY24 School Operating Budget. He stated that the School Committee will vote on the budget on Tuesday, January 24, 2023.

Chairman Spengler opened the Public Hearing at 6:35 pm and yielded the floor to the Superintendent of Schools to present a brief presentation before hearing comments from the public.

Superintendent Gutekanst outlined the challenging context for developing a budget request to support the Needham Public Schools in 2023-2024. He stated that the primary driver and one that the School Committee has asked the school department to focus on is the four priority areas within the Portrait of a Needham Graduate 2020-2025. He stated that this budget plan does adhere to the Portrait Plan and Strategic Priorities. He described enrollment challenges, and special education enrollment challenges. He stated that the overall FY24 Operating Budget request is \$92,155,973 that is broken into three areas: level services, wages, and program improvements. He stated that the proposed increase is \$4,878,175, which is an increase of 5.59% over FY23. He stated that the School Committee will vote on the FY24 School Operating Budget on Tuesday, January 24, 2023.

Superintendent Gutekanst stated that within this budget request is a request for 14.33 FTEs which will provide student support services, special education, kindergarten teaching assistants for enrollment, literacy specialist teachers, special area teachers, and increased administrative support. He outlined the special education request totaling \$1,311,668.00 and 9.0 FTEs. He also outlined new and expanded programming as well as proposed increases for technology.

Superintendent Gutekanst stated that the FY24 School Operating Budget addresses priorities identified by School Committee, build capacity in specialized programs for special education students and counseling, offers new summer programming, supports sustainable and competitive wages, redirects existing funds to meet new needs, allows the district to continue to prioritize equity, inclusion, and the Strategic Plan.

Superintendent Gutekanst concluded his presentation with comments from the Report to the Town of Needham from the Needham School Committee April 4, 1859. The Superintendent's entire budget presentation is available at www.needham.k12.ma.us.

Chairman Spengler invited members of the public to bring forward their comments and questions:

Caren Firger, Assistant Principal of Newman Elementary School, and president of the Needham Education Association (NEA) spoke in support of the FY2024 budget request. She stated that the 2024 budget request meets the needs of the Needham Public Schools and upholds contracts and agreements that the School Committee have committed to the staff. She stated that the FY2024 budget request helps students by providing additional staff to support the greater academic and social-emotional needs that have been known since the start of the pandemic. She also stated that additional special education teachers, teaching assistants, guidance counselors, English language teachers, nurses, psychologists, and speech and language pathologists increase the capacity to teach students with varying needs and be able to provide students with the services they need to grow and learn. She stated that the FY2024 budget provides additional leadership to the Elliot and Mitchell Elementary Schools by expanding part-time assistant principal roles to full-time positions. She stated that the 2024 budget request affirms the district's commitment to the strategic priorities based on the Portrait of a Needham Graduate. She concluded her comments by noting that with this focus, all students in the Needham Public Schools will be creative thinkers and problem solvers, communicators and collaborators, socially and culturally responsive contributors, responsible and resilient individuals and empowered learners.

Lindsey Bigda, Needham Parent, PTC Co-Chair, Needham Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Preschool Liaison, and SEPAC Leadership Committee. Ms. Bigda stated that she would not have gotten involved with any of these organization if it weren't for the eternal gratitude she feels for the preschool program and what they have accomplished with her son and her family. She stated that if she had not had the comprehensive services offered by the incredible staff at the preschool, her family would not be experiencing the success they have today. She stated that for children with developmental disabilities like autism, early intervention makes an enormous difference in long-term outcomes. She stated that Needham Public Schools need to invest in these services for its youngest children now so they can have the best chance for success. She stated that no child should lack access to services due to funding, staffing, or building capacity issues. She stated that the FY2024 budget request is critical to the success of children throughout their entire school journey.

Christianne Bayliss, Needham parent, 5 Parkinson Street spoke in support of the FY2024 special education budget request. She stated that this year she received a notice that her child's speech services were on hold and that the three-year evaluation will not be completed with the prescribed timeline. She stated that she recognizes that both internal and external factors may have contributed to this but that she believes that capacity played a part in this. She stated that capacity has been stretched and that staff and students are feeling the effects.

Chairman Spengler closed the Public Hearing on the FY24 School Operating Budget Request at 7:00 pm. There were no additional comments from the public or from members of the School Committee.

School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates

School Committee
Chair and
Subcommittee
Updates

There were no School Committee Chair and subcommittee updates.

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent's
Comments

There were no Superintendent comments.

Consent Items

Consent Items

1. Approve Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2022, revised and December 20, 2022
2. FY23 Budget Transfers
3. Approve FY23 Grants
4. Accept Donations

Chairman Spengler asked if members of the School Committee wanted to remove any item from the Consent Agenda. Chairman Spengler stated that because there are no objections, the items are adopted by unanimous consent.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

FY24 Budget Discussion: Program Improvement for Instruction and Innovation

FY24 Budget
Discussion:
Program
Improvement for
Instruction and
Innovation

Chairman Spengler introduced this item and invited Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Innovation, Carmen Williams to present the FY2024 budget request on program improvement.

Dr. Williams introduced, Lisa Messina, Director of Literacy K-8, Caren Firger, Assistant Principal of Newman Elementary School (speaking on behalf of the K-5 Social Studies Curriculum Director), LeeAnn Sutton, Director of Fine and Performing Arts, and Elizabeth Zajac, Director of World Languages.

Dr. Williams expressed her appreciation to the Curriculum Directors and Assistant Principal for their work on the Portrait of the Needham Graduate. She stated that in FY22, with a full return to an in-person model, gaps in student learning and development are being addressed and we continue our focus on equity. She stated that in FY23, we will work to scale and optimize the Actions of the Strategic Plan going forward.

Curriculum Directors and Assistant Principal presented reports on Early Literacy, K-5 Social Studies, Fine and Performing Arts, and World Languages. The Administrators spoke about key goals, current work, next steps, and budgetary needs. The entire report is available online at www.needham.k12.ma.us. Discussion followed.

Update on School Facilities Master Plan

Update on School Facilities Master Plan

Dr. Gutekanst introduced this item. He stated that he and Anne Gulati, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations would update the School Committee and community on the School Facilities Master Plan. He reiterated the goals of the School Master Planning process established by the School Committee to remediate the deteriorating physical infrastructure and programmatic deficiencies of the Mitchell and Pollard Schools, to alleviate overcrowding, to mitigate the impact of construction on one or more generation of students, to avoid expensive building maintenance over time by completing renovations in a timely manner, to avoid expenditures for temporary facilities, and to provide elementary enrollment capacity, including preparing Needham for Universal Preschool.

Dr. Gutekanst repeated the four options that came out of the planning process, A, E, C, and D. He stated that the School Committee thoroughly discussed the options and chose option C and D. He stated that options C and D allow the sixth-grade program to return to the Pollard campus. The Mitchell School would be a MSBA project with the slowest completion but has the best scale and size for the Mitchell site. He stated that option D would be complete in about 13-14 years. He stated that option D and C have the most square footage and option D is the most affordable of all them. He stated that the costs for these facilities are over \$300M. He stated that a working group of the Select Board, School Committee, Permanent Public Building Committee (PPBC), and Finance Committee have been meeting for almost two years to talk about how the town and taxpayers could fund these projects. Dr. Gutekanst reviewed the financing impact for School Committee consideration and described next steps. The entire report is available in the School Committee Packet for this meeting at www.needham.k12.ma.us. Visit Master Planning at https://www.needham.k12.ma.us/departments/business_operations/facilities. Discussion followed.

School Committee Comments

School Committee Comments

Alisa Skatrud expressed appreciation for the grants as listed in the consent agenda and for the donations received.

Chairman Spengler stated that he and Vice-Chair Andrea Longo Carter will be out of town and will not be available for the next School Committee meeting. He stated that Michael Greis as agreed to serve as acting Chair at the next School Committee meeting.

Chairman Spengler stated that yesterday we celebrated the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King. He stated that he has had the honor and privilege to visit the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park in Washington D.C, several times and would like to close with a quote that is etched upon one of the walls that is part of that park, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We

are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

A list of all documents used at this School Committee meeting is available at:

[http://www.needham.k12.ma.us/districtinfo/schoolcommittee/packets 2022-2023.](http://www.needham.k12.ma.us/districtinfo/schoolcommittee/packets 2022-2023)

A List of Documents

A motion was made:

At approximately 8:35 p.m., Michael Greis moved, and Elizabeth Lee seconded the motion to adjourn the January 17, 2023, School Committee Meeting.
The motion carried the vote was unanimous 7-0-0.

Adjournment

Minutes Prepared by,
Cheryl Gosmon



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **Discussion**

Student Presentation: Portrait of a Needham Graduate

Background Information:

- Throughout the school year different schools and staff will share how one of the five attributes in the Portrait of a Needham Graduate are reflected in teaching and learning in the Needham Public Schools:

Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers
Communicators and Collaborators
Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors
Responsible and Resilient Individuals
Empowered Learners

- Teachers and students from the Sunita Williams School fourth grade will share their experience and describe their project about the environment at your meeting.

Person(s) Available for Presentation:

George Goneconto, Sunita Williams 4th Grade teacher
Sunita Williams 4th Grade Students
Kiana Brunson, Principal, Sunita L. Williams School



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **Discussion**

Newman School Improvement Plan

Background Information:

- The Needham High School Council has worked collaboratively this past year to advise Principal Jessica Peterson and develop and maintain the School Improvement Plan.
- In accordance with M.G. L. Chapter 71, Section 59c, the Superintendent has approved the Newman School Improvement Plan.

Persons Available for Presentation:

Jessica Peterson, Principal of Newman School
Newman School Council Members

Newman Elementary School

School Improvement Plan

2023-2026

Emily Day, Teacher

Michaela McGrory, Teacher

Susan Eyer, Community Member

Craig Idlebrook, Parent

Samantha Ensslin, Parent

Caren Firger, Assistant Principal

Jessica Peterson, Principal



**NEWMAN
ELEMENTARY**
WHERE LEARNING ROCKS!

Newman Elementary School Mission

The Newman Elementary School is an inclusive neighborhood school located in Needham, Massachusetts. The building itself opened its doors in 1960 and has since served as a junior high school, state police barracks, and now as Needham's largest elementary school. The physical structure sits on 60 beautiful acres abutting protected wetlands. The grounds are complete with large play structures and newly renovated playing fields. The wetlands provide an amazing site for bringing our curriculum to life and the size of the building and its facilities attract many community programs including community theater, cultural arts events, and community youth sports. Newman Elementary School is the largest elementary school in the Needham Public School District. Serving over 680 (711) students in grades Preschool-5, Newman offers an engaging and supportive learning environment for all children. We are an inclusive school, providing a variety of instructional settings that best suit the needs of students' individual learning styles. We are a diverse and inclusive community serving families from a multitude of cultures, backgrounds, gender and LGBTQ+ identities. In addition, Newman houses two of the district's special education programs including the Early Childhood Center, an integrated preschool program and Elementary Intensive Learning Center (ILC), a specialized program for students with complicated learning profiles. Finally, just as we encourage our students to be active learners, we ourselves are a Professional Learning Community, using student work and data to provide targeted and meaningful instruction so that all students can reach their fullest potential. We are proud of the supportive parents, dedicated teachers, and enthusiastic students who make up Newman School.





MISSION:

A school and community partnership that creates excited learners, inspires excellence, & fosters integrity.

VISION:

Preparing ALL Needham Public Schools students to be:

- Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers;
- Communicators and Collaborators;
- Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors;
- Responsible and Resilient Individuals;
- Empowered Learners

CORE VALUES:

- Scholarship
- Community
- Citizenship
- Personal Growth

NEEDHAM STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1. All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning

- 1A) Incorporate opportunities for student choice, independent learning, & personalized pathways*
- 1B) Provide structures & experiences that enable student efficacy, leadership, and voice*
- 1C) Teach students the content & skills necessary for them to grow personally and academically.*

2. All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning

- 2A) Extend interdisciplinary teaching and learning practices Pre-K to 12*
- 2B) Embed Portrait Competencies, Technology, Inclusive Practices, SEL, and Equity into all curricula and instructional practices*
- 2C) Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills through multiple means of expression.*

3. All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments

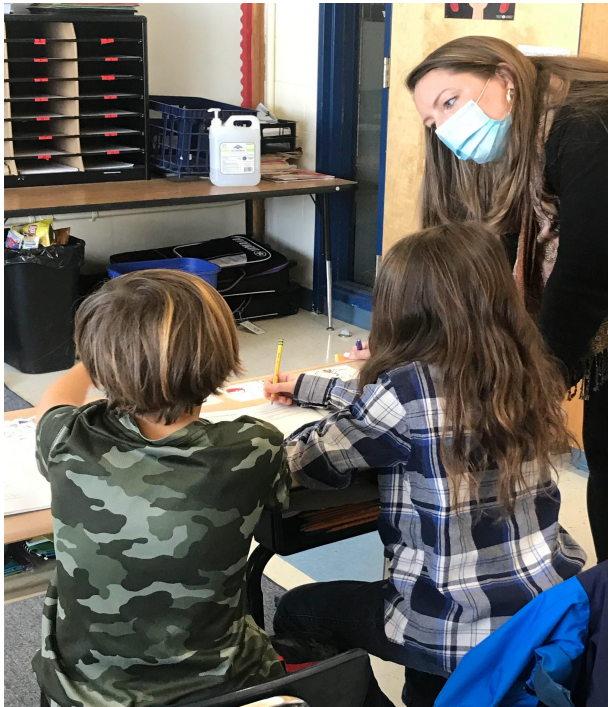
- 3A) Support and design classroom models and environments that foster collaboration & innovation*
- 3B) Provide time, schedules, and spaces that promote learning objectives*
- 3C) Complement instruction with accessible learning beyond the classroom, within the community, and in partnership with families.*

4. Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students

- 4A) Provide staffing, facilities, and budget resources aligned to district priorities*
- 4B) Implement a recruitment, retention, and development process for staff growth and diversity*
- 4C) Establish a professional learning structure supporting equity and the Portrait vision.*

School Goals	SP	Action Steps/ Strategies Employed	Impact on Students	Progress
<p>#1--Teachers will partner with colleagues to address the targeted academic and social/emotional needs of students on a consistent basis.</p>	<p>1C 2B 2C 3A 3B 4A 4C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish school wide expectations for teacher engagement in coaching cycles and consultations based on student data <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a tiered system of support for students to receive interventions in SEL <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for vertical teams to collaborate on the effective academic and SEL strategies that have impacted learning 	<p>All students will receive consistent, targeted intervention that results in increased student achievement and emotional wellness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible and Resilient Individuals • Empowered Learners 	
<p>#2--Teachers will foster the emotional development and social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviors of students so they can be successful across a variety of settings*</p> <p>*© CASEL 2018</p>	<p>1A 1B 1C 2B 3A 3C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a tiered system of behavioral supports <input type="checkbox"/> Explore and implement best practices for supporting students' executive functioning skills, including, but not limited to, explicit skills instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Promote student self-reflection on which strategies support their behavioral, emotional, and sensory needs to increase self-awareness and independence <input type="checkbox"/> Promote growth mindset through integrated reflection within academic projects <input type="checkbox"/> Support wellness of all school staff by promoting a culture of self-care, mindfulness, and gratitude through the use of Restorative Circles 	<p>Students' social and emotional needs will be met by all teachers in the Newman School, allowing students to be successful across all areas of the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors; • Responsible and Resilient Individuals 	
<p>#3--Increase the sense of belonging at school for all members of the school community.</p>	<p>1B 1C 2B 3A 3B 3C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore what it means to “belong” at the Newman School with staff, students, and families <input type="checkbox"/> Survey students on their sense of belonging at school <input type="checkbox"/> Disaggregate data to determine if specific groups are feeling more isolated than others <input type="checkbox"/> Develop support plans to address reported SEL or school climate needs <input type="checkbox"/> Explore opportunities to support new to Needham and non-Needham resident students and families <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate effectiveness of support plans 	<p>Teachers, students, and families will collaborate to increase the sense of belonging of all members of the Newman School community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors • Responsible and Resilient Individuals • Empowered Learners 	

School Goals	SP	Action Steps/ Strategies Employed	Impact on Students	Progress
#4--Effectively communicate to our diverse Newman caregiver community in a variety of ways	1A 1B 2A 2B 2C 3C 4C	<input type="checkbox"/> Examine current school to home communication at the classroom and school level <input type="checkbox"/> Establish consistent modes for communicating academic expectations for students, including opportunities for work shares, portfolio reviews, and student led conferencing. <input type="checkbox"/> Create additional opportunities for students to reflect upon their work and communicate their goals with families	School and family will work together to support the needs of students in a collaborative manner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers ● Communicators and Collaborators ● Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors ● Responsible and Resilient Individuals ● Empowered Learners 	



Glossary of Terms

Achievement Gap

The observed, persistent disparity in measures of educational performance among subgroups of U.S. students, especially groups defined by socioeconomic status (SES), race/ethnicity and gender.

CASEL

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. Their mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school.

Community Meetings

Monthly school assemblies that follow a Responsive Classroom meeting format, which invite the school community to greet one another, share their accomplishments, participate in an activity and hear about class/school news and announcements.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally Responsive Teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning ([Ladson-Billings, 1994](#)).

Economically Disadvantaged (ED)

A term used by government institutions in allocating free school meals to "a student who is a member of a household that meets the income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced-price meals (less than or equal to 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines)" or business grants.

Emotional Regulation

Controlling one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts in the pursuit of long-term goals. More specifically, emotional self-regulation refers to the ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulses

English Learner (EL)

English learners, or ELs, are students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses.

Executive Functioning

Executive function and self-regulation skills are the mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, remember, and juggle multiple tasks.

Growth Mindset

This concept, coined by Carol Dweck, means that you believe in your ability to become better through hard work, and help from others. Dweck and her team became interested in the attitude of students when it comes to failure. After studying the behavior of students and children, the term "growth mindset" came about.

High Needs

DESE defines "high needs" as an unduplicated count of all students in a school or district belonging to at least one of the following individual subgroups: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and former ELL students, or low income students (eligible for free/reduced price school lunch). For a school to be considered to be making progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps, the cumulative PPI for both the "all students" group and high needs students must be 75 or higher.
academic courses.

Intervention

Academic interventions are additional instruction that supplements the general curriculum (regular classroom instruction) and may include supports outside of the regular classroom (i.e. pull-out for small group instruction) necessary to improve academic performance.

Mindfulness

Being mindful means having your mind on what you are doing. It's the opposite of rushing or doing too many things at once. To be mindful, you slow down to take your time. You do one thing at a time. You focus on what you're doing in a calm way.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

A Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a framework for how school districts can build the necessary systems to ensure that each and every student receives a high quality educational experience. It is designed to support schools with proactively identifying and addressing the strengths and needs of all students by optimizing data-driven decision-making, progress monitoring, and the use of evidence-based supports and strategies with increasing intensity to sustain student growth.

Portfolio

A portfolio is a systematic collection of student work that represents student activities, accomplishments, and achievements over a specific period of time in one or more areas of the curriculum.

Professional Development (PD)

Education for teachers and other school staff regarding school and district based initiatives. Currently, PD time is provided during staff meetings, early release days, staff meetings and during the school day as needed.

Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Grade level teams that collaborate to develop strategic goals aimed towards increasing student achievement.

SEL

Social and Emotional Learning

Self-Awareness

The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.

Self-Care

The practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress.

Sensory Motor Breaks

A sensory break or “brain break” is a fancy word for just taking a regular old break from seated learning activities or sedentary activities. It is a time for students to gain the sensory input they need in their bodies to stay alert, on task, and focused.

Student Centered Coaching Cycle

A teacher in partnership with an instructional coach (literacy, math, technology), engages in a cycle that enhances the opportunity for teachers to co-plan, rehearse, co-teach, and then debrief with their coaches so that they can target specific student learning goals.

Student Led Conferences

A student-led conference is a preplanned meeting in which students demonstrate responsibility for their academic performance by providing a review of their work for parents and teachers.

Student Support Team (SST)

A group of Newman classroom teachers, special educators, guidance counselors, instructional coaches, and administrators that meets weekly to discuss individual and small groups of students and provide strategies and/or targeted interventions that can be implemented to support student growth. Data is collected based on student progress to determine if interventions have been successful.

Work Shares/Celebrations

Student Work Shares or Celebrations are an authentic means to recognize a child's effort or accomplishment, rather than focusing on reward systems. Students and others in the school community are invited to view the students' work and see all that they have accomplished.

Newman Elementary School

School Improvement Plan
2023-2026





School Advisory Council

Emily Day, Teacher

Michaela McGrory, Teacher

Susan Eyler, Community Member

Craig Idlebrook, Parent

Samantha Ensslin, Parent

Caren Firger, Assistant Principal

Jessica Peterson, Principal

Panorama Survey Data Spring 2022



STUDENTS

TEACHERS

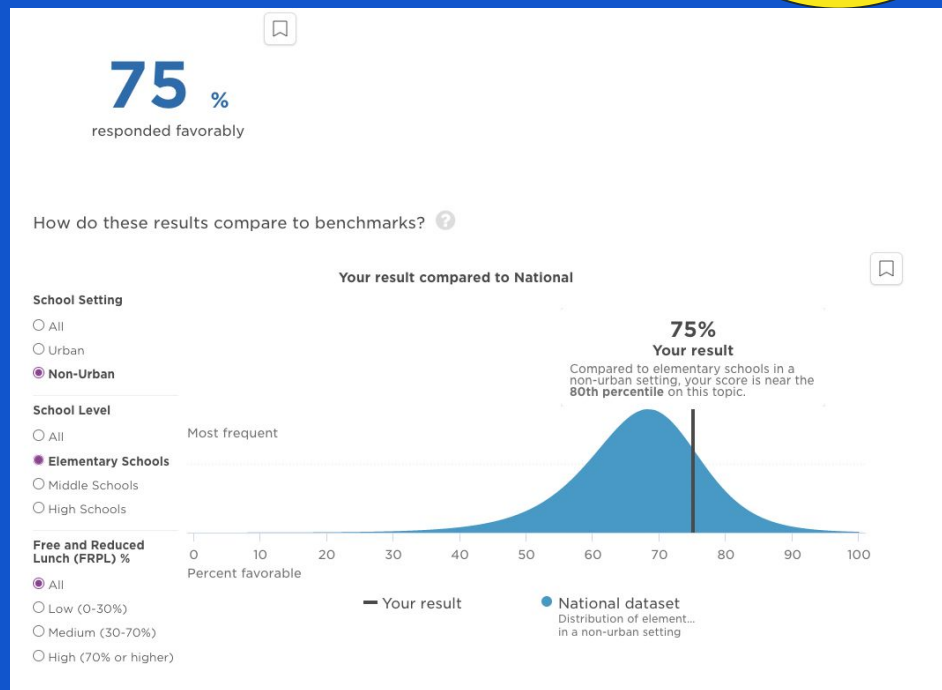
FAMILIES

In the Spring of 2022, the district surveyed students (3rd-12th), educators, and families regarding their social and emotional well-being and how the schools are doing in supporting their students' needs.

How are we doing?

SCHOOL CLIMATE STUDENTS

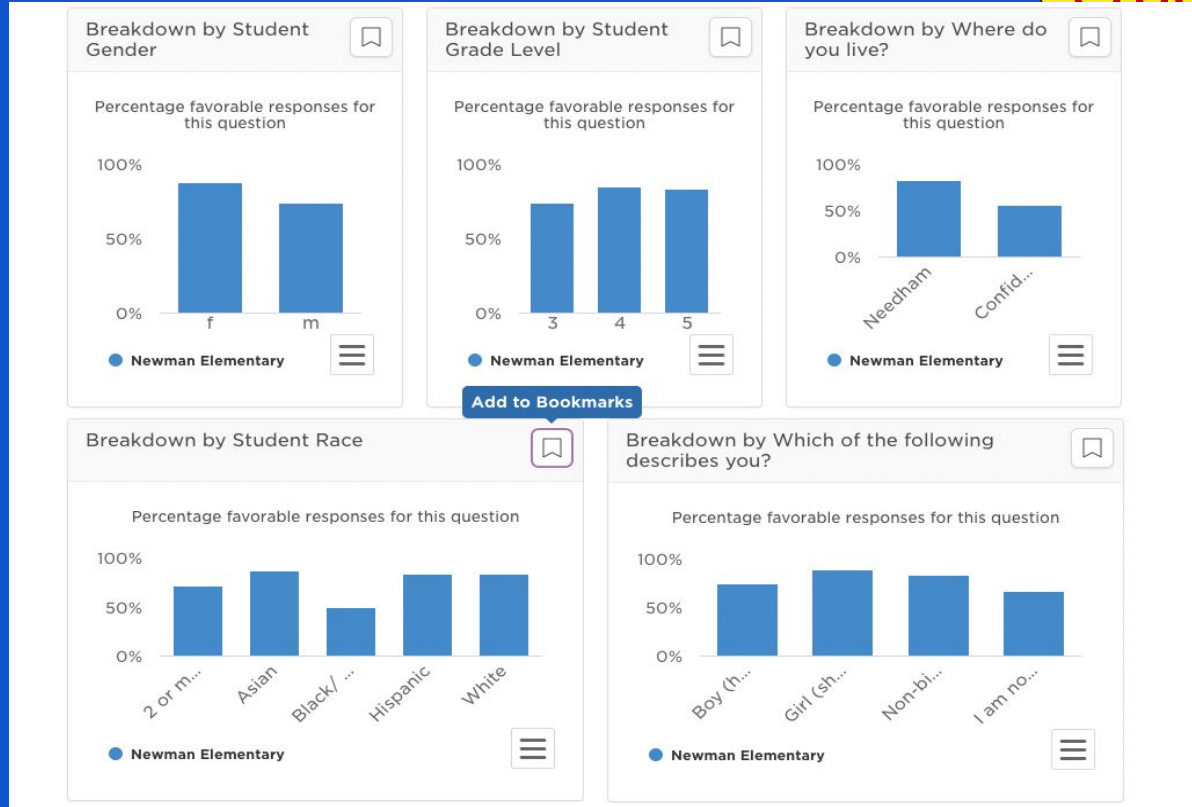
How positive or negative is the energy of the school?



How are we doing?

SCHOOL
COMMUNITY
STUDENTS

Who is not feeling as positive about school?



How are we doing?

SCHOOL
COMMUNITY
STUDENTS

But who is
saying they
DON'T feel like
they belong?

Sense of Belonging

Based on **268** responses

How much students feel that they are valued members of the school community.

What are the results for this topic?



79 %

responded favorably

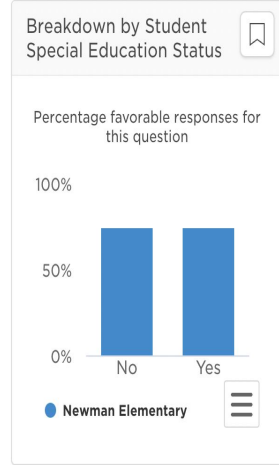
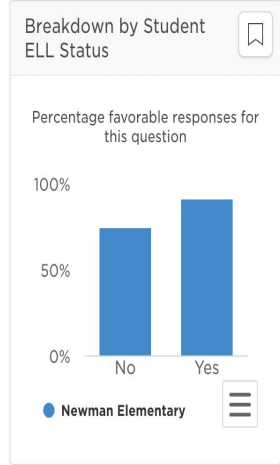
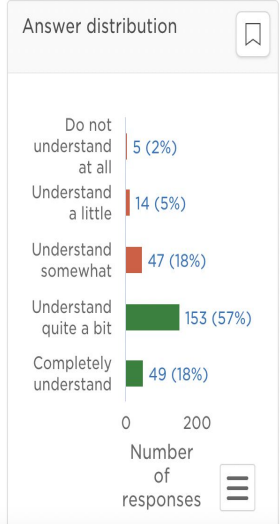
How are we doing?

**SENSE OF
BELONGING
STUDENTS**

QUESTION

How well do people at your school understand you as a person?

75% responded favorably



How did different groups respond?

Group by

Results by group

Where do you live?

Group	Percentage
Needham	80%
Confidentiality protected	61%

Which of the following describes you?

Student ELL Status

Student Special Education Status

Student Gender

How are we doing?

SENSE OF
BELONGING
STUDENTS

How did different groups respond?

Group by

Results by group

Where do you live?

2 or more races 70%

Which of the following describes you?

Asian 81%

Student ELL Status

Black/ African American 66%

Student Special Education Status

Hispanic 73%

Student Gender

White 80%

Student Grade Level

Student Race



How are we doing?

ENGAGEMENT
STUDENTS

Engagement

Based on **268** responses

How attentive and invested students are in class.

What are the results for this topic?



67 %

responded favorably

How did different groups respond?

Group by

Results by group

Where do you live?

f 71%

Which of the following describes you?

m 63%

Student ELL Status

Student Special Education Status

Student Gender



How are we doing?

ANTI-RACIST
PRACTICES
STUDENTS

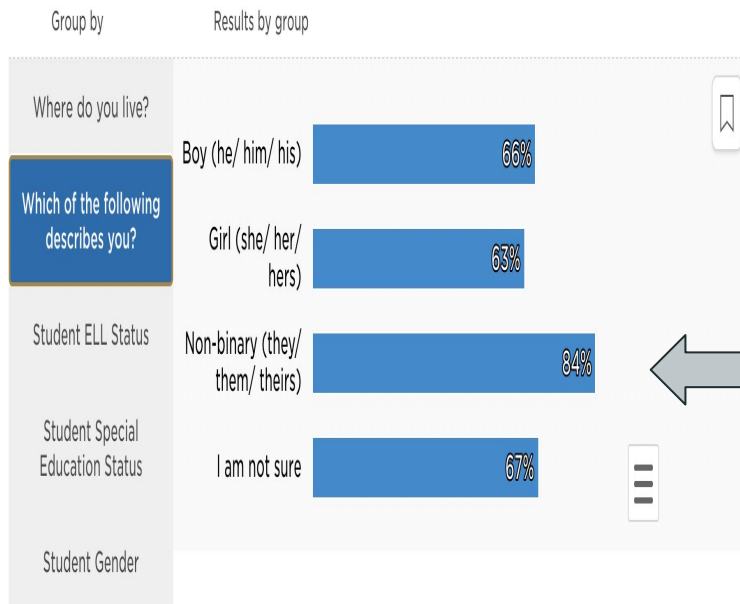
NPS Anti-racist Practice

Based on **268** responses

What are the results for this topic?

65 %
responded favorably

How did different groups respond?



How are we doing?



NPS Anti-racist Practice

Based on **268** responses

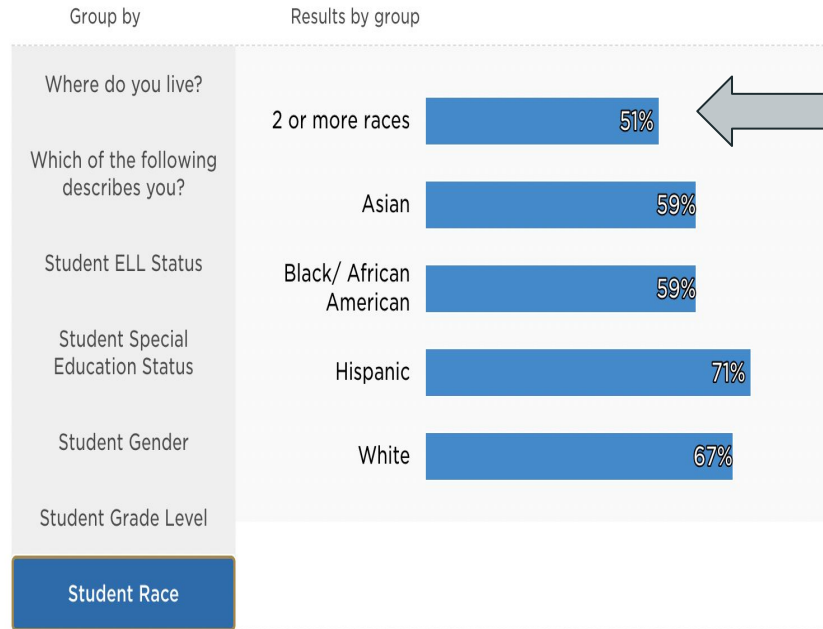
What are the results for this topic?



65 %

responded favorably

How did different groups respond?



How are we doing?

Students say...

SELF
MANAGEMENT
STUDENTS

QUESTION

- During the past 30 days...How often did you remain calm, even when someone was bothering you or saying bad things?

68% 
responded
favorably



QUESTION

- During the past 30 days...How often did you allow others to speak without interrupting them?

90% 
responded
favorably



QUESTION

- During the past 30 days...How often were you polite to other students?

95% 
responded
favorably



QUESTION

- During the past 30 days...How often did you keep your temper under control?

88% 
responded
favorably



How are we doing?

Teachers say...

**SELF
MANAGEMENT
TEACHERS**

Self-Management

Based on 62 responses

How well students manage their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations.

What are the results for this topic?



61 %

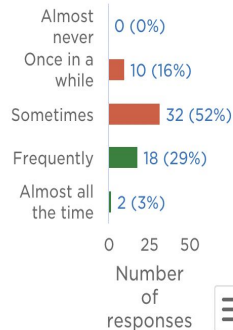
responded favorably

QUESTION
✓ How often did your students pay attention and resist distractions?

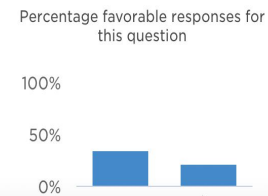
32%
responded favorably



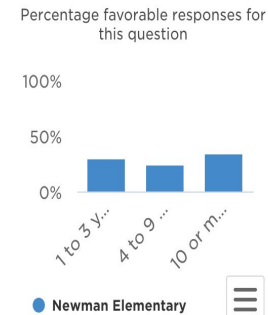
Answer distribution



Breakdown by At which school building do you work? (Please choose your primary workplace and answer this survey based on your experiences there. If you work at more than 1 building, you will have the opportunity to complete more than 1 survey.)



Breakdown by For how many years have you been working in the Needham Public Schools?



School Improvement Focus Areas

Teachers will foster the emotional development and social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviors of students so they can be successful across a variety of settings

- Explore and implement best practices for supporting students' executive functioning skills, including, but not limited to, explicit skills instruction
- Promote student self-reflection on which strategies support their behavioral, emotional, and sensory needs to increase self-awareness and independence
- Promote growth mindset through integrated reflection within academic projects
- Support wellness of all school staff by promoting a culture of self-care, mindfulness, and gratitude through the use of Restorative Circles

Increase the sense of belonging at school for all members of the school community.

- Explore what it means to “belong” at the Newman School with staff, students, and families
- Explore opportunities to support new to Needham and non-Needham resident students and families

School Improvement Focus Areas

Teachers will partner with colleagues to address the targeted academic and social/emotional needs of students on a consistent basis.

- Provide opportunities for vertical teams to collaborate on the effective academic and SEL strategies that have impacted learning

Effectively communicate to our diverse Newman caregiver community in a variety of ways

- Establish consistent modes for communicating academic expectations for students, including opportunities for work shares, portfolio reviews, and student led conferencing.
- Create additional opportunities for students to reflect upon their work and communicate their goals with families



Questions?





Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **Discussion**

Massachusetts School Building Authority Statements of Interest:

- **William Mitchell Elementary School**
- **Pollard Middle School**

Background Information:

- The School Committee has expressed the need to submit two Statements of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority as part of the district's School Facilities Master Plan.
- Enclosed are the draft SOI documents for your review.
- Information about the SOI process can be found [here](#).

Person(s) Available for Presentation:

Dan Gutekanst, Superintendent of Schools
Anne Gulati, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

**In Partnership with the
Massachusetts School
Building Authority**

**Statement of
Interest Process:
Pollard & Mitchell**

**Needham School
Committee**

March 7, 2023





Goals of the School Master Planning Process

- **Remediate** the deteriorating physical infrastructure and programmatic deficiencies of the Mitchell and Pollard Schools, including the end-of-life middle school modular classrooms.
- **Alleviate** the general overcrowding and lack of adequate program space at the District's two middle school facilities: High Rock and Pollard.
- **Mitigate** the impact of construction on one or more generations of students.
- **Avoid** expensive building maintenance over time by completing renovations in a timely manner.
- **Avoid** expenditures for temporary facilities, to the extent possible.
- **Provide** elementary enrollment capacity, including preparing Needham for Universal Preschool.



Massachusetts School Building Authority

Funding Affordable, Sustainable, and Efficient Schools in Partnership with Local Communities

- **The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) is a quasi-independent government authority created in 2004 to work with local communities to create affordable, sustainable, educationally appropriate, and energy efficient schools across Massachusetts.**
- **The initial step to work with the MSBA is to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI).**



Massachusetts School Building Authority

Funding Affordable, Sustainable, and Efficient Schools in Partnership with Local Communities

- **The SOI process includes:**
 - **The MSBA announces the SOI submittal period (In 2023, closes on April 14th)**
 - **District submits separate SOIs for each school facility project for approval.**
 - **SOIs must identify and provide a description of each deficiency of the facility.**



Massachusetts School Building Authority

Funding Affordable, Sustainable, and Efficient Schools in Partnership with Local Communities

- **MSBA requires the vote of the School Committee authorizing the Superintendent to submit the SOI.**
- **MSBA also requires the vote of the municipal governing body (Select Board) authorizing the Superintendent to submit the SOI.**



Massachusetts School Building Authority

Funding Affordable, Sustainable, and Efficient Schools in Partnership with Local Communities

- **MSBA requires the district to indicate which project submitted is the priority project for the community.**
- **If the MSBA invites Needham into the process, this will allow both Needham and the MSBA to have a conversation about the projects submitted, including the priority project.**



Priority: Pollard Middle School

The School Committee voted Options C & D on 4/5/22 as “the most educational sound and overall, less expensive path forward for the students and staff of the Mitchell, High Rock and Pollard Schools.” These scenarios:

- Reconfigure and expand Pollard by 100,000 square feet (gsf) as a Grade 6-8 Middle School**
- Convert High Rock to the District's 6th Elementary School**
- Reconstruct Mitchell as a three-section, 80,000 g.s.f. school**
- Total cost range: \$334.2M - \$349.2M**



Priority: Pollard Middle School

Approved options C & D are preferred because they:

- **Avoid costly temporary swing space**
- **Offer fastest resolution of Pollard and High Rock issues**
- **Offer fastest resolution of Mitchell School issues and best scale for Mitchell site**
- **Create elementary classroom capacity for enrollment growth**



Next Steps

- **SOIs Reviewed & discussed by School Committee 3/7, Vote 3/21**
- **SOIs Reviewed & discussed by Select Board 3/14, Vote 3/28**
- **SOIs Reviewed by PPBC 3/13**
- **Business office obtains minutes, signatures & certified vote documentation 3/29 - 4/6**
- **Tentative submission date 4/7; SOI Window closes at MSBA 4/14**
- **Await MSBA decision, tentatively December '23**

Massachusetts School Building Authority

Next Steps to Finalize Submission of your FY 2023 Statement of Interest

Thank you for submitting an FY 2023 Statement of Interest (SOI) to the MSBA electronically. **Please note, the District's submission is not yet complete if the District selected statutory priority 1 or priority 3.** If either of these priorities were selected, the District is required to mail the required supporting documentation to the MSBA, which is described below.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION FOR SOI STATUTORY PRIORITIES #1 AND #3: If a District selects Statutory priority #1 and/or priority #3, the District is required to submit additional documentation with its SOI.

- If a District selects statutory priority #1, Replacement or renovation of a building which is structurally unsound or otherwise in a condition seriously jeopardizing the health and safety of the school children, where no alternative exists, the MSBA requires a hard copy of the engineering or other report detailing the nature and severity of the problem and a written professional opinion of how imminent the system failure is likely to manifest itself. The District also must submit photographs of the problematic building area or system to the MSBA.
- If a District selects statutory priority #3, Prevention of a loss of accreditation, the SOI will not be considered complete unless and until a summary of the accreditation report focused on the deficiency as stated in this SOI is provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: In addition to the information required above, the District may also provide any reports, pictures, or other information they feel will give the MSBA a better understanding of the issues identified at a facility.

If you have any questions about the SOI process please contact the MSBA at 617-720-4466 or SOI@massschoolbuildings.org.

Massachusetts School Building Authority

School District Needham

District Contact Anne Gulati TEL: (781) 455-0400

Name of School William Mitchell

Submission Date 3/2/2023

SOI CERTIFICATION

To be eligible to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI), a district must certify the following:

- The district hereby acknowledges and agrees that this SOI is NOT an application for funding and that submission of this SOI in no way commits the MSBA to accept an application, approve an application, provide a grant or any other type of funding, or places any other obligation on the MSBA.
- The district hereby acknowledges that no district shall have any entitlement to funds from the MSBA, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B or the provisions of 963 CMR 2.00.
- The district hereby acknowledges that the provisions of 963 CMR 2.00 shall apply to the district and all projects for which the district is seeking and/or receiving funds for any portion of a municipally-owned or regionally-owned school facility from the MSBA pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B.
- The district hereby acknowledges that this SOI is for one existing municipally-owned or regionally-owned public school facility in the district that is currently used or will be used to educate public PreK-12 students and that the facility for which the SOI is being submitted does not serve a solely early childhood or Pre-K student population.
- Prior to the submission of the SOI, the district will schedule and hold a meeting at which the School Committee will vote, using the specific language contained in the "Vote" tab, to authorize the submission of this SOI. This is required for cities, towns, and regional school districts.
- Prior to the submission of the SOI, the district will schedule and hold a meeting at which the City Council/Board of Aldermen or Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body will vote, using the specific language contained in the "Vote" tab, to authorize the submission of this SOI. This is not required for regional school districts.
- The district hereby acknowledges that current vote documentation is required for all SOI submissions. The district will use the MSBA's vote template and the required votes will specifically reference the school name and the priorities for which the SOI is being submitted.
- The district hereby acknowledges that it must upload all required vote documentation on the "Vote" tab, in the format required by the MSBA. All votes must be certified or signed and on city, town or district letterhead.
- The district hereby acknowledges that this SOI submission will not be complete until the MSBA has received all required supporting documentation for statutory priority 1 and statutory priority 3. If statutory priority 1 is selected, your SOI will not be considered complete unless and until you provide the required engineering (or other) report, a professional opinion regarding the problem, and photographs of the problematic area or system. If statutory priority 3 is selected, your SOI will not be considered complete unless and until you provide a summary of the accreditation report focused on the deficiency as stated in this SOI. The documentation noted above must be post-marked and submitted to the MSBA by the Core Program SOI filing period closure date.

**LOCAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT/SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR
(E.g., Mayor, Town Manager, Board of Selectmen)**

Chief Executive Officer *	School Committee Chair	Superintendent of Schools
----------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
(signature)	(signature)	(signature)
Date	Date	Date

* Local chief executive officer: In a city or town with a manager form of government, the manager of the municipality; in other cities, the mayor; and in other towns, the board of selectmen unless, in a city or town, some other municipal office is designated to the chief executive office under the provisions of a local charter. Please note, in districts where the Superintendent is also the Local Chief Executive Officer, it is required for the same person to sign the Statement of Interest Certifications twice.

Massachusetts School Building Authority

School District Needham

District Contact Anne Gulati TEL: (781) 455-0400

Name of School William Mitchell

Submission Date 3/2/2023

Note

The following Priorities have been included in the Statement of Interest:

1. Replacement or renovation of a building which is structurally unsound or otherwise in a condition seriously jeopardizing the health and safety of school children, where no alternative exists.
2. Elimination of existing severe overcrowding.
3. Prevention of the loss of accreditation.
4. Prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments.
5. Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility.
6. Short term enrollment growth.
7. Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements.
8. Transition from court-ordered and approved racial balance school districts to walk-to, so-called, or other school districts.

SOI Vote Requirement

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the MSBA’s vote requirements for submitting an SOI, which are set forth in the Vote Tab of this SOI. I understand that the MSBA requires votes from specific parties/governing bodies, in a specific format using the language provided by the MSBA. Further, I understand that the MSBA requires certified and signed vote documentation to be submitted with the SOI. I acknowledge that my SOI will not be considered complete and, therefore, will not be reviewed by the MSBA unless the required accompanying vote documentation is submitted to the satisfaction of the MSBA. All SOI vote documentation must be uploaded on the Vote Tab.

SOI Program: Core

Potential Project Scope: Potential New School

Is this a Potential Consolidation? No

Is this SOI the District Priority SOI? No

School name of the District Priority SOI: Pollard Middle

Is this part of a larger facilities plan? Yes

If "YES", please provide the following:

Facilities Plan Date: 11/19/2020

Planning Firm: Dore & Whittier Architects (DWA)

Please provide a brief summary of the plan including its goals and how the school facility that is the subject of this SOI fits into that plan:

The scope of this project is to renovate/replace the Mitchell School and increase its capacity for the purpose of addressing significant building deficiencies and overcrowding. This project has been identified in several Town facilities plans: Town-wide Comprehensive Facilities Study, Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc. (5/15/1998, KBA); Facilities Master Plan – Town of Needham, DiNisco Design Partnership (11/15/ 2006, DDP); Comprehensive Facilities Assessment- Mitchell & Hillside Schools, Dore & Whittier Architects Inc. (8/22/2011, DWA); Pre-Feasibility Study – Mitchell & Hillside Schools, (7/6/2012, DWA); Master Plan update by HKT Architects, Inc. (2014) and in the most recent School Master Plan by Dore & Whittier Architects (2020). DWA subsequently updated its Master Plan document in 2022.

The Mitchell School is a high priority for a comprehensive building renovation/ or replacement project, due to the age of the building (70+ years), deficiencies in the size and number of core educational spaces (42%) under current Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) standards for the permanent structure), inaccessibility of the teaching spaces for handicapped students and/or their parents, noted deficiencies and/or end-of-life conditions in most building systems, poor energy performance, and site constraints due to topography, wetlands and the current location of the facility. The 2020 Master Plan included updated evaluations of every aspect of the building by the following professional (A&E) disciplines: site (civil and landscape), architectural, structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, hazardous materials and energy savings, with a cost analysis of short-term and long-term improvements. Although the Needham Public Schools has undertaken significant repair and maintenance of the building over the years through its Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) and budgeting processes, all plans agree that this aging facility is in need of total renovation and/or replacement. Additionally, the project seeks to address the building's undersized educational spaces. During the summers of 2014 and 2019, the Town invested in modular classrooms to temporarily reduce, but not permanently solve, the overcrowding problem. The 2014 project built a 7,000 sq.ft. modular building that is independent of the main building structure, for the purpose of avoiding triggering the codes that would require substantial upgrades to the existing building. The new modular building created four (4) new (kindergarten) classrooms, which allowed the District to implement a full day kindergarten program in September 2019. The 2019 project added a 3,500 sq. ft. independent modular classroom building to accommodate an art and a music classroom. This allowed the school to repurpose the existing art and music rooms into general classrooms and special education spaces. The second modular building is also detached from the existing school. The modular classroom additions are a temporary "band aid" that have helped to reduce some of the severe overcrowding at Mitchell (from being 42% undersized to an estimated 30% undersized, based on gross square feet of the building, compared to current MSBA standards) while the District awaits a more comprehensive repair and/or replacement of the school.

Please provide the current student to teacher ratios at the school facility that is the subject of this SOI: 20 students per teacher

Please provide the originally planned student to teacher ratios at the school facility that is the subject of this SOI: 22 students per teacher

Does the District have a Master Educational Plan that includes facility goals for this building and all school buildings in District? Yes

If "YES", please provide the author and date of the District's Master Educational Plan.

Several studies have documented facility goals for the Mitchell School, including the most recent School Master Plan by Dore & Whittier Architects (2020). The Town of Needham also updates its Facilities Master Plan about every decade. The 1998, 2006 and 2014 master plans all identified the need to renovate/replace the Mitchell School to address overcrowding and building deficiencies. In addition, the building's deficiencies, and recommendations for remediation, have been documented in the fol

Is there overcrowding at the school facility? Yes

If "YES", please describe in detail, including specific examples of the overcrowding.

The Mitchell School, a four-section, 425-student K-5 school occupying 49,027 sq. ft. (excluding modular classrooms) is undersized by approximately 48%, compared to MSBA guidelines for gross square feet, based on enrollment. (When the modular classrooms totaling 9,900 sq. ft. are included, the deficit drops to about 37%.) As noted in the Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (DWA, 2011), specific educational spaces are undersized by the following percentages: 1948 wing classrooms (-18%), 1958 wing classrooms (-8%), library media center (-25%), cafeterium (-31%), kitchen (-60%), gymnasium (-10%). The only spaces that meet current MSBA guidelines are the two classrooms at the end of the 1968 wing and the detached, modular classrooms installed in 2014 and in 2019. As a comparison, the new Sunita Williams Elementary School (constructed in partnership with MSBA), which is a four-section K-5 facility serving 529 students, has a total gross square foot area of 94,000 sq.ft.

Additionally, there is a significant lack of remedial/tutorial and special education spaces. Small group instruction often occurs in corridors and former storage rooms. Currently, single offices and classrooms are shared by multiple teachers. For instance, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, and special education administration all share the same space. Students must walk through general education classrooms to access the guidance counselors and special education spaces which are located in a former entrance foyer. Special education parent meetings often occur in spaces that are shared by other service providers, which has created a confidentiality issue for the students being seen at that time. In addition, there is limited, shared space for gross motor activities, and OT services are often provided in the hallway. As a result, Mitchell is not able to house the OT equipment necessary for some students. Moreover, due to the shared use of space by service providers, special education, speech/language, and occupational therapy sessions often are interrupted or displaced by meetings. Finally, the undersized and inadequate spaces mean that, during the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) administration windows, Mitchell lacks sufficient testing areas to accommodate students whose Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) require separate testing space.

Due to a lack of appropriate specialized program space, special area programming is delivered in a way that compromises the educational program. Less than half of the school's Physical Education (PE) classes can be scheduled in the undersized gym. The remaining classes take place in the classroom and the cafeteria. As a result, Mitchell does not have the same physical education program as the other elementary schools in Needham. For instance, Mitchell 4th and 5th graders do not have two consistent PE times per week as they do in other schools. This arrangement also limits the availability of the stage/cafeteria space for school wide events, or special joint classroom events that need larger spaces to only two afternoons per week. The stage is not handicapped-accessible, which limits student access and participation. PE classes are bothered by students queuing for lunch in the cafeteria, as well as by the noise from the kitchen, the motors from the vending machines and milk cooler, and the raising and lowering of tables by the custodian. In addition, the size and layout of the Media Center require technology and media classes to run simultaneously within the same space, with no sound separation and with limiting access to the library collection.

The kitchen also is undersized by approximately 60% and has limited functionality. There are two stovetop burners for the entire school, and the school lacks a mechanical dishwasher (as well as the capacity to add one.) Due to the limited kitchen area, additional refrigerators and freezers were installed in the cafeteria space and some food prep occurs outside of the kitchen, as well. These deficiencies have limited the menu options for students.

Finally, there is inadequate space for administrative activities. The administrative suite is undersized by (-44%), compared to the MSBA guidelines. The Principal's Office is only accessible via an adjacent conference room, which is used several times per day for lunch groups, special education, reading, testing and assessment, parent/teacher conferences, team meetings, and small group work with students. This is problematic because the Principal, and visitors to the Principal's Office, must walk through and interrupt these meetings and testing situations. The overuse of the conference space also limits the Principal's access to the conference room for his own meetings with teacher teams, administrative teams, School Council, and parent groups.

Has the district had any recent teacher layoffs or reductions? Yes

If "YES", how many teaching positions were affected? 7

At which schools in the district? Broadmeadow Elementary, Sunita Williams Elementary, Mitchell Elementary and Newman Elementary

Please describe the types of teacher positions that were eliminated (e.g., art, math, science, physical education, etc.).

FY23 teachers: 1.0 FTE Newman; 1.0 FTE Mitchell; 0.7 FTE Broadmeadow visual arts 0.7 FTE Williams visual arts; 0.13 FTE Mitchell visual arts teacher; 0.2 FTE Newman visual arts; 0.17 FTE Mitchell world language.

Has the district had any recent staff layoffs or reductions? Yes

If "YES", how many staff positions were affected? 5

At which schools in the district? Broadmeadow Elementary, Eliot Elementary, Sunita Williams Elementary, Newman Elementary and Needham

Please describe the types of staff positions that were eliminated (e.g., guidance, administrative, maintenance, etc.).

FY23: 1.0 FTE Broadmeadow kindergarten TA; 0.8 FTE Sunita Williams COTA; 0.8 FTE Newman SLPA; 0.5 FTE Eliot TA, 1.0 FTE NHS permanent building substitute.

Please provide a description of the program modifications as a consequence of these teacher and/or staff reductions, including the impact on district class sizes and curriculum.

The teacher reductions in FY23 were made in response to enrollment/scheduling changes in the respective schools. The staff reductions were made to better reflect student support service requirements, including the conversion of paraprofessionals to certified teaching staff. The changes had no impact on program, class size, or curriculum.

Please provide a description of the local budget approval process for a potential capital project with theMSBA. Include schedule information (i.e. Town Meeting dates, city council/town council meetings dates, regional school committee meeting dates). Provide, if applicable, the District’s most recent budget approval process that resulted in a budget reduction and the impact of the reduction to the school district (staff reductions, discontinued programs, consolidation of facilities).

The budget process begins in September/October, when the School Committee votes budget guidelines. The budget is developed in October-December, with a public hearing and budget review in December - January. The School Committee votes its final budget recommendation at the end of January and the Town Manager's balanced budget proposal (including the School Committee voted budget, if different) is due to the Finance Committee by January 31. The Finance Committee's recommendation, which is voted by March 15, becomes the main motion at Town Meeting. Annual Town Meeting occurs during the first and second weeks of May, at which time the school budget is approved and funds are appropriated. The fiscal year begins July 1. Planned budget reductions for FY24 include: the conversion of 7.4 FTE teaching assistants to 3.29 FTE certified special education teachers; the conversion of a 0.55 FTE occupational therapist position to a full-time certified occupational therapy assistant; the conversion of a 0.5 FTE psychologist position to a 0.5 FTE special education team chair; the reduction of 2.41 FTE vacant classroom and special area teachers to match enrollment projections/scheduling requirements; and the elimination of 0.35 FTE vacant clerical support positions. The aforementioned budget reductions do not have an impact on school facilities or class size. Generally, the changes strengthen the program overall by converting paraprofessional staff to certified teachers.

General Description

BRIEF BUILDING HISTORY: Please provide a detailed description of when the original building was built, and the date(s) and project scopes(s) of any additions and renovations (maximum of 5000 characters).

The Mitchell Elementary School was originally constructed in 1948 as a one-story brick and steel frame elementary school with a pitched roof and an “I-shaped” floor plan. The original building included offices, one kindergarten classroom, seven general classrooms and a cafegymnasium. A full basement under the front of the building holds the boiler room and storage. In 1958, a series of additions were made that included: 1) eight classrooms on the east side of the existing building with two connecting corridors, creating an interior courtyard space, 2) a second Kindergarten room on the southwest corner and 3) a 2,400 sq. ft. gymnasium (approximately ½ the size of MSBA guideline for an elementary school gymnasium) on the NW corner of the original building. The 1968 addition included the library/ media center, toilet rooms and six classrooms to the northeast end of the 1958 wing. The 1958 and 1968 buildings were constructed with flat roofs.

To remediate the space shortage at Mitchell School on a temporary basis, the District installed four modular classrooms, which opened in Fall, 2014. These modular classrooms were constructed as an independent building structure to avoid triggering extensive code upgrades to the existing building including sprinklers, ADA compliance, and structural upgrades. In 2019, a second modular classroom building with two classrooms was added on the east side of the site. This building is also an independent building structure that serves art and music. Students must leave the main building to attend these classes several times a week.

TOTAL BUILDING SQUARE FOOTAGE: Please provide the original building square footage PLUS the square footage of any additions.

49027

SITE DESCRIPTION: Please provide a detailed description of the current site and any known existing conditions that would impact a potential project at the site. Please note whether there are any other buildings, public or private, that share this current site with the school facility. What is the use(s) of this building(s)? (maximum of 5000 characters).

The Mitchell Elementary School is located in a residential area near the center of Town, with its primary address at 187 Brookline St. The 12.47-acre parcel has about 8.35 acres that are viable for the school building, parking and field uses. The site is about twice as long (1,100 ft.) in the east-west axis as it is wide (550 ft.) on the north-south axis. The school building sits roughly in the middle of the lot with a setback of 150 feet to Brookline Street and 120 feet to Tower Ave. The site has about 620 ft. of frontage onto Brookline St. and 45 ft. of frontage at a back entrance on the north side onto Tower Avenue. Each point of access has sidewalks, a car drop-off loop and parking, but there is no interconnecting road between the north and south sides. Emergency access to the east side is limited. Emergency access to the west side of the building is provided through the playground. The existing school parcel has a dense stand of trees on the east, where the land drops off by about 25 feet to a wetland area. On the west side of the building adjacent to the playground is an open playing field. At the edge of the open playing field, there is an adjacent Town-owned lot with a park called “Mitchell Woods,” a heavily wooded sloping parcel, which slopes 50 feet down to James Ave. The school is the only use on this parcel of land. The playfield is bordered by residential homes to the north and south.

The majority of students walk to the school, due to the proximity of houses to the school and the compactness of the Mitchell School District. The neighborhood is zoned as SRB single family residence-B, which allows for quarter acre lot sizes. As a result, it is one of the more densely populated single-family districts in Town.

The site has about 89 car parking spaces. There is a striped lot for 48 cars located on Brookline St. and an additional striped lot for 33 cars located at the rear entrance to the school and accessed from Tower Ave. (The back lot is used primarily by teachers.) Eight visitor spaces are available in the front of the building in the drop-off loop;

parking in these spaces is limited to non drop-off and pick-up times. Site traffic and circulation during drop-offs & pick-ups are not contained on the site, resulting in traffic back ups onto Brookline St. On-street parking is restricted near the school.

There is an 80 sq. ft. x 130 sq. ft. hard-surfaced play area adjacent to the 1948 wing on the west side of the building, with an adjacent paved basketball court located near the back parking lot. A playground with swings and play structures is adjacent to this play area and further, to the west, are two 60 ft baseball diamonds in an open playing field.

Utilities serving the school come mainly from Brookline St. There is municipal water and sewer service including: a four-inch cast iron water main, a six-inch cement sewer from the original building, and a six-inch asbestos cement sewer from the 1968 addition. A two-inch gas line in Brookline Street was recently connected to the school to serve a relocated dual fuel (oil & gas) boiler. A twenty-year-old, double-walled underground 10,000-gallon oil storage tank is located within the planted circle at the front of the building, with iron oil supply piping to the basement boiler room.

ADDRESS OF FACILITY: Please type address, including number, street name and city/town, if available, or describe the location of the site. (Maximum of 300 characters)

William Mitchell Elementary School, 187 Brookline Street, Needham, MA 02492

BUILDING ENVELOPE: Please provide a detailed description of the building envelope, types of construction materials used, and any known problems or existing conditions (maximum of 5000 characters).

The envelope of the building, including the structure and roof, is reaching the end of its useful life and does not meet contemporary energy code requirements.

Building Envelope:

The building envelope varies depending upon the phase of construction. There is little or no insulation within the walls and the exterior brick walls are in fair condition with some areas in poor condition. The original structure shows the least deterioration, with a small amount of efflorescence and brick decay. The 1958 addition shows some efflorescence and fungal growth on the exterior and there is evidence of brick settlement and cracking in several locations. Deterioration of the exterior surface was observed in areas of the 1958 and 1968 additions. Repointing is needed in many areas. All of the window glazing within the building is single glazed and therefore very energy inefficient. Windows in the original building are steel sash with 'hopper style' venting at both the top and bottom of the window units. In the 1958 addition, the windows are a mix of steel frame and wood frame. Several of the wood windows are near the grade and show signs of wood rot. The 1968 wing metal frame windows have evidence of rust and are allowing water to enter some of the window frames. The building envelope is very energy inefficient, when compared to contemporary codes and energy standards. Comprehensive replacement of all windows and most walls would be required to meet contemporary energy codes.

Grills and vents around the school are damaged and are being replaced under the current maintenance plan, as these are affecting the performance of existing mechanical systems. Many exterior doors around the building have been replaced; however these new insulated fiberglass panel doors, which have been set within the existing metal frames, are in poor condition. Some of the remaining existing doors are original to the building and further replacement is required.

Building Structure:

1948 Building - The original building was constructed about four feet above grade, with a utility basement for boilers and storage at the front of the building and a crawl space beneath the rest of the building. Foundations are traditional, cast-in place concrete with interior concrete pilasters on footings and concrete walls around the perimeter of the structure. The ground floor structure consists of exterior masonry walls and eight-inch-wide flange steel columns and beams supporting roof framing of trusses with eight-inch and ten-inch steel purlins. The roof substrate has 1-½ inch wood planking spiked to the purlins and trusses. The exterior walls appear to be solid

brick with steel lintels supporting the brick veneer. 1958 Addition – The single-story wing has a flat roof. Foundations are traditional cast-in-place concrete with a four-inch cast-in-place concrete un-insulated floor slab. The roof framing is supported on steel columns both on the corridor and exterior. Twelve-inch girders and ten-inch-deep steel beams support fourteen-inch-deep open web steel joists thirty – inches on center with perlite on steel-tex decking. The exterior walls have curtain-wall with masonry to sill level consisting of various materials including solid brick and concrete breeze block. Masonry cavities vary from one-inch to two –inches, typically without any insulation. 1968 Addition – This single-story flat-roofed classroom section has traditional un-insulated cast-in-place concrete foundations and a four-inch uninsulated slab on grade. Steel columns and beams support open web steel joists at four feet on center and 1- ½ inch deep steel decking. The structural frame is in sound condition, but would not meet contemporary seismic code requirements. While the roof probably meets current loading requirements, any new rooftop equipment would require structural assessment prior to installation. The building was not designed for the addition of any future stories. Any major renovation would require lateral stabilization of the exterior and interior masonry walls to meet contemporary seismic codes and limit removal of any existing lateral bracing and walls within the structure.

Roof:

The 1948 building has a pitched roof with asphalt shingles, while both of the additions have flat, internally-drained roof systems with built-up roofing. The asphalt shingle roof is about twenty-six-years old, while the flat roof sections were replaced in 2007. There was approximately two to three inches of insulation above the ceiling in the original building, and an additional 6 to 8 inches of insulation were added in 2016 to improve energy efficiency and maintain better temperature control of these classrooms. The flat roof additions have only 2 inches of rigid insulation on top of the metal roof deck with built-up asphalt and gravel roofing materials. The rigid roof insulation thickness would need to triple in depth to meet contemporary codes.

Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the EXTERIOR WALLS? YES

Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 2001

Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:

The exterior wood panels of the Mitchell school were painted in 2012. In 2000 and 2001, major structural repairs were made to the concrete block walls between Room 22 and 23 and Rooms 20 and 21.

Roof Section A

Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section? YES

Area of Section (square feet) 20664

Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe)

1948 wing: Pitched roof with asphalt shingles

Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced) 26

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

The sloped roof was last replaced in 1997. It has exceeded the 20-year life expectancy.

Roof Section B

Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section? YES

Area of Section (square feet) 17280

Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe)

1958 wing: flat, internally-drained roof systems with built-up asphalt and gravel roofing

Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced) 16

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

All flat roofing was replaced in 2007. The new roof has a life expectancy of 20 years and should be replaced in 2027.

Roof Section C

Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section? YES

Area of Section (square feet) 11083

Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe)

1969 wing: flat, internally-drained roof systems with built-up asphalt and gravel roofing

Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced) 16

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

All flat roofing was replaced in 2007. The new roof has a life expectancy of 20 years and should be replaced in 2027.

Window Section A

Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section? YES

Windows in Section (count) 76

Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))

1948 wing: steel sash with 'hopper style' venting; All windows single glazed

Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced) 75

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

Original windows.

Window Section B

Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section? YES

Windows in Section (count) 85

Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))

1958 wing: mix of steel frame and wood frame; All windows single glazed

Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced) 65

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

All windows in the gym were replaced in 2006 with polycarbonate windows. In 2012, the gym windows were replaced with thermal pane windows.

Window Section C

Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section? YES

Windows in Section (count) 18

Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))

1968 wing: metal frame; All windows single glazed

Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced) 55

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

Original windows

MECHANICAL and ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS: Please provide a detailed description of the current mechanical and electrical systems and any known problems or existing conditions (maximum of 5000 characters).

Generally speaking, all of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems (with the exception of those in the modular units) are in poor to fair condition and reaching the end of their useful lives. The electrical systems also are at capacity, are obsolete and are in need of replacement.

Mechanical Systems

The building is heated with two, cast iron, sectional-type HB Smith low-pressure steam boilers. One boiler was replaced in 1997; the second boiler is about 10-years older. In 2013, gas service was brought to the building and two salvaged dual fuel burners from the Pollard School were installed at Mitchell. The total capacity of both boilers is approximately 6,000 lbs/h of steam or 5,700 MBH. Natural gas is now the primary fuel source for the boilers, but #2 oil is still stored in a 30-year-old 10,000 gallon underground storage tank (UST) as a backup. Three fuel oil pumps remain with the associated oil supply piping. Heating distribution piping in the boiler room is about 21-years old, but the piping is original elsewhere in the building and is in fair to poor condition. Sections need to be replaced every year.

There is no central air conditioning system within the building. The classrooms get outdoor air and heating from the 1968 floor-mounted unit ventilators. General heating is provided by finned tube radiators and convectors along the perimeter walls of the building. The radiators and convectors are original to their phase of construction. The

1968 addition has a hot water hydronic loop, which serves the unit ventilators in that section of the building and uneven heating in the most remote spaces is an ongoing problem. Some classrooms have window-mounted air conditioners (AC), where windows have been removed. These air conditioners are in fair or good condition. There is no energy recovery system in the main building. Fresh air enters through the unit ventilators and is exhausted through vents on the corridor wall of each classroom to rooftop fans. The HVAC system in the two newer wings is controlled by a 30-year-old direct digital central building control system. A pneumatic control system operates the older zones of the building. All controls are in need of replacement. The modular classrooms have electric heat pumps that provide both heating and cooling.

Electrical Systems

The building is supplied by an underground electrical service with a 208Y/120 Volt, 3-phase, and 4-wire supply. In the basement, the electric service is split into a metered 400 Amp section and a metered 200 Amp and 100 Amp section. The panels and switches appear to be original. All panels are full and there are no empty circuits or spaces for new circuits. Certain circuits within the school trip the breakers during AC operation, and no expanded service to classrooms for enhanced technology is currently possible. The circuit breakers and main service are obsolete and unavailable, making maintenance impossible. Replacement of the primary electrical transformer, main circuit board and sub-panels is the only option during a renovation. Upgrades would require comprehensive replacement of the electrical service. The existing electrical service is not adequate to support the growing technology and HVAC needs of the school. Each set of modular classrooms has a new separate 200A electrical service with overhead wiring from Brookline St.

Other Systems:

The fire alarm system is a zoned analog type system manufactured by FCI, is in good condition and was updated in 2019. System components include outside beacon, Knox-box, pull stations, heat detectors, horn /strobes. The system in the main building does not have smoke detectors, only heat detectors, but is in good operating condition. The school has a public address system with an integrated bell, which operates throughout the building, and functions properly. A clock system is in place with 90% of the clocks functioning properly.

The lighting within most of the classrooms is surface-mounted 2-lamp 1ft x 4ft fluorescent light strips with prismatic lens placed in rows about 4 to 8 feet apart. The lighting is functional and in fair condition throughout the school. The modular classrooms have their own independent 600-amp electric service. New LED lighting was installed in 2020, as part of a town-wide energy savings program.

Boiler Section 1

Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler? YES

Is there more than one boiler room in the School? YES

What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler? 100

Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)

Natural gas with backup Heating Oil

Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced) 6

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

Oil tanks were replaced in 1992-1993. In 2009, Boiler Number 1 was replaced and the boilers, univents, and air handling units were upgraded to digital control. Also in 2009, the piping in crawl spaces and in the boiler room were insulated, exterior air leaks were sealed, and a Rentar catalyst unit was installed. In 2013, boiler burners converted to dual fuel oil and natural gas-fired units and hot water heaters replaced with natural gas-fired units.

Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the HVAC SYSTEM? YES

Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 1998

Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:

Partial repair/replacement: Window air conditioning units are replaced as needed. The rooftop HVAC unit above the Media Center was replaced in 1998. Modular classroom equipment is all new in 2014 and 2019.

Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the ELECTRICAL SERVICES AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM? YES

Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 2009

Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:

In 2006, there was an electrical update that included all exit signs and emergency lighting, safety upgrades to several electric distribution panels, rewiring 1 main distribution circuit, rebuilding 1 flush wall mounted electrical sub-panel in the 1968 corridor, and replacing cafeteria fans. The kitchen was wired for a new convection oven in 2009. The intercom, clock, and bells were updated in 1997, and LED bulbs were installed in 2020. The media center was rewired in 2005. Modular classroom service is all new in 2014 and 2019.

BUILDING INTERIOR: Please provide a detailed description of the current building interior including a description of the flooring systems, finishes, ceilings, lighting, etc. (maximum of 5000 characters).

Interior

The floor in the main corridor of the original 1949 building is 1ft x 1ft ceramic tile, is original to the building and in good condition. Classrooms and offices within this wing have Vinyl Composite Tile (VCT) flooring in good condition. The corridor and classroom flooring in the 1958 & 1968 additions are VCT and are well maintained. The low-pile carpet in the Media Center is in good condition. Carpet squares and area rugs are replaced as needed. Bathroom floors are ceramic tile, in good condition. The gymnasium floor is hardwood, in good condition. Many interior walls in the original wing are constructed of four inch steel stud with plaster finish, and are generally in good condition, except for a few locations with cracking or peeling due to prior water damage. In the 1958 addition, the interior walls were constructed of structural concrete masonry unit (CMU) block walls. Because of the limited insulation within the exterior walls and single glazed windows, it can be uncomfortable to sit near the exterior walls in winter.

Most ceilings are in good condition although water damage and staining from HVAC units is visible in certain areas. Glue-applied perforated ceiling tiles are installed in several of the original areas of the building and are in poor condition. Ceiling tiles in the school kitchen are not washable and therefore inappropriate for that location. The ceilings in the 1948 & 1958 corridors and classrooms have two-by-four tectum acoustical ceiling tiles.

The interior doors are largely original to their date of construction. Many doors lack the push / pull clearance and proper hardware to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/ Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) requirements. Few of the interior doors are fire rated, as would now be required, and several doors and sidelights contain wire glass. Many doors lack hardware to meet accessibility requirements. Extensive renovations to address door clearance and the replacement of all interior doors, frames and hardware would likely be required as a part of any major renovation.

Building codes have changed significantly since the original construction and subsequent additions to the Mitchell School. Although the building has several ramped access pathways into the building, not all of the spaces within the single-story building are accessible for people with disabilities. The Gymnasium and former Kindergarten room are only accessible by stairs or by walking outside and around the building. The PE program is forced to use the stage in the Cafeteria twice per week, due to lack of available space in the building. This elevated platform has no ramp or lift access. Retrofits were completed in 2021 for one set of boys and girls' bathrooms to be compliant with ADA and MAAB criteria, but most restrooms still lack proper entrance clearances, stall sizes, grab bars, insulated pipes at the sinks, urinals at proper heights, dispensers at proper heights, entrance and turning radii clearances, pull side clearances at entry doors and the correct door hardware. Additionally a person entering the front door who is unable to climb steps would need to travel around the entire building to enter the administration office that is located adjacent to the front door but at a higher level.

Technology

Technology distribution through the building has been retrofitted over the past two decades and is minimal in comparison to other modern classrooms in the District and current MSBA standards. Technology distribution is further constrained by the lack of/and improper location of many power receptacles, as well as the inability to add new power receptacles. White boards typically require rubber floor strips to hide power and technology cables and avoid creating a tripping hazard. The school does not have sufficient available space to have a full computer lab. Therefore, an area within the Media Center contains multiple computers for training, but this area has no sound

separating walls.

Hazardous Materials

Some floor tiles contain asbestos (ACM) and a program of phased remediation and replacement has been in place for the past decade. Hard joint insulation of heating pipes was found to contain asbestos in various locations. The asbestos has been remediated and removed from the boiler room, but ACM's still remain in the utility tunnels. The exterior and interior window framing and glazing caulking are assumed to contain ACM's and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) and would require abatement as a part of repair / replacement. Other locations assumed to contain asbestos are wall and door framing caulking, unit vent/grill caulking, blackboard glue, underground waste water pipes, damp proofing on foundation wall, and thru-wall flashing. The painted surfaces are assumed to contain lead. All of these materials would need to be remediated during a comprehensive repair or replacement project.

PROGRAMS and OPERATIONS: Please provide a detailed description of the current grade structure and programs offered and indicate whether there are program components that cannot be offered due to facility constraints, operational constraints, etc. (maximum of 5000 characters).

Students in Grades K-5 receive the regular elementary curriculum, including art, music, media, Spanish, technology and PE instruction. Special needs instruction is provided on an integrated and pull-out basis.

Due to lack of space, small group instruction often occurs in inappropriate locations, such as corridors and former storage rooms and shared spaces. Multiple teachers share special education classroom spaces. The use of shared space to hold parent meetings has created a confidentiality issue for the students being seen at that time. In addition, the school has only limited, shared space for gross motor activities and often has to provide services in the hallway. As a result, Mitchell is not able to house the OT equipment necessary for some students. This leads to inequity among buildings, with regard to OT services. Moreover, due to the shared use of space by service providers, special education, speech and language, and occupational therapy, sessions often are interrupted or displaced by team meetings. The psychologist works in a 50 s.f. space next to the nurse's office and bathroom, where work is distracted by conversations and bathroom noises. Finally, the undersized and inadequate spaces mean that, during the MCAS administration windows, Mitchell lacks sufficient testing areas to accommodate students whose IEPs require separate testing space.

Due to the lack of appropriate specialized program space, Spanish and media/technology education are delivered in a way that compromises the educational program. Less than half of the school's PE classes can be scheduled in the undersized gym. The remaining classes take place in the classroom and the cafeteria. This arrangement creates scheduling issues with other specials, limits the availability of the stage/cafeteria space for school wide events, or special joint classroom events that need larger spaces to only two afternoons per week, and creates an inequity with regard to the delivery of PE curriculum throughout the District. Also, the stage is not handicapped-accessible, which limits student access and participation in both PE class and stage performances or activities. PE classes are bothered by children queuing for lunch in the cafeteria, as well as by the noise from the kitchen, the motors from the vending machines and milk cooler and the raising and lowering of tables by the custodian. The Media Center size is problematic because the limited size and layout require technology and media classes to run simultaneously within the same space with no sound separation.

Access to the Principal's Office is only via an adjacent conference room, which is used several times per day for lunch groups, special education, reading, testing and assessment, parent/teacher conferences, team meetings, and small group work with students. This is problematic because the Principal, and visitors to the Principal's Office, must walk through and interrupt these meetings and testing situations, and the lack of acoustical separation between the two spaces means those using the space outside the Principal's office can often hear the conversations that occur within the Principal's office. The overuse of the conference space also limits the Principal's access to the conference room for his own meetings with teacher teams, administrative teams, School Council, and parent groups.

Finally, other building deficiencies have a negative impact on the educational program, including the inadequate electrical system, which limits the ability to add technology, since there are no available circuits in any of the

electrical panels, or to add hubs that make the building wireless. The heating system is insufficient, requiring children to wear coats in classrooms where the temperature drops below 68 degrees, and the intercom does not reach all areas of the school in an emergency. The lack of accessibility limits the full participation of students with mobility constraints, and the electrical and technology limits impact the ability to upgrade the building security systems.

The temporary modular classrooms are separate from the main school, requiring students to go outside to get to the music and art rooms and for kindergarteners in the modular classrooms to access the gymnasium and the cafeteria.

EDUCATIONAL SPACES: Please provide a detailed description of the Educational Spaces within the facility, a description of the number and sizes (in square feet) of classrooms, a description of science rooms/labs including ages and most recent updates, a description of the cafeteria, gym and/or auditorium and a description of the media center/library (maximum of 5000 characters).

The core educational spaces include the following:

Classrooms:

1958 wing (870 avg sq. ft.): 4 Grade 3, 1 Grade 4, 2 Grade 2, 1 Special Education

1948 wing (780 avg sq. ft.): 2 Grade 2, 4 Grade 1, 1 Grade 5 (Reading Room, & SPED Room) 1968 wing (980 avg sq. ft.): 3 Grade 4, 3 Grade 5

No science room

Four temporary modular classrooms opened in Fall 2014, each 1200 sq. ft. used for kindergarten. The 2019 modular classrooms, each 1200 sq. ft., are used for art and music.

Common Areas:

1 Gymnasium- 2400 sq. ft.

1 Cafeteria/Auditorium- 2400 sq. ft.; Stage 540 sq. ft., 1 Kitchen- 640 sq. ft.

1 Media Center

Student Support/Other Instructional:

2 Special Education/ Guidance/ Occupational Therapy

1 Nurse Suite -346 sq. ft.

Administration:

3 Administration

1 Teacher Break Room

1 Storage

CAPACITY and UTILIZATION: Please provide the original design capacity and a detailed description of the current capacity and utilization of the school facility. If the school is overcrowded, please describe steps taken by the administration to address capacity issues. Please also describe in detail any spaces that have been converted from their intended use to be used as classroom space (maximum of 5000 characters).

The calculated capacity of the school is 272 students, based on the total area noted in the Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (DWA, 2011) and current MSBA Space Summary Guidelines. With the addition of the modular classrooms, the calculated capacity of the school is now approximately 300 students. The current enrollment is 425 students, creating a space deficiency of over 36%. As noted in the Assessment report, all of the existing educational spaces are undersized by the following percentages: 1948 Wing (-18%), 1958 wing (-8%), library media center (-25%), cafeteria (-31%), kitchen (-60%), gymnasium (-10%), and former art space (-53%.) The only spaces that meet current MSBA guidelines are two classrooms at the end of the 1968 wing, and the new classrooms in the modular classroom buildings.

The addition of modular classrooms in 2014 also allowed the school to repurpose spaces. One room housed speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral therapy, and special education administration. The second room served as the music room until the 2019 modular building was constructed and was then repurposed to house

literacy support, math support, ELL support, and the school psychologist. Additionally, the former undersized art room (which was originally a teacher workroom) was repurposed as a multi use space that supports special education, literacy support, math support, the afterschool program, a part-time music teacher, and conference / meeting space. The former occupational therapy / special education space was, in turn, repurposed to create three special education teaching spaces.

The administration has addressed the general lack of remedial/tutorial and special education spaces by using non-traditional and shared spaces for service delivery, such as corridors and storage rooms. The use of moveable partitions allows special educators to share the same space, while working with students at the same time. For instance, one room is currently shared by five different disciplines through the use of movable partitions. Similarly, partitions are used to screen off a classroom from students who walk through the room to access specialized education support and guidance located in a former entrance foyer between classrooms. The need for space for student lunch groups and testing during MCAS administration periods has been met by setting up tables and chairs in hallways and entrances. Guidance and other support services meet with students in the repurposed kindergarten room, but the office style dividers do not provide acoustical separation of the multiple specialties in this room.

The media center and cafetorium are shared by multiple groups throughout the day. Staff must rearrange the cafetorium stage daily to accommodate the morning band classes, followed by PE classes during the school day. Before-school string classes have been moved to the Media Center, which limits Media Center prep time and displaces the math groups that otherwise would meet in that space. The Media Center also is used for computer and media instruction, which run simultaneously with no sound separation. Currently less than half of the school's PE classes can be scheduled in the undersized gym: the remaining classes must take place in the classroom and the cafeteria. This arrangement creates scheduling issues because staff need time to set up the cafeteria for lunch and then clean and setup for PE classes and after school activities. The combined use also limits the availability of the stage/cafeteria space for grade level events, or special joint classroom events that need larger spaces. PE is often scheduled as students are queuing for lunch in the cafetorium, or as staff prepare meals in the kitchen (which opens to the cafetorium.)

There is a general lack of storage space throughout the building. Many teacher materials have been moved to the basement, or are stored in hallways requiring additional prep time for classroom work. A storage shed was installed near the building, to store auditorium chairs, while the chair storage area is used for other furniture, pallets of paper and the school's snowblower.

MAINTENANCE and CAPITAL REPAIR: Please provide a detailed description of the district's current maintenance practices, its capital repair program, and the maintenance program in place at the facility that is the subject of this SOI. Please include specific examples of capital repair projects undertaken in the past, including any override or debt exclusion votes that were necessary (maximum of 5000 characters).

The Town implemented a structured preventative maintenance program in 2009. This program provides for the quarterly and/or annual maintenance of HVAC, water heating, plumbing, electrical, and general maintenance systems. The Town also funds an annual facility maintenance capital article to address the needs of smaller repairs such as duct cleaning, asbestos abatement, flooring replacement, and HVAC upgrades.

A chronology of capital repairs to the facility follows:

1997 – The intercom, clock, and bells were updated

1998 – Hot water tank was installed

1999 – Master fire alarm panel was upgraded

2000, 2001 – Major structural repairs to concrete block exterior walls in some parts of the building 2004 – Rigid insulation was installed to resolve drafts

2004, 2005 – Window air conditioning units were installed

2004, 2006 – Electrical updates and exterior light fixtures were added

2005 – Media Center was rewired

2006 – Entrance ramp outside room 1 was replaced

2007 – Flat roofing was replaced

- 2007 – Playground was re-patched and paved, and the rear entrance ramp and handrail were replaced
- 2009 – Boiler #1 was replaced and mechanical system was upgraded
- 2009 – Systemic plumbing corrections were made including installing low flow toilets
- 2009 - In 2009 asbestos abatement was undertaken, floor tiles were replaced, and interior walls were painted
- 2011 – Motion sensors installed
- 2012 – Exterior doors were replaced (the original frames remain)
- 2012 – All windows in the gym were replaced with polycarbonate windows
- 2013 - Replaced hot water heater with gas-fired unit, converted boiler burners to natural gas units, asbestos abatement and re-insulation, repaired granite steps at main entrance, installed bathroom occupancy sensors, installed rear door awning, installed induction lights in parking lot, interior painting.
- 2014 - A free standing, 7,000 sq. ft. modular building with four classrooms and bathrooms was installed. The two former kindergarten spaces in the building were repurposed for music, special education/occupational therapy, reading, and administrative meeting space.
- 2015 - roof repairs, replaced window AC units, cleaned ductwork, welding repairs to steam piping
- 2016- LED lighting in gym; window repairs in lobby; painting of south, west and north sides; refinished all wood floors in building; installed electrical lift to basketball hoops in gym
- 2017- new AI-phones in front office; crack sealed parking lots; bathroom stall repairs; LED lighting upgrades in classrooms
- 2018-Cafeteria LED lighting upgrades, wood floor refinishing, replaced additional window AC units.
- 2019- A freestanding modular building with two classrooms (3,000 sq. ft.) for Art and Music was added; fire alarm system upgrades; phased window shade replacement; duct cleaning; roof repairs/ maintenance; steam trap repairs; boiler and HVAC repairs.
- 2020- Full COVID induced retro-commissioning and repair of all unit ventilators, fans and related HVAC equipment. Installation of plexiglass dividers throughout the school for social distancing, temporary tent installed in playground for outdoor cafeteria seating; phased window shade replacement; heating, steam trap and rooftop fan system repairs
- 2021-Continued COVID retro-commissioning and repairs to HVAC systems; enhanced filter replacements; continued LED light replacement; Phased window shade replacement; Heating system repairs.
- 2022- Six (6) Bathrooms updated; Created new Staff Bathroom; Insulation added to Grade 5 Wing; Phased LED replacement; Phased window shade replacement; boiler repairs; unit ventilator repairs.
- 2023 - HVAC repairs.

A Comprehensive Facilities Assessment study was completed in 2011 for the Hillside, Mitchell, and Pollard Schools. An updated Facilities Assessment was completed in 2020. Ongoing maintenance is limited to those essential repairs, which are needed to extend the useful life of this facility, and are funded through the Town's five-year Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) and budgeting processes.

Priority 2

Question 1: Please describe the existing conditions that constitute severe overcrowding.

The Mitchell School, a four-section, 425-student K-5 school occupying 49,027 sq. ft. (excluding modular classrooms) is undersized by approximately 48%, compared to MSBA guidelines for gross square feet, based on enrollment. (When the modular classrooms totaling 9,900 sq. ft. are included, the deficit drops to about 37%.) As noted in the Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (DWA, 2011), specific educational spaces are undersized by the following percentages: 1948 wing (-18%), 1958 wing (-8%), library media center (-25%), cafeterium (-31%), kitchen (-60%), gymnasium (-10%). The only spaces that meet current MSBA standards are the two classrooms at the end of the 1968 wing and the modular classrooms installed in 2014 and in 2019. As a comparison, the new Sunita Williams Elementary School (constructed in partnership with MSBA), which has four-sections per grade K-5 serving 529 students, has a total area of 94,000 gross sq.ft.

Additionally, there is a significant lack of remedial/tutorial and special education spaces. Small group instruction often occurs in corridors and former storage rooms. Currently, single offices and classrooms are shared by multiple teachers. For instance, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and special education administration all share the same space. Students must walk through general education classrooms to access the guidance counselors and special education spaces. Special education parent meetings often occur in spaces that are shared by other service providers, which has created a confidentiality issue for the students being seen at that time. In addition, there is limited, shared space for gross motor activities, and OT services are often provided in the hallway. As a result, Mitchell is not able to house the OT equipment necessary for some students. This leads to inequity among the other elementary schools in the district with regard to OT services. Moreover, due to the shared use of space by service providers, special education, speech/language, and occupational therapy sessions often are interrupted or displaced by meetings. Finally, the undersized and inadequate spaces mean that, during the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) administration windows, Mitchell lacks sufficient testing areas to accommodate students whose Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) require separate testing space.

Due to a lack of appropriate specialized program space, special area programming is delivered in a way that compromises the educational program. Less than half of the school's PE classes can be scheduled in the undersized gym. The remaining classes take place in the classroom (requiring disruption to the classroom arrangement as furniture and student work must be moved to allow space for the PE activity) and in the cafeteria. This arrangement limits the availability of the stage/cafeteria space to only two afternoons per week. The stage is not handicapped-accessible, which limits student access and participation. PE classes are bothered by students queuing for lunch in the cafeteria, by the noise from the kitchen as staff prepares meals, by the motors from the vending machines and milk cooler (which are located within the cafeteria space due to a lack of kitchen space), and by the raising and lowering of tables by the custodians as they prep for lunch. The schedule requires that technology and media classes occur at the same time but the size and layout of the Media Center offer no sound separation between these spaces.

The kitchen is undersized by approximately 60% and has limited functionality making meal prep difficult. There are two stovetop burners for the entire school, and the school lacks a mechanical dishwasher (as well as the capacity to add one.) Due to the limited kitchen area, additional refrigerators and freezers were installed in the cafeteria space and some food prep occurs in the cafeteria (outside of the kitchen space.) The kitchen deficiencies have limited the menu options for students.

Finally, there is inadequate space for administrative needs. The administrative suite is undersized by (-44%), compared to the MSBA guidelines. The Principal's Office is only accessible via an adjacent conference room, which is used several times per day for lunch groups, special education, reading, testing and assessment,

parent/teacher conferences, team meetings, and small group work with students. This is problematic because the Principal, and visitors to the Principal's Office, must walk through and interrupt these meetings and testing situations. The overuse of the conference space also limits the Principal's access to the conference room for his own meetings with teacher teams, administrative teams, School Council, and parent groups.

Priority 2

Question 2: Please describe the measures the School District has taken to mitigate the problem(s) described above.

To help with overcrowding, the District constructed a temporary modular classroom building on the paved playground space adjacent to the school during the summer of 2014. These modular classrooms accommodate four kindergarten classrooms. In 2019, a second modular classroom building was added to the front of the school, adjacent to the entrance driveway. This second building houses two classrooms serving art and music. These additional classrooms have helped to reduce the calculated space deficiency from an estimated 48% to 37%, compared to MSBA guidelines.

The addition of modular classrooms in 2014 also freed up spaces that could be repurposed as shared space. One room housed speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral therapy, and special education administration. The second room served as the music room until the 2019 modular building was constructed and was then repurposed to house literacy support, math support, ELL support, and the school psychologist.

Additionally, the former undersized art room (which was originally a teacher workroom) was repurposed as a multi use space that supports special education, literacy support, math support, the afterschool program, a part-time music teacher, and conference / meeting space. The former occupational therapy / special education space was, in turn, repurposed to create three special education teaching spaces.

The administration has addressed the general lack of remedial/tutorial and special education spaces by using non-traditional and shared spaces for delivery of services. These spaces include corridors, stair landings, and repurposed storage rooms. The use of moveable partitions allows special educators to share the same space while working with students. For instance, one room is currently shared by four different disciplines through the use of movable partitions. As a result, there are students receiving speech and language and occupational therapy services in the same room that do not have access to a quiet and distraction-free environment to receive those services, as would normally be expected. Individuals must also pass through this room and the SLP and OT services areas to get to special education administration, further compounding the issue. Similarly, in general classrooms where students need to pass through the classroom to access special education services and guidance, movable partitions are used to provide privacy to the student and reduce interruption in the classroom. The need for space for student lunch groups and testing during MCAS administration periods has been met by setting up tables and chairs in hallways and entrances.

Additionally, the media center and cafetorium are shared by multiple groups throughout the day. Staff must rearrange the cafetorium stage daily to accommodate Staff must rearrange the stage daily to accommodate the morning band classes, followed by PE classes and then band classes again the next morning. Before-school string classes have been moved to the Media Center, which limits Media Center prep time and displaces the math groups that otherwise would meet in that space. The Media Center also is used concurrently for computer and media instruction, which run simultaneously with no sound separation. Additionally, since less than half of the school's PE classes can be scheduled in the undersized gym, the remaining classes must take place in the classroom and the cafeteria. This arrangement limits the availability of the stage/cafeteria space for school wide events, or special joint classroom events that need larger spaces to only two afternoons per week. PE often happens as students are queuing for lunch in the cafetorium, or as staff prepare meals in the kitchen (which opens to the cafetorium.) The Media Center size is problematic because the limited size and specific layout require technology and media classes to run simultaneously within the same space, with no sound separation and with limiting access to the library collection.

Finally, to mitigate the lack of storage, many teacher materials have been moved to the basement, or are stored in hallways or mechanical/electrical spaces. In addition, a storage shed was installed near the building, to store auditorium chairs.

Priority 2

Question 3: Please provide a detailed explanation of the impact of the problem described in this priority on your district's educational program. Please include specific examples of how the problem prevents the district from delivering the educational program it is required to deliver and how students and/or teachers are directly affected by the problem identified.

The lack of sufficient space and deficiencies of the facility have created disruptions and compromises to the educational program at Mitchell School.

As noted above, classrooms are undersized and small group instruction is often delivered in stairways, corridors and former storage rooms. The dual use of the core spaces often results in compromised educational programs, and /or creates conditions that are not conducive to learning. Due to space constraints, Mitchell does not have the same physical education program as the other elementary schools in Needham. For instance, Mitchell 4th and 5th graders do not have two consistent PE times per week as they do in other schools. Given the small size of the gym and PE classes being held in the cafeteria, activities need to be eliminated or modified for all grades K-5. In addition, PE instruction is partially delivered in general education classrooms and in the cafeteria. The use of a classroom for PE limits the type of PE activities provided, and disrupts the classroom environment. (Furniture must be moved to provide space for PE, and the time needed to move furniture and student work reduces the amount of instructional time available.) The stage and gym are not accessible, which limits student access and participation. The use of the stage for band and PE class requires the gym teacher or other staff to move equipment off and on the stage for the gym classes. The use of the Media Center for simultaneous technology and media education creates a congested and noisy learning environment, which is distracting for students, and limits access to the library collection.

Additionally, there is a significant lack of remedial/tutorial and special education space. Mitchell is the only elementary school in Needham without a learning center space to support special education programming. The front office has been partitioned to provide space for students in mental health and behavioral crises. Students needing a higher level of support are assigned to other school or out-of-district collaboratives. Speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral therapy, and special education parent meetings all happen in one room. Given the requirements of confidentiality, the availability of these services is limited by the constraints of the space. Small group instruction occurs in places which lack privacy and are distracting to students. The fact that classrooms are used as passageways to other spaces, also creates disruption to the learning environment. The use of shared office space for parent meetings has created a confidentiality issue for the students being seen at that time. Finally, the use of hallways and entrances for MCAS testing is not an environment conducive to focus, concentration and student performance.

Finally, building deficiencies hamper effective administration of the building. As noted above, there is inadequate space for storage and administrative meetings, lunch groups, special education and reading testing and assessment, parent/teacher conferences, team meetings, and small group work with students. The Principal's conference room doubles as an entrance way to the Principal's Office, as well as a space for meetings. The lack of appropriate meeting space leads to disruption and over scheduling of the conference room. It also limits the Principal's access to the space for his own meetings with teacher teams, the Teacher Support Team (TST) team, School Council, and parent groups.

Please also provide the following:

Cafeteria Seating Capacity: 176

Number of lunch seatings per day: 6

Are modular units currently present on-site and being used for classroom space?: YES

If "YES", indicate the number of years that the modular units have been in use: 9

Number of Modular Units: 6

Classroom count in Modular Units: 6

Seating Capacity of Modular classrooms: 22

What was the original anticipated useful life in years of the modular units when they were installed?: 20

Have non-traditional classroom spaces been converted to be used for classroom space?: YES

If "YES", indicate the number of non-traditional classroom spaces in use: 3

Please provide a description of each non-traditional classroom space, its originally-intended use and how it is currently used (maximum of 1000 characters):

Yes. PE classes are delivered in the cafeteria or classrooms twice per week, due to the lack of space and the presence of three PE teachers in one small gymnasium. In addition, the lack of remedial/tutorial and special education spaces has resulted in the use of non-traditional spaces for small group instruction, such as corridors, stair landings, former entrance ways, and former storage rooms. The Media Center has dual use for technology class and media/library use.

Please explain any recent changes to the district's educational program, school assignment polices, grade configurations, class size policy, school closures, changes in administrative space, or any other changes that impact the district's enrollment capacity (maximum of 5000 characters):

During the 2019/20 School Year, the District opened the Sunita Williams Elementary School, to replace the aging Hillside School. The Williams School provided some needed capacity to address growing elementary enrollment, and now houses many of the District's elementary intensive learning center programs. Also in the 2019/20 School Year, the District introduced full-day kindergarten for residents. Previously, a half-day program had been provided, with a tuition-in afterschool enrichment program for interested families.

In March of 2019, the School Committee approved policy #JFABC "Assignment of Elementary Students to School." This policy governs the registration of students who wish to attend a school other than the school in their assigned attendance area. It also addresses the enrollment of new students in the event of overcrowding, in the event of under-enrollment, when there is development of a new residential area, when a new school opens, or in other extenuating circumstances. Finally, it provided guidelines around the establishment of buffer zones, and the assignment of students within buffer zones.

There have been no recent changes to the school committee's class size policies.

What are the district's current class size policies (maximum of 500 characters)?:

School Committee Policy #IHB specifies that student/teacher ratios should be within the guidelines: 18-22 in Grades K 3, 20-24 in Grades 4-5, and 'reasonable class size' in Grades 6-12. These guidelines are recommendations, however, rather than absolute limits requiring strict, literal adherence.

Priority 7

Question 1: Please provide a detailed description of the programs not currently available due to facility constraints, the state or local requirement for such programs, and the facility limitations precluding the programs from being offered.

The physical constraints of the Mitchell School have impeded the educational program in a variety of ways.

As previously noted, classrooms are undersized, the number and configuration of spaces are problematic, and there is a significant lack of small group instruction space for remedial/ tutorial and special education. Some small group spaces are only accessible by walking through general classrooms, which creates disruption in the learning environment and comprises the privacy of students receiving support. Occupational therapy has inadequate space for gross motor activities. The school lacks a performance space, which limits student access to creative arts and other school-wide educational programming. There is no dedicated computer lab, due to space constraints, and the size and configuration of the Media Center are problematic.

Deficiencies in the electrical system also cause periodic blackouts, which disrupt educational programming for students. As previously noted, the electrical system is largely original to the building, with no empty circuits. Overloads, created during AC operation, cause the circuits to trip and for portions of the school to lose electricity. The circuit breakers and main service are obsolete and unavailable, making maintenance difficult and costly. The lack of and improper location of power receptacles in classrooms and throughout the building, limit the expansion of technology. The electrical system and most other building systems are nearing the end of their useful lives. The modular classrooms required a new independent electrical service, so as not to over tax the existing school.

The Gymnasium is only accessible by stairs or by walking outside and around the building. The PE program is forced to use the Cafeteria and the stage, which does not have a ramp or lift access. Students with mobility issues who need to access reading, math ELL, or psychological services must walk outside and around the building. The main office is not directly accessible from the front entrance. Individuals with mobility issues need to walk the entire interior perimeter of the school to access the main office and would need to exit the building and walk outside, regardless of weather, to re-enter at the levels of the gym, reading, math, ELL, or psychology. The general lack of accessibility results in a significant increase in out-of-class time for students with disabilities who need to access these areas of the building. In addition, classrooms and restrooms lack proper push / pull clearances at entrances.

Priority 7

Question 2: Please describe the measures the district has taken or is planning to take in the immediate future to mitigate the problem(s) described above.

The Mitchell School has taken measures to mitigate many of the deficiencies noted above, but has not been able to address all problem areas.

To accommodate growing enrollment, the District constructed additions to the School in 1958 and 1968, which added classrooms, a gymnasium and a library. To accommodate more recent enrollment growth, full day kindergarten and the increase in special education service, four temporary modular classrooms were constructed in Fall 2014, and an additional two modular classrooms were constructed in 2019. However, despite these additions, teaching and learning continues in a school building that is approximately 42% undersized for its population, and where many spaces need to be shared to accommodate program needs. Future enrollment growth would likely require increases in class size, and/or moving music instruction back to the stage, so that the existing music room could be used as a general classroom. To accommodate enrollment, the district has also used movable partitions to create private teaching spaces in stairways, corridors and to subdivide larger rooms. Former storage rooms and an entrance foyer have been outfitted with tables and chairs to allow for one on one tutoring and small group work. Service providers share program offices, which also are used for parent meetings and administration conference areas double as teaching spaces

Due to a lack of common space, the gymnasium, cafeteria/auditorium and media centers all are put to dual use, which often leads to scheduling conflicts and reduced content delivery as setup and breakdown time for each program needs to be accounted for. The lack of a dedicated technology lab has been partially mitigated by the use of the Media Center for instruction, however, the lack of acoustical separation makes this a difficult environment for dual instruction.

The lack of administrative and storage space has been only partially mitigated by the shared use of conference space (such as the Principal's conference room), and the use of hallways for student work. Hallways, decommissioned bathrooms, and the basement are also used for storage.

The school has not been able, however, to mitigate deficiencies in many of the building systems. The Comprehensive Facilities Assessment and 2020 School Master Plan both indicated that a comprehensive repair/ addition project would be needed to address the following significant deficiencies: the age of the building (70+ years), deficiencies in the size and number of core educational spaces, inaccessibility to bathrooms and certain academic and core classroom spaces, end-of-life conditions in most building systems, poor energy performance, site constraints, and lack of compliance with contemporary building codes, such as automatic sprinklers, seismic structural design and roof snow loading. The reports recommended a comprehensive renovation/addition project to address these needs, as well as the associated code-related upgrades that would be triggered, including life safety, energy efficiency, and accessibility improvements.

Priority 7

Question 3: Please provide a detailed explanation of the impact of the problem described in this priority on your district's educational program. Please include specific examples of how the problem prevents the district from delivering the educational program it is required to deliver and how students and/or teachers are directly affected by the problem identified.

Although Mitchell is able to provide its educational program, the deficiencies of the facility and the resulting mitigating measures taken by staff have had a negative impact on the educational program for students.

Despite the fact that the building was enlarged in 1958, 1968, 2014 and 2019, the building remains undersized for its population. As previously noted, the calculated capacity of the school is 311 students, based on the total area noted in the Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (DWA, 2011) and classroom count. The current enrollment is 425 students, creating a space deficiency of over 42% (use consistent % here) (or 36% with the modulars.) As noted in the Assessment report, all of the existing educational spaces are undersized by the following percentages: 1948 wing (-18%), 1958 wing (-8%), Library Media Center (-25%), Cafeteria (-31%), Gymnasium (-10%), and former art room (-53%.) The only spaces that are within 10% of the current MSBA guidelines are two classrooms at the end of the 1968 wing and the new classrooms in the modular buildings.

The dual use of common space also has created conflicts between program areas and disruptions for students. The stage is used for gym instruction, which limits the availability of the stage/ cafeteria for school-wide or special joint classroom events. The stage is not handicapped accessible, which limits student access, and makes it difficult for the gym teacher to move equipment on and off the Stage. PE classes are bothered by the noise from the kitchen, the motors from the vending machines and milk cooler and the raising and lowering of tables by the custodian. The necessary placement of freezers, coolers, and kitchen storage in the cafetorium space limits the use of the space for both PE and the performing arts. During assemblies and performances the freezers, coolers, tables, etc. need to be unplugged and removed from the space due to both the disruptive sound of the equipment and the physical restrictions of the space. Use of the Media Center also is problematic, because the size and configuration require technology and media classes to run simultaneously within the same space, with no acoustical separation. Before-school strings classes also have been moved to the Media Center, which limits Media Center prep time and displaces math groups that otherwise would meet in the Media Center.

The use of non-traditional spaces to conduct small group instruction creates space, but does not create a learning environment that is conducive to focus, concentration and student performance. As previously noted, remedial/tutorial and special education instruction often occurs in stairways, corridors and storage rooms. Partitions are used to cordon off areas of some classrooms to permit access to the adjacent reading and small group instruction rooms, which creates disruption in the classroom environment. Tables and chairs are set up in hallways and entrances provide locations for student lunch groups to meet, or for MCAS testing, but are not ideal locations for either of these activities.

Service providers also share office space, creating confidentiality issues among themselves, students and parents. For instance, the reading teachers, math teachers, English language learner teacher, and the school psychologist share office space. Special education parent meetings often occur in shared spaces, where confidential information is being discussed. Moreover, due to the shared use of space by service providers, special education, speech/language, and occupational therapy sessions are often interrupted or displaced by meetings. Occupational therapists often must provide gross motor activities in the hallway. The lack of dedicated space for OT means that the Mitchell School is not able to house the OT equipment that would be ideal for some students, which leads to inequity among buildings, with regard to OT services. Services for students with visual and hearing impairments take place exclusively in the hallways or outside in good weather.

Finally, the lack of administrative office space and inaccessibility of the Principal's Office has created disruption for administrative personnel. The Principal's Office is only accessible via an adjacent conference room. This conference room is used by lunch groups, special education, reading testing and assessment, parent/teacher conferences, team meetings and small group work with students. This is problematic because the Principal, and those who come to see him, must walk through and interrupt these meetings and testing situations. It also limits the Principal's access to the conference room for his own meetings with teacher teams, administrative teams, School Council and parent groups and creates privacy issues regarding principal meetings.

CERTIFICATIONS

The undersigned hereby certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge, information and belief, the statements and information contained in this statement of Interest and attached hereto are true and accurate and that this Statement of Interest has been prepared under the direction of the district school committee and the undersigned is duly authorized to submit this Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The undersigned also hereby acknowledges and agrees to provide the Massachusetts School Building Authority, upon request by the Authority, any additional information relating to this Statement of Interest that may be required by the Authority.

Chief Executive Officer * School Committee Chair Superintendent of Schools

_____	_____	_____
(signature)	(signature)	(signature)
Date	Date	Date

* Local chief executive officer: In a city or town with a manager form of government, the manager of the municipality; in other cities, the mayor; and in other towns, the board of selectmen unless, in a city or town, some other municipal office is designated to the chief executive office under the provisions of a local charter. Please note, in districts where the Superintendent is also the Local Chief Executive Officer, it is required for the same person to sign the Statement of Interest Certifications twice.

Massachusetts School Building Authority

Next Steps to Finalize Submission of your FY 2023 Statement of Interest

Thank you for submitting an FY 2023 Statement of Interest (SOI) to the MSBA electronically. **Please note, the District's submission is not yet complete if the District selected statutory priority 1 or priority 3.** If either of these priorities were selected, the District is required to mail the required supporting documentation to the MSBA, which is described below.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION FOR SOI STATUTORY PRIORITIES #1 AND #3: If a District selects Statutory priority #1 and/or priority #3, the District is required to submit additional documentation with its SOI.

- If a District selects statutory priority #1, Replacement or renovation of a building which is structurally unsound or otherwise in a condition seriously jeopardizing the health and safety of the school children, where no alternative exists, the MSBA requires a hard copy of the engineering or other report detailing the nature and severity of the problem and a written professional opinion of how imminent the system failure is likely to manifest itself. The District also must submit photographs of the problematic building area or system to the MSBA.
- If a District selects statutory priority #3, Prevention of a loss of accreditation, the SOI will not be considered complete unless and until a summary of the accreditation report focused on the deficiency as stated in this SOI is provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: In addition to the information required above, the District may also provide any reports, pictures, or other information they feel will give the MSBA a better understanding of the issues identified at a facility.

If you have any questions about the SOI process please contact the MSBA at 617-720-4466 or SOI@massschoolbuildings.org.

Massachusetts School Building Authority

School District Needham

District Contact Anne Gulati TEL: (781) 455-0400

Name of School Pollard Middle

Submission Date 3/2/2023

SOI CERTIFICATION

To be eligible to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI), a district must certify the following:

- The district hereby acknowledges and agrees that this SOI is NOT an application for funding and that submission of this SOI in no way commits the MSBA to accept an application, approve an application, provide a grant or any other type of funding, or places any other obligation on the MSBA.
- The district hereby acknowledges that no district shall have any entitlement to funds from the MSBA, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B or the provisions of 963 CMR 2.00.
- The district hereby acknowledges that the provisions of 963 CMR 2.00 shall apply to the district and all projects for which the district is seeking and/or receiving funds for any portion of a municipally-owned or regionally-owned school facility from the MSBA pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B.
- The district hereby acknowledges that this SOI is for one existing municipally-owned or regionally-owned public school facility in the district that is currently used or will be used to educate public PreK-12 students and that the facility for which the SOI is being submitted does not serve a solely early childhood or Pre-K student population.
- Prior to the submission of the SOI, the district will schedule and hold a meeting at which the School Committee will vote, using the specific language contained in the "Vote" tab, to authorize the submission of this SOI. This is required for cities, towns, and regional school districts.
- Prior to the submission of the SOI, the district will schedule and hold a meeting at which the City Council/Board of Aldermen or Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body will vote, using the specific language contained in the "Vote" tab, to authorize the submission of this SOI. This is not required for regional school districts.
- The district hereby acknowledges that current vote documentation is required for all SOI submissions. The district will use the MSBA's vote template and the required votes will specifically reference the school name and the priorities for which the SOI is being submitted.
- The district hereby acknowledges that it must upload all required vote documentation on the "Vote" tab, in the format required by the MSBA. All votes must be certified or signed and on city, town or district letterhead.
- The district hereby acknowledges that this SOI submission will not be complete until the MSBA has received all required supporting documentation for statutory priority 1 and statutory priority 3. If statutory priority 1 is selected, your SOI will not be considered complete unless and until you provide the required engineering (or other) report, a professional opinion regarding the problem, and photographs of the problematic area or system. If statutory priority 3 is selected, your SOI will not be considered complete unless and until you provide a summary of the accreditation report focused on the deficiency as stated in this SOI. The documentation noted above must be post-marked and submitted to the MSBA by the Core Program SOI filing period closure date.

**LOCAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT/SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR
(E.g., Mayor, Town Manager, Board of Selectmen)**

Chief Executive Officer *	School Committee Chair	Superintendent of Schools
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(signature)	(signature)	(signature)
Date	Date	Date

* Local chief executive officer: In a city or town with a manager form of government, the manager of the municipality; in other cities, the mayor; and in other towns, the board of selectmen unless, in a city or town, some other municipal office is designated to the chief executive office under the provisions of a local charter. Please note, in districts where the Superintendent is also the Local Chief Executive Officer, it is required for the same person to sign the Statement of Interest Certifications twice.

Massachusetts School Building Authority

School District Needham

District Contact Anne Gulati TEL: (781) 455-0400

Name of School Pollard Middle

Submission Date 3/2/2023

Note

The following Priorities have been included in the Statement of Interest:

1. Replacement or renovation of a building which is structurally unsound or otherwise in a condition seriously jeopardizing the health and safety of school children, where no alternative exists.
2. Elimination of existing severe overcrowding.
3. Prevention of the loss of accreditation.
4. Prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments.
5. Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility.
6. Short term enrollment growth.
7. Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements.
8. Transition from court-ordered and approved racial balance school districts to walk-to, so-called, or other school districts.

SOI Vote Requirement

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the MSBA's vote requirements for submitting an SOI, which are set forth in the Vote Tab of this SOI. I understand that the MSBA requires votes from specific parties/governing bodies, in a specific format using the language provided by the MSBA. Further, I understand that the MSBA requires certified and signed vote documentation to be submitted with the SOI. I acknowledge that my SOI will not be considered complete and, therefore, will not be reviewed by the MSBA unless the required accompanying vote documentation is submitted to the satisfaction of the MSBA. All SOI vote documentation must be uploaded on the Vote Tab.

SOI Program: Core

Potential Project Scope: Renovation\ Addition

Is this a Potential Consolidation? No

Is this SOI the District Priority SOI? Yes

School name of the District Priority SOI: Pollard Middle

Is this part of a larger facilities plan? Yes

If "YES", please provide the following:

Facilities Plan Date: 11/19/2020

Planning Firm: Dore & Whittier Architects (DWA)

Please provide a brief summary of the plan including its goals and how the school facility that is the subject of this SOI fits into that plan:

The scope of this project is the renovation of and addition to the Pollard School, including: upgrading and replacing sections of the school that are obsolete and/or deficient according to current codes, as well as expanding and renovating core educational spaces, in order to provide the full range of programs consistent with state and approved local education requirements. The Town's three recent master plans (the 5/15/1998-Townwide Comprehensive Facilities Study, Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc. (KBA), the 11/15/ 2006 – Facilities Master Plan – Town of Needham, DiNisco Design Partnership (DDP), and the 2014 Facilities Master Plan by HKT Architects) all identified the need to renovate and add to the Pollard School to address size and condition deficiencies. This need was confirmed by the 2020 School Master Plan Study (11/19/2020, Dore & Whittier Architects, DWA) and an earlier, 2011 Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (8/22/2011), also completed by DWA. The DWA studies examined the deficiencies of the typical classrooms, science classrooms, auditorium, gymnasiums, and administrative office spaces in great detail, and included evaluations by the following professional (A&E) disciplines: site (civil and landscape), architectural, structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, hazardous materials and energy savings programs, with a cost analysis for both short-term and long-term improvements.

Although the Town has undertaken significant repair and maintenance of the Pollard School over the years through its Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) and budgeting processes, all plans agree that this building is in need of a comprehensive repair/addition project to address the following significant deficiencies: the age of the building (between 31 and 67 years), deficiencies in the size and number of core educational spaces (particularly the regular classrooms and science classrooms), the age of the temporary modular classrooms (now 21-years old), deficiencies in many building systems, and poor energy performance.

Please provide the current student to teacher ratios at the school facility that is the subject of this SOI: 20 students per teacher

Please provide the originally planned student to teacher ratios at the school facility that is the subject of this SOI: 22 students per teacher

Does the District have a Master Educational Plan that includes facility goals for this building and all school buildings in District? Yes

If "YES", please provide the author and date of the District's Master Educational Plan.

Several studies have occurred to document facility goals for the Pollard School, including the most recent School Master Plan by Dore & Whittier Architects (2020). The Town of Needham also updates its Facilities Master Plan about every decade. The 1998, 2006 and 2014 master plans all identified the need to renovate/replace the Pollard School to address building deficiencies. In addition, a Comprehensive Facilities Assessment (DWA, 2011) evaluated the long-term needs at Pollard School.

Is there overcrowding at the school facility? Yes

If "YES", please describe in detail, including specific examples of the overcrowding.

The building was designed for 45 classroom spaces, which vary approximately from 553 - 872 sq. ft. As enrollment has increased over the years, however, spaces have been converted to accommodate 40 regular education classrooms for core subject delivery and 22 classrooms for elective programs. These elective spaces include use of the Lecture Hall, Auditorium, Cafeteria, Library/Media Center, Computer Labs, Music Lab, and the 10 modular classrooms that were added in 2002 to accommodate the middle school population. The 10 modular classrooms are at the end of their useful life. Overall, core academic spaces are 23% smaller than the MSBA Space Summary guidelines for the 901 current student enrollment. The existing building (exclusive of the modular classrooms) is 139,524 gross square feet. This is about 9,000 gross square feet less than the MSBA guideline for a school of this enrollment. To make up for some of the space deficiency, the District added 10 modular classrooms in 2021. Currently these classrooms serve as World Language and special education spaces. Despite the addition of 10 classrooms many elective classes are held in shared spaces. For example, orchestra classes are held in the Lecture Hall; art classes are offered in a Science classroom; data science and health classes are held in open social studies or english classrooms, and other classes are placed in the Cafeteria, Library, or the Auditorium, when available.

In addition to overcrowding in the classrooms and hallways, the specialty classrooms are all undersized for the student population. The science classrooms are all smaller than the MSBA standard of 1440 sf. These rooms range in size from 661 sq. ft. to 1004 sq. ft. and cannot accommodate enough lab tables for the number of enrolled students. Although there are two gymnasium spaces, both are less than the MSBA guideline of 6000 sq.ft. In order to ensure that all students receive the required Physical Education (PE) curriculum, between 3-4 PE classes are scheduled concurrently in each of the gym spaces. Given class sizes ranging from 24 – 30 students, this means that there are between 75 - 120 students and 3-4 teachers in the gym spaces during a single class period, four times per day. As a result, students ‘sit out’ for approximately 33% of their class time, awaiting their turn to play. The locker rooms are undersized for the school and do not safely accommodate the number of students who are scheduled to use them during PE or the after-school middle school sports program. Similarly, no more than 20 students can occupy the adaptive PE center at once, which is smaller than many classes of 25+ students.

The common areas also are undersized for the student population. Approximately 5 years ago, the main office was relocated to the center of the building, in order to provide for better visibility of students and visitors. The new, main office space occupies a portion of the original Media Center. The current Media Center is now 2,749 sq. ft. and is approximately half the size of the MSBA guideline for this student population. The Kitchen and Cafeteria are approximately right sized to serve the current student body. Overcrowding can be felt in the congested hallways and staircases and circulation throughout the school. The Pollard School has only two staircases and one entrance and exit corridor from the modular classrooms to the main building. Finally, parking is insufficient and student arrival and drop-off is heavily congested. There are approximately 100 striped parking spaces on site, and although the 2011 site improvements reduced the parking deficiency on site, the project required a zoning variance, because a school of this size should have additional parking for about 65 cars. Harris Ave also experiences severe congestion at the beginning and end of the school day, when 17 buses drop off and pick up students, at the same time as parents are waiting on the street to drop off or pick up students. Fortunately, many students live within walking distance of the school. The accessible vans drop off and pick up students at the lower lot, since there are insufficient spaces at the main entry drive.

Has the district had any recent teacher layoffs or reductions? Yes

If "YES", how many teaching positions were affected? 7

At which schools in the district? Broadmeadow Elementary, Sunita Williams Elementary, Mitchell Elementary and Newman Elementary

Please describe the types of teacher positions that were eliminated (e.g., art, math, science, physical education, etc.).

FY23 teachers: 1.0 FTE Newman; 1.0 FTE Mitchell; 0.7 FTE Broadmeadow visual arts 0.7 FTE Williams visual arts; 0.13 FTE Mitchell visual arts teacher; 0.2 FTE Newman visual arts; 0.17 FTE Mitchell world language.

Has the district had any recent staff layoffs or reductions? Yes

If "YES", how many staff positions were affected? 5

At which schools in the district? Broadmeadow Elementary, Eliot Elementary, Sunita Williams Elementary, Newman Elementary and Needham

Please describe the types of staff positions that were eliminated (e.g., guidance, administrative, maintenance, etc.).

FY23: 1.0 FTE Broadmeadow kindergarten TA; 0.8 FTE Sunita Williams COTA; 0.8 FTE Newman SLPA; 0.5 FTE Eliot TA, 1.0 FTE NHS permanent building substitute.

Please provide a description of the program modifications as a consequence of these teacher and/or staff reductions, including the impact on district class sizes and curriculum.

The teacher reductions in FY23 were made in response to enrollment/scheduling changes in the respective schools. The staff reductions were made to better reflect student support service requirements, including the conversion of paraprofessionals to certified teaching staff. The changes had no impact on program, class size, or curriculum.

Please provide a description of the local budget approval process for a potential capital project with the MSBA. Include schedule information (i.e. Town Meeting dates, city council/town council meetings dates, regional school

committee meeting dates). Provide, if applicable, the District's most recent budget approval process that resulted in a budget reduction and the impact of the reduction to the school district (staff reductions, discontinued programs, consolidation of facilities).

The budget process begins in September/October, when the School Committee votes budget guidelines. The budget is developed in October-December, with a public hearing and budget review in December - January. The School Committee votes its final budget recommendation at the end of January and the Town Manager's balanced budget proposal (including the School Committee voted budget, if different) is due to the Finance Committee by January 31. The Finance Committee's recommendation, which must be voted by March 15, becomes the main motion at Town Meeting. Annual Town Meeting occurs during the first and second weeks of May, at which time the school budget is approved and funds are appropriated. The fiscal year begins July 1. Planned budget reductions for FY24 include: the conversion of 7.4 FTE teaching assistants to 3.29 FTE certified special education teachers; the conversion of a 0.55 FTE occupational therapist position to a full-time certified occupational therapy assistant; the conversion of a 0.5 FTE psychologist position to a 0.5 FTE special education team chair; the reduction of 2.41 FTE vacant classroom and special area teachers to match enrollment projections/scheduling requirements; and the elimination of 0.35 FTE vacant clerical support positions. The aforementioned budget reductions do not have an impact on school facilities or class size. Generally, the changes strengthen the program overall by converting paraprofessional staff to certified teachers.

General Description

BRIEF BUILDING HISTORY: Please provide a detailed description of when the original building was built, and the date(s) and project scopes(s) of any additions and renovations (maximum of 5000 characters).

The Pollard Middle School was constructed in 1956 (73,370 sq. ft.) with major additions/ renovations in 1968 (52,586 sq. ft.) and 1992 (8,471 sq. ft.) that nearly doubled the original size of the school. A series of additional renovations were completed in the 1990's including: handicapped accessibility renovations (1996); air balancing (1998) and HVAC / electrical system improvements (1999). In 2002, ten modular classrooms, toilets, and a corridor / ramp that connects the modular building to the lower level of the 1968 wing (totaling 12,797 sq. ft.) were added to the south of the existing building. The main school roof was replaced in 2011 as part of the MSBA Green Roof repair program. Parking was added adjacent to the sports fields with a driveway for buses to Dedham Ave in 2011-12, with some renovations to the modular classrooms. Boiler replacement was completed during the summer of 2013, as part of a strategic investment plan for energy efficiency renovations for the facility. Some student bathroom renovations were completed in 2019 and 2020.

The building has always functioned as a middle school, and at one time contained grades 6, 7 & 8. However, due to overcrowding, the 6th Grade was moved to the newly-reconstructed High Rock School in 2009. The Pollard campus now serves the 7th and 8th Grades, with 901 students utilizing all available space within the building.

TOTAL BUILDING SQUARE FOOTAGE: Please provide the original building square footage PLUS the square footage of any additions.

147224

SITE DESCRIPTION: Please provide a detailed description of the current site and any known existing conditions that would impact a potential project at the site. Please note whether there are any other buildings, public or private, that share this current site with the school facility. What is the use(s) of this building(s)? (maximum of 5000 characters).

The Pollard Middle School is located in a residential neighborhood of Needham, with a main entrance at 200 Harris Ave. It also has a west side entrance and parking area accessed from Glenwood Rd. The school is located on a 15.38 acre parcel of land in the south east section of Town, just east of RT 135 (Dedham Ave) and adjacent to DeFazio Park. The property is bound on the south side by Dedham Ave and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail line. A tunnel under the tracks provides access from the school property to DeFazio Park, a multi-field athletic complex. The west edge of the property abuts a densely populated neighborhood of single family homes. The east side of the school is bounded by a wooded area with residential homes just beyond the woods. The north side and front entrance abut Harris Avenue. The neighborhood is moderately dense with mostly single family homes. Harris Avenue is a wide boulevard with adjoining side streets. Access to the site is provided via Harris Avenue, Glenwood Road, and (for emergency use only) Dedham Avenue. The Pollard School is the only use on this parcel of land.

The building occupies about 16% of the site area, and sits in the northwest corner of the site. The building appears to be one story tall from the main entrance on Harris Ave. However, due to the land contours, the central and west wings are actually two stories tall as seen from the secondary entrance to the site. The southern side of the site is occupied by playing fields and a tennis court. The southwest corner of the site is a wooded wetland which drains through a culvert beneath the railroad embankment to the south. The Conservation Commission's jurisdictional control extends over the wetlands and to the areas within 100 ft. of the wetlands boundary, restricting development in this corner of the site. Other constraints to development on the playing fields include a 36" storm sewer line extending from the lower parking lot under the fields and through the pedestrian passage of the RR embankment. If a new school building were constructed adjacent to the railroad embankment, the building envelope would require enhanced sound separation features from the train noise and vibration.

The site includes a bus drop-off loop and striped parking lot for 81 cars, split between lots on the east and west sides of the building. Additional parking is available in a small lot adjacent to (and accessed from) the east lot (14 spaces), and along the emergency access drive at the rear of the school (33 spaces). Handicap accessible spaces are provided in the front lot however, access to the front door may exceed the allowable travel distance. Some, but not all, of the exterior pathways are accessible. Handicap accessible spaces are also located in the west parking area, accessible to the lower level entrance near the gymnasium, and along the emergency access road for access to the playfields.

The school and modular classrooms are “existing nonconforming”. Special Permits and Waivers were requested and granted in 2011, including a request for additional parking, modifications to pre-existing non-conforming transition area, pre-existing non-conforming site coverage, off street parking and number of parking spaces, parking illumination, size of parking spaces, landscape requirements in the parking area and the number of trees required in the parking area. Any major future project on this site will need to address the existing nonconforming conditions, as measured against the current Zoning By-laws and apply for additional Special Permits or Waivers, as needed

The school has pedestrian sidewalk access from Harris Ave, Dedham Ave and grass pathway access from DeFazio Park. Improvements to these pathways would be required during a major renovation to meet current Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The site walkways surrounding the building leading from Harris Ave to the playing fields are asphalt and are in generally poor condition. The pathway from the Harris Ave parking lot to the administration wing is not MAAB compliant, although repairs were made in 2014-15 because this is a primary handicapped access pathway to the school.

The Pollard School uses adjacent DeFazio Park for outdoor gym classes, however, it takes between 5-10 minutes to walk to the fields each way, which shortens the gym period time for specific instruction. The DeFazio fields are under the jurisdictional control of the Park & Recreation Commission and serve the entire Town, including several of the Needham High School sports teams. These fields are not available for school construction.

ADDRESS OF FACILITY: Please type address, including number, street name and city/town, if available, or describe the location of the site. (Maximum of 300 characters)

Pollard Middle School, 200 Harris Ave, Needham, MA 02492.

BUILDING ENVELOPE: Please provide a detailed description of the building envelope, types of construction materials used, and any known problems or existing conditions (maximum of 5000 characters).

Building Structure: The foundation beneath the 1956 original building is uninsulated cast-in-place concrete, with a four-inch cast in-place uninsulated concrete slab on grade. There is minimal rigid insulation isolating the slab from the exterior. The structural frame of the original school included steel WF8 columns and open web steel joists, five feet on center, supporting a low-slope 1.5-inch steel deck roof. The 1968 two-story wing and 1992 addition have a two-story steel frame with HSS 6 x 6 columns supporting 27-inch steel girders and 16-inch steel beams and a 1.5-inch metal deck with cast in place concrete floor. The roof is framed with open web steel joists and 1.5-inch metal low-slope deck. The exterior steel frame on the oldest section of the school is generally exposed steel and the roof beams cantilever to form a roof overhang with no thermal break from the interior. Insulated metal soffit panels were added to the 1968 wing to enclose the cantilevered steel beams within the thermal envelope during the 2011 roof repair project. All of the exposed structural steel columns and beams require regular painting maintenance and some rusting may be compromising the structure after 65 years. Any repairs, renovations, additions or changes of occupancy or use to the existing structure will need to conform to contemporary seismic and snow load design criteria. Capacity of the existing structure to support solar panels will also need to be assessed.

Building Envelope: The walls of this building are largely uninsulated and require an upgrade to meet contemporary energy codes. The building has a double-pane aluminum window wall system (EFCO type), which was installed in 1992 and is in fair to good condition, but at 30+ years in age, some windows are losing their seal and require replacement. The end walls and gymnasium walls are constructed of 6" interior CMU block, 2.75-inch airspace

and four-inch exterior red brick with no insulation. The brick and mortar are generally in good repair. Settlement cracks and water staining require regular repair. Exterior wall louvers bring unconditioned outside air into each classroom through the unit ventilators. Some of the upper facade areas of the building have vertical tongue and groove cedar siding with gray stain in good condition but require regular repainting and repair. Portions of these walls have fiberglass batt insulation. Solid knee walls beneath the windows in most classrooms have one-inch asphalt impregnated insulation board adhered to the exterior brick. The floor and wall system insulation was typical in the 1960's but does not meet contemporary energy codes. All exterior doors have been replaced with red aluminum insulated panel doors, with double-pane insulated vision glass panels with new egress hardware and are in good condition. Exterior stairs leading out of the gym should be replaced or reconstructed to solve water drainage problems that cause occasional flooding. Some of the exterior galvanized metal frame exit stairs from 1958 have rotted wood railings that require replacement. A major renovation project will trigger energy code upgrades and will likely require replacement or upgrade of the building envelope.

The modular classrooms have four-inch wood frame walls with painted plasterboard interior, fiberglass-batt insulation, and vinyl horizontal exterior sheathing. The double-pane, double-hung, vinyl clad windows are operable in the modular classroom wing. The skirt around the crawl space beneath the modular classrooms has a cement board finish with Tyvek wrap installed over plywood with pressure-treated wood framing. Egress stairs from this area are made of pressure treated lumber. These 21-year old temporary classrooms have a maximum useful life of about twenty years, therefore demolition and replacement with permanent space will be required in any major renovation/ repair project.

Roof: The main building has a built-up asphalt sheeting roof with a white granular finish (Tremco system), with six to eight-inches of sloping insulation installed in 2011 as part of the roof project. Annual roof inspections identify continuing repairs. The four sloped skylight structures over the art rooms were replaced with translucent fiberglass insulating skylights (Kalwall System). Similar translucent fiberglass insulating clearstory windows were installed on the two roof monitors in the 1958 classroom wing. New roof drains, cap flashing, downspouts and gutters were also installed in 2011. This repair project provided an important upgrade to the energy efficiency of the building. The modular classrooms roof (not upgraded in 2002) is a black single ply EPDM rubber roof membrane with 1-3" of rigid insulation on a plywood deck on composite wood I-beams.

Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the EXTERIOR WALLS? NO

Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 1958

Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:

Original walls. Exterior painting and minor repairs made on a periodic basis, as needed.

Roof Section A

Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section? NO

Area of Section (square feet) 140000

Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))

Main building: built-up asphalt sheeting roof with a white granular finish (Tremco system.)

Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced) 12

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

new asphalt roof on the main building was installed in 2011, as part of an MSBA Green Roof project. New roof drains, cap flashing, downspouts and gutters were also installed in 2011. The new energy code may require full replacement or enhancement as part of a major renovation project.

Roof Section B

Is the District seeking replacement of the Roof Section? YES

Area of Section (square feet) 12385

Type of ROOF (e.g., PVC, EPDM, Shingle, Slate, Tar & Gravel, Other (please describe))

Modular classrooms (2002): black single ply EPDM rubber roof membrane.

Age of Section (number of years since the Roof was installed or replaced) 21

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

Leaks patched as needed. These will be demolished in a major add/reno project.

Window Section A**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?** YES**Windows in Section (count)** 434**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

Aluminum windows with insulated glass and thermally-broken frames, typically with fixed 3'x3' window above and awning 1'x3' window below.

Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced) 31**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

Aluminum frame double pane energy efficient windows were installed (1992) EFCO-type. New energy code requirements for the building envelope would likely require replacement during a major renovation.

Window Section B**Is the District seeking replacement of the Windows Section?** YES**Windows in Section (count)** 23**Type of WINDOWS (e.g., Single Pane, Double Pane, Other (please describe))**

Double pane sliding aluminum windows

Age of Section (number of years since the Windows were installed or replaced) 21**Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:**

The long-term plan is to demolish the modular classrooms and replace them with permanent construction.

MECHANICAL and ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS: Please provide a detailed description of the current mechanical and electrical systems and any known problems or existing conditions (maximum of 5000 characters).**Mechanical Systems**

In 2013, the boilers in the upper boiler room were replaced with three high-efficiency, natural gas condenser boilers. The lower boiler room is rarely used because when operating, the pressure relief valves open due to improper pipe sizing in the original 1992 installation. The 20-year old underground storage tank (UST) was removed in 2013. General heating in the older classrooms is provided through inefficient finned-tube radiators in both floor-mount and ceiling-mount locations. Perimeter classrooms get outdoor air and heating from wall-mounted unit ventilators.. Although there is no central cooling system in place, some classrooms have roof-mounted split systems or window-mounted air-conditioning systems. The building has over 50 rooftop fans, which were installed in the 1990's, to improve indoor air quality throughout the school. The modular classroom wing has twelve gas-fired rooftop heating and cooling units that supply hot and cold air to the modular classroom spaces. A Barber-Coleman Network 8000 Microzone pneumatic DDC control system was installed in 1995 to control all the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems within the building, including the modular classrooms. This control system is past the end of its useful life and should be replaced with an electronically actuated valve system during any major renovation. The entire mechanical system would be replaced during a major add/reno project.

Electrical Systems

The building is supplied by two electrical services. The main school service (upgraded in 1999), is a 2000 Amp, 208Y/120 Volt, three-phase, four-wire underground lateral to a transformer located in a vault, below grade. The switchboard is in good condition, with three 225 AMP spaces and one 400 Amp space for future expansion. The modular classroom service (installed in 2002), is an underground lateral to a pad mounted transformer, is rated 800 Amps at 208Y/120 Volt, three-phase, four-wire, and has no spare capacity. The electrical distribution system in the primary technology classrooms was enhanced in 1999, but otherwise is original to the phase of construction. Areas of the 1958 and 1968 building wings have original wiring that is approaching the end of its useful life. The building has an emergency generator rated at 125kVA/100W, at 208Y/120 Volt, 3 phase, 4-wire. Life safety and emergency egress lighting is illuminated with emergency battery units and LED exit signs. The school has a public address system, which operates through the phone system. The master clock system functions in only 50% to 70% of the rooms. The telephone system was replaced and the intercom system and bells were repaired in 2013. The lighting within the classrooms is typically 2'x4', recessed flat prismatic lens type and the fixtures are in good condition. The balance of the lighting consists of 2'x4' and 2'x2' parabolic louvered fixtures. Corridor lighting is

generally linear fluorescent fixtures either surface mounted or indirect, wall-slot type light cover. The lighting is functional and in fair to good condition throughout the school. The town is in the process of replacing all existing light fixtures with LED lighting in all town buildings.

Plumbing

The building is supplied with a 4" water service line coming to the building from Harris Ave. The water distribution system is contemporary to the phase of the building, with the exception of the hot water heater, which was converted to a high efficiency natural gas condenser hot water heater in 2013. The hot water heater connects with a mixing valve and circulating pump that maintains a constant water temperature supply to the building. The hot water piping appears to be insulated where exposed in the building. The cast iron, oakum and lead draining system is original to the phase of construction and therefore, the older sections are beyond the end of their useful life. The plumbing fixtures within the bathrooms also are largely original to the phase of construction, with wall mounted sinks, toilets and urinals. Some fixtures were replaced in 1996 during accessibility upgrades. However, ongoing phased renovations of some bathrooms are addressing deficiencies for MAAB compliance and accessibility that exist within the bathroom layouts that were noted in the 2011 report.

Fire Protection

The fire alarm system is an addressable system manufactured by FCI, and is in good condition. The building is partially equipped with an automatic sprinkler system added in 1992, and serves those spaces that were added or renovated at that time. The original 1956 building and most of the 1969 addition do not have automatic sprinklers. The modular classrooms have an independent automatic sprinkler system. Many of the larger spaces like the gymnasium and auditorium are lacking coverage. Any renovation will require adding sprinklers to the rest of the building in order to comply with contemporary code.

Boiler Section 1

Is the District seeking replacement of the Boiler? NO

Is there more than one boiler room in the School? YES

What percentage of the School is heated by the Boiler? 100

Type of heating fuel (e.g., Heating Oil, Natural Gas, Propane, Other)

Natural gas.

Age of Boiler (number of years since the Boiler was installed or replaced) 10

Description of repairs, if applicable, in the last three years. Include year of repair:

In 2013, the 20-year old dual fuel boilers in the upper boiler room were replaced with three high efficiency, natural gas condenser boilers. The domestic hot water heater also was replaced with high efficiency natural gas condenser hot water heaters. Fresh air intake and exhaust systems were added to improve combustion efficiency. Boiler operations were integrated with the building management system software and the system was programmed for energy efficient cycling of boilers. The underground oil storage tank was removed. The emergency generator fuel pump was installed in 2003. The lower boiler room has two unused 33-year old cast iron boilers. The entire mechanical system will likely need to be replaced in any major add/reno project due to the new energy codes and the Town and state goal of meeting net zero GHG emissions by 2050.

Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the HVAC SYSTEM? YES

Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 1995

Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:

In 1995, the HVAC system was updated in the 1969 building and the cafeteria building, and was put on the building management system (BMS) for remote control. There were modifications to the system in 1999-2000, including exhaust fans and outlets. Rooftop units and exhaust fans were installed in 2006 and some were replaced in 2011 & 2020. In 2009, a Rentar fuel catalyst was installed, and the pneumatic devices were replaced with digital controls. During the COVID pandemic all the mechanical systems were re-commissioned. Enhanced fresh air exchange rates in some classrooms required opening windows to achieve the designated amounts of fresh air. The pandemic response exposed the many deficiencies of the existing HVAC systems which require constant repairs to maintain the design airflow.

Has there been a Major Repair or Replacement of the ELECTRICAL SERVICES AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM? YES

Year of Last Major Repair or Replacement:(YYYY) 2009

Description of Last Major Repair or Replacement:

In 2009, the electrical and technology infrastructure was upgraded. The 1998 study found that the service switchboard had been upgraded in the previous 10 years and was in excellent condition. New lighting was installed in 1995. Electrical outlets were installed in 2003, 2004, and 2005. In 2003 a closet was constructed and wired in the rear of the lecture hall to house data and port connections. The cafeteria AV closet was rewired and conduits were installed for data cables. Additional data lines were strung in 2004 and 2005. All the electrical systems in the modular classrooms are original to the 2002 construction, with minor upgrades in 2011.

BUILDING INTERIOR: Please provide a detailed description of the current building interior including a description of the flooring systems, finishes, ceilings, lighting, etc. (maximum of 5000 characters).

Interior:

The flooring throughout the cafeteria, corridors and classrooms is Vinyl Composite Tile (VCT) and is well maintained and in good condition. The low-pile carpet in the Media Center and administrative offices is in good condition, but only in fair condition in the 1968 classroom wing. Bathroom floors are ceramic tile in good condition, except in sections of the locker room shower, which have delaminated from the concrete substrate and require replacement. The gymnasium floors are rubber flooring and the original floors were replaced in 2020. The floors in the utility areas are exposed concrete. Kitchen flooring is quarry tile in good condition. The Auditorium stage floor is wood and in good condition.

The wall finish system varies according to the phase of construction, but incorporates similar materials. Classrooms in the 1958 building have a combination of plaster and SGFT walls. Walls in the 1969 wing are a combination of concrete masonry unit (CMU) and sheetrock and are generally in good condition. Some of the corridor walls have hard-wood panels in good to fair condition. Multi-stall bathrooms are typically 20+ years old and in need of upgrades, with poor lighting, bowed ceiling tiles, chipped ceramic mosaic tile, rusting metal partitions, and sink/ counters that are in poor condition.

Most of the classrooms have dropped ceiling metal grids with 2'x4' Acoustic Ceiling Tile (ACT). The ACT in the administration area and a few of the classrooms in the 1958 wing are at a very low height of 7'-1/2" above finished floor (AFF), instead of the required 7'-6" AFF. Ceilings in the 1969 wing are in good condition. The kitchen has vinyl coated ceiling tile, which is in good condition. The Media Center/ Library and the main entry hall have exposed painted structural metal decks.

The interior doors throughout the building are typically wood and original to their date of construction. The oldest doors in the 1958 wing are in need of replacement, while the doors in the 1969 wing are in generally good condition. Many interior stairways have railings that were acceptable at the time of installation, but do not meet all current egress code and accessibility requirements.

Technology:

The building has Category 5 cabling to every classroom with many classrooms outfitted with smart boards and computers. There are four computer labs within the building, which function as teaching spaces for technology education. The following areas require upgrade: the Auditorium audio visual system; wireless access points in the Auditorium, the Lecture hall, the Cafeteria and gymnasias; projection system in the Lecture Hall; upgrades to the soundfield systems in many classrooms; and technology upgrades in all science labs.

Hazardous Materials:

The Town has an ongoing plan for the assessment and remediation of hazardous materials in the school. Testing confirmed that floor tiles contain asbestos (ACM) and a program of phased remediation and replacement has been in place for the past decade. Asbestos in the hard joint insulation of heating pipes was removed as part of the boiler room upgrades, but ACM's still remain in the utility tunnels. Interior caulking at wall seams is assumed to contain asbestos and PCBs. The exterior and interior window framing and glazing caulking are assumed to contain ACM's and PCB's and will require abatement as a part of repair/ replacement. Other locations assumed to contain asbestos

are door framing caulking, unit vent grill caulking, blackboard glue, underground waste water pipes, damp proofing on foundation wall, and thru-wall flashing. Tubes within light fixtures, exit signs, switches, and thermostats are assumed to contain Mercury. The painted surfaces are assumed to contain lead. All of these materials would need to be remediated during a comprehensive repair or replacement project.

PROGRAMS and OPERATIONS: Please provide a detailed description of the current grade structure and programs offered and indicate whether there are program components that cannot be offered due to facility constraints, operational constraints, etc. (maximum of 5000 characters).

As noted above, the majority of teaching spaces are undersized and/or inappropriate to the content area delivered. As noted above, the majority of classrooms are undersized, compared to MSBA standards, and can not accommodate actual class sizes, which often range from 22-25 students. This is particularly true of the science classrooms, which range in size from 661 sq. ft. to 1004 sq. ft., and are well below the current MSBA standard of 1440 sq. ft. These classrooms can not accommodate enough lab tables for all enrolled students, lack adequate preparation rooms and storage space, and the built-in casework and plumbing fixtures are in poor condition. Improvements would likely trigger code-required upgrades throughout the building for a complete automatic sprinkler system, handicapped accessibility improvements, seismic design, energy efficiency, as well as infrastructure upgrades to plumbing, fire alarm and electrical systems. The lack of adequate science classrooms and facilities means that Pollard's students do not receive the type of science or engineering instruction expected at the middle school level. Tight spaces, inadequate or missing gas, water, and electrical utilities, crumbling classroom walls, tables, and cabinets mean that teachers avoid certain experiments and learning opportunities that would otherwise be available in more appropriate space. In addition, many elective classes are held in shared spaces that are not appropriate to the curricular content area. For example, orchestra classes are held in the Lecture Hall; art classes are offered in a Science classroom; data science and health classes are held in open social studies or english classrooms, and other classes are placed in the Cafeteria, Library, or the Auditorium, when available.

Moreover, the learning spaces do not reflect the District's "21st Century Learning" and equitable access goals. The traditional layout, undersized rooms and lack of breakout rooms, meeting spaces and collaboration areas do not lend themselves to project-based learning, team-teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration, and modern special education delivery methods.

Other programmatic deficiencies are found in the Auditorium, which is largely original to its construction in 1958. It is not large enough to accommodate a whole grade or the whole school for any activity. In addition, the lighting and sound equipment is outdated, not code compliant and not ADA accessible, and is in constant need of repair. Typically equipment is rented for theatrical productions held in the Auditorium. The HVAC (heat only) system is noisy and can interfere with performance acoustics. Sections of the auditorium seating are broken or missing, and the stage is in need of repair.

The gymnasium also lack sufficient space to fully accommodate the concurrent use by multiple sections of students (as is required by the schedule), which in turn limits the curriculum and requires students to 'sit out' for about 33% of their class time, in order to provide equitable 'movement time' for all students. (The School's goal is for students to be active at least 80% of their time in a PE class.) In addition, much of the wall space is concrete and our climbing wall is not up to code, which could cause injury. Further when it rains, it often floods certain parts of the gym, and the drainage backs into the gym near the egress doors. In addition, there is no scoreboard in the Blue Gym, no spectator seating, no ability to add footholds or equipment for volleyball or other team sports, and the school speaker (PA system for safety announcements) and clocks do not work in the gym. The Pollard School uses adjacent DeFazio Park for outdoor gym classes, however, it takes between 5-10 minutes to walk to the fields each way, which shortens the gym period time for specific instruction.

The school also has too few special education meeting spaces and conference/meeting rooms. Over the past several years, increasing numbers of students have required our Intensive Learning Center Program, creating the need for additional teaching and learning spaces that are restroom-equipped and have break-out spaces, private counseling areas, and therapeutic space. Our learning centers currently share spaces, which are used all day. During busy times, students often receive instruction in the Media Center, Cafeteria or the hallways. On a given day, between

15-20 students can be seen receiving assistance in the common hallways using a desk or table. Additionally, our parent meeting room was turned into a learning center and guidance office. As a result, preparation and meetings often occur in the hallways, the Media Center (if available), or the Main Office.

EDUCATIONAL SPACES: Please provide a detailed description of the Educational Spaces within the facility, a description of the number and sizes (in square feet) of classrooms, a description of science rooms/labs including ages and most recent updates, a description of the cafeteria, gym and/or auditorium and a description of the media center/library (maximum of 5000 characters).

The building was designed for 45 classroom spaces, which vary approximately from 553 - 872 sq. ft. As enrollment has increased over the years, however, spaces have been converted to accommodate 40 regular education classrooms for core subject delivery and 22 classrooms for elective programs. These elective spaces include use of the Lecture Hall, Auditorium, Cafeteria, Library/Media Center, Computer Labs, Music Lab, and modular classrooms. Presently, there are 10 science rooms and 15 special education classrooms. The science classrooms range in size from 661- 1,004 sq. ft. and are smaller than the MSBA guideline of 1440 sq. ft. for science classrooms. Of the 10 science rooms, only seven are true science classrooms with the proper (but outdated) connections for water/sinks, gas lines and drainage for chemicals. The other three rooms, which are converted general classrooms, have mobile sinks and eye wash stations. The ten modular classrooms and associated spaces, which include two reading classrooms with small offices, four restrooms (male, female, and two all gender rooms, which are shared by staff and students), and a small break room, are at the end of their 20-year lifespan and are in need of replacement.

Pollard has two gymnasiums, one Media Center/Library (which was reduced to accommodate new main office space), and two computer labs. The gymnasia (which include Gym #114 @ 5,785 sq. ft. and Gym #112 @ 5,050 sq. ft.) lack sufficient space to fully accommodate the concurrent use by multiple sections of students (as is required by the schedule). In addition, the concrete wall space and climbing wall are problematic, the gyms often flood when it rains, and lack amenities like scoreboards (Blue Gym), spectator seating, and a working clock/PA system. The modified Library/Media Center is now (2,749 sq. ft.) and undersized, compared to MSBA guidelines. The Auditorium is not large enough to accommodate an entire grade, or the whole school for any activity. In addition, the lighting and sound equipment is outdated, not code compliant and not ADA accessible, and is in constant need of repair.

The school also lacks the following spaces, which are important for educational programming and student support service needs. The school has no location for teachers to collaborate or plan/prepare. When displaced, the teachers will find space in the hallways. The school also lacks conference rooms to meet with families (IEP meetings, 504 meetings, cluster meetings...) or to meet with one another, a space to conduct Tier 2 groups with students, or common collaborative space. The lack of space for collaboration, planning and meetings, leads to inconsistent collaboration and teaming among teachers, to the detriment of students and program, overall. Additionally, the school lacks specific learning spaces for the English Language Learner (ELL) program, METCO program, and curriculum coordinators, so these functions occur in shared spaces and locations like the library and main office. Finally, the school lacks modern science/ engineering/ technology spaces, as well as spaces for project-based learning, interdisciplinary work, lab spaces, music exploration, experiential education, and other classes. Finally, our nurse's room and guidance do not contain smaller, personal spaces. It will be important to address the lack of lactation space for staff, our guidance counseling spaces, ELL services, METCO space, and dedicated tier 2 and 3 learning spaces, which are now all shared.

CAPACITY and UTILIZATION: Please provide the original design capacity and a detailed description of the current capacity and utilization of the school facility. If the school is overcrowded, please describe steps taken by the administration to address capacity issues. Please also describe in detail any spaces that have been converted from their intended use to be used as classroom space (maximum of 5000 characters).

The school currently is over-crowded, particularly in the classroom and common space areas. Given the existing cluster configuration (consisting of five grade 7 clusters and five grade 8 clusters) and the current enrollment (of 901 students), the average class size is 24 students/ class, which exceeds the design capacity of 22 students. (The

capacity of many smaller classrooms is less than this number.) As such, many classrooms are too small to accommodate a standard size class. Additionally, some science classrooms are too small to accommodate the required number of science tables for enrolled students and have non-functioning sinks. The science teachers have been forced to modify the curriculum, particularly science experimentation, due to the facility constraints. Additionally, the school has adapted to using a much higher classroom utilization rate, than is typically seen in a middle school. Twenty two of the classrooms/ teaching spaces are utilized 100% of our day. All other teaching spaces are utilized at 85% or more, with the exception of the two computer labs and Midilab (which have fluctuating utilization ranging from 50% of the day to 100% of the day.) Those classroom spaces at 100% utilization include the Library/Media Center, the Auditorium (used for daily Advisory, four teaching periods, community meetings, and other special events); the Lecture Hall (used for strings classes, alternative lunch space, and special events), and the gymnasias, which are used both for classes and lunch recess. (The use of the gyms for lunch recess is to reduce the number of students using the cafeteria and outdoor spaces at any one time.)

A number of non-traditional classrooms also are in use. For example, due to the lack of music rooms, the orchestra classes are held in the Pollard Lecture Hall, which is not ADA compliant. The Auditorium is used for all theater arts classes. However, these classes must move on a constant basis to allow the Auditorium to be used for large group events, such as cluster presentations. Art classes are offered in a Science classroom. Data science and health classes are held in open social studies or english classrooms, and other classes are placed in the Cafeteria, Library, or the Auditorium, when available. Given the lack of space for guidance and special education services, the school is actively looking for alternative spaces for students, office, preparation, and transition spaces.

Given overcrowding in the gyms, the Wellness Department has modified the physical education curriculum to accommodate the number of students and space available. In our current situation, students often must wait and sit out for approximately one third of their class time, despite the 80% physical activity educational goal. Additionally, experiential education is taught in a typical classroom, even though the program requires a large activity space. The smaller classroom space limits programming in terms of activities and requires that classes be taken outside, when the weather is warm enough. Finally, given the limited size of the Adaptive PE Center, students are rotated into the space one group at a time to accommodate the number of students. Given the small locker rooms, teachers must supervise students in the gym locker rooms to the best of their abilities and continually remind students about the importance of appropriate behavior. The locker rooms lack appropriate space for LGBTQ students to change clothing, so students seeking privacy must use a restroom.

The limited size of the cafeteria also has required the school to implement split lunches. This, in turn, means the school can not operate on a bell system. Teachers must rely on personal clocks/ laptops for guidance and are required to communicate via the phone system or email. Additionally many of our classrooms and spaces, especially those that have been converted to classrooms do not have a functioning speaker/ PA system, which is a safety concern for any type of school safety issue.

Finally, the widespread use of shared and non-traditional spaces at the school mean that many teachers lack space to hold a preparation period, or collaborate with colleagues. As a result, teachers often work and meet in the Library (if available), hallways or other quiet nooks. The ubiquitous use of shared spaces also limits opportunities for co teaching, collaboration, and/or spontaneous ideas to emerge within the normal course of a day.

Over the next fifteen years, the Pollard student population is projected to grow and peak at 934 students in the 2030/31 School Year. Additional enrollment growth will result in increased class size, the subdivision of existing modular classroom spaces, the conversion of non-traditional spaces to classrooms and/or traveling teachers.

MAINTENANCE and CAPITAL REPAIR: Please provide a detailed description of the district's current maintenance practices, its capital repair program, and the maintenance program in place at the facility that is the subject of this SOI. Please include specific examples of capital repair projects undertaken in the past, including any override or debt exclusion votes that were necessary (maximum of 5000 characters).

The Town implemented a structured preventative maintenance program in 2009. This program provides for the quarterly and/or annual maintenance of HVAC, water heating, plumbing, electrical, and general maintenance

systems. The Town also funds an annual facility maintenance capital article to address the needs of smaller repairs such as duct cleaning, asbestos abatement, flooring replacement, and HVAC upgrades. The recent major capital repair projects include:

2014 - Gym floor repair

2013 - Boiler replacement project (high efficiency gas boilers)

2013 - Telephone system replacement

2011 - Roof replacement (MSBA Green Roof Project)

2011 - Parking lot improvements and minor modifications to modular classrooms

Future capital improvements included in the five-year Capital Improvement Plan include:

FY 2017 - Lighting upgrades to gyms - better lighting and more energy efficient

FY 2019 - Replace rubber flooring in both gyms

FY 2019 - Wood siding removal/ replacement and basketball hoop replacement/ repair and 2 sections of spectator seating installed in green gym for class accommodation.

FY 2020 - Telephone replacements throughout the school & LED lighting replacements

FY 2021 - Retro commissioning of all mechanical systems/ repairs/ replacements

FY 2022 - Select split system repairs / replacements; emergency generator repairs / rental

Priority 2

Question 1: Please describe the existing conditions that constitute severe overcrowding.

The school is currently over-crowded, particularly in our hallways, two staircases, restrooms, most classrooms, and common space areas, such as the Gymnasiums, Library, Cafeteria, Auditorium, Lecture Hall, and Adaptive PE Center.

Most classrooms are undersized for the student population. The average class size is 24 students/ class, given the existing cluster configuration (consisting of five grade 7 clusters and five grade 8 clusters) and the current enrollment (of 901 students). This average class size exceeds the design capacity of 22 students. Additionally, the building was designed for 45 classroom spaces, which vary approximately from 553 - 872 sq. ft. As enrollment has increased over the years, however, spaces have been converted to accommodate 40 regular education classrooms for core subject delivery and 22 classrooms for elective programs. These elective spaces include use of the Lecture Hall, Auditorium, Cafeteria, Library/Media Center, Computer Labs, Music Lab, and modular classrooms. Presently, there are 10 science rooms and 15 special education classrooms. The science classrooms range in size from 661 - 1,004 sq. ft. and are smaller than the MSBA guideline of 1440 sq. ft. Some of these science classrooms are too small to accommodate the required number of science tables for enrolled students. Although the addition of ten modular classrooms in 2002 remediated some of the overcrowding issue, these classrooms are at the end of their 20-year lifespan and are in need of replacement.

The gymnasias, Media Center/Library, Auditorium, Locker Rooms and Adaptive PE Center also are undersized for the student population. The two gymnasiums (which include Gym #114 @ 5,785 sq. ft. and Gym #112 @ 5,050 sq. ft.) lack sufficient space to fully accommodate the concurrent use by multiple sections of students (as is required by the schedule), with negative implications for student instruction. The Library/Media Center (2,747 sq. ft.) is smaller than the MSBA's recommended "2,680 sq. ft. for first 400 students plus 5.75 sq. ft. /student over 400." The Auditorium is not large enough to accommodate an entire grade, or the whole school for any activity. The locker rooms are undersized for the school and do not safely accommodate the number of students who are scheduled to use them during PE or the after-school middle school sports program. Similarly, no more than 20 students can occupy the Adaptive PE Center at once, which is smaller than many classes of 25+ students.

To accommodate the current student population in the Cafeteria, the School has implemented split lunches. As a result, Pollard can not work on a bell system. Thus, teachers must rely on personal clocks for guidance and our hallways are congested particularly the two small staircases which are required to access the gyms, cafe, lecture hall, and the modulars. Although we have 3-4 minutes reported as passing time, students are often late due to congestion and the "no bell" system.

Additionally, the school lacks a sufficient number of guidance, special education, and ELL spaces. Not only do we have shared learning centers and not enough space for our additional ILC students, but we also lack dedicated ELL space for English Language instruction for our non-English speaking students and the school lacks appropriate space for curriculum meetings, resource materials, or offices for the Literacy Specialist and Curriculum Coordinators. Due to shared classrooms, teachers also do not have a dedicated space for their preparation time and often use the hallways, a table in the cafe, or library if available for quiet space to plan, develop, and assess students.

Finally, the lack of administrative space is evidenced by the tight quarters that the administrative personnel occupy, and the use of the lobby space as additional work and copy layout space. Most of the administrative offices and the 2 small conference rooms used for meetings are internalized and lack natural light.

Priority 2***Question 2: Please describe the measures the School District has taken to mitigate the problem(s) described above.***

To mitigate classroom overcrowding, the school has added modular classrooms, implemented shared classrooms across the building, created additional teaching spaces through subdivision, utilized non-traditional teaching spaces and adapted to using a much higher classroom utilization rate than is typically seen in a middle school.

In 2002, modular classrooms were added, which increased the classroom capacity of the school by 10 classrooms. These classrooms, now 21 years old, have reached the end of their useful lives and must be replaced.

In addition, the school has implemented shared classrooms across the building. Most teachers share their teaching space and must find another location or remain in the class (while it is being instructed by a colleague) since there are no common planning spaces for teachers.

The school also created additional teaching spaces by subdividing the Principal's office, the Library, two modular classrooms, a computer lab, and guidance offices. The conversion of all spaces to classrooms to mitigate traveling teachers on carts and provide dedicated, private spaces to counselors have been a priority.

A number of non-traditional classrooms also are in use. For example, due to the lack of music rooms, Orchestra classes are held in the Pollard Lecture Hall- a space that is not ADA compliant, nor able to hold more than 50 students. The Pollard Auditorium, Library, and Cafe are also used for classes and after school activities, and these classes are moved on a constant basis to make the spaces available for other programs, lunch, or other large group presentations.

Finally, the school has adapted to using a much higher classroom utilization rate, than is typically seen in a middle school. Twenty two of the classrooms/ teaching spaces are utilized 100% of our day. All other teaching spaces are utilized at 85% or more, with the exception of the two computer labs and Midilab (which have fluctuating utilization ranging from 50% of the day to 100% of the day.) Those classroom spaces at 100% utilization include the Library/Media Center, the Auditorium (used for daily Advisory, four teaching periods, community meetings, and other special events); the Lecture Hall (used for strings classes, alternative lunch space, and special events), and the gymnasium, which are used both for classes and lunch recess. (The use of the gyms for lunch recess is to reduce the number of students using the cafeteria and outdoor spaces at any one time.)

To mitigate deficiencies in the science spaces, the teachers have been required to modify the curriculum, including science experiments. As previously noted, these rooms are undersized, are lacking in adequate preparation rooms or storage spaces, and are in poor condition (most have non-working sinks). Additionally, since there are no additional rooms that can be converted into science classrooms, two of the ten science classrooms are traditional classroom spaces that have been converted using temporary rolling cart water stations.

Due to congestion in the halls and restrooms, Pollard has implemented "Hall Pass" to limit the number of students at any given restroom. For the halls, we have additional supervision by all teachers and administrators, and give students flexibility with late arrivals to classes. The school has also adjusted its schedule to reduce congestion (varying passing times, split lunches, thoughtful placement of teachers in classrooms, etc....)

The limited gymnasium space has required classes to be scheduled concurrently, and for teachers to modify the physical education curriculum. Currently, the Pollard School schedules 3-4 classes of physical

education concurrently in the gym space which constitutes two gyms. Class sizes range from 24 – 30 students, and as a result, most PE classes have between 75 - 120 students and 3-4 teachers in the gyms during one class period, four times/day. Due to the lack of large activity spaces, experiential education is taught in a typical classroom, which limits what the teacher can do in terms of activities and requires that classes be taken outside, weather permitting. In addition, the lack of appropriate office spaces, teachers are often finding spaces in different areas of the school for their preparation periods.

Finally, to accommodate the current student population, the school has implemented split lunches and will use that space when lunches are not occurring. The school has been unable to fully mitigate the lack of meeting rooms, teacher preparation space, and administrative space. Although the lobby has been utilized as additional work space, it does not offer privacy for meetings with students or other teachers. Offices are undersized and there is a lack of conference and meeting spaces. The School also is in need of additional guidance, ELL, and special education spaces to meet our students' needs.

Priority 2

Question 3: Please provide a detailed explanation of the impact of the problem described in this priority on your district's educational program. Please include specific examples of how the problem prevents the district from delivering the educational program it is required to deliver and how students and/or teachers are directly affected by the problem identified.

To mitigate the lack of appropriately-sized classroom space for core curriculum, the Pollard School has been required to increase class size, subdivide existing space and/or modify the existing curriculum, to the detriment of the educational program. Given the lack of additional classrooms, the school has created additional learning spaces by subdividing classrooms, offices, and an existing modular classroom space; and has converted non-traditional spaces to learning centers. All teachers, including Science teachers, have modified the existing curriculum, particularly experiments and project based lessons, to meet the existing facility constraints. As previously noted, the science rooms are undersized, are lacking in adequate prep rooms or storage spaces, and are in poor condition (most have non-working sinks.)

Common spaces are undersized or not ADA compliant, which limits activities and learning for students. As noted, Pollard schedules classes of physical education concurrently in the gym space, resulting in anywhere from 75 - 120 plus students occupying the gym at one time. In addition, the physical limitations of the gymnasiums have further limited the educational program. Specifically, there is no space for spectators and the following systems require replacement: lighting, sound system and venting. There also are ongoing heating issues - either the school itself is too hot or too cold. The undersized locker rooms also have significant limitations. Many lockers are damaged or broken. The locker rooms themselves were not well designed for supervision purposes, as there is no office/ ability to supervise safely our students embedded within the locker room, and appropriate changing facilities to provide access and safety for our students who require separate changing facilities do not exist. The locker rooms are not ADA-compliant, and none provide a private changing area for our LGBTQIA+ students. Finally, the Adaptive PE Center is small and obsolete. Currently the space can safely accommodate only 20 students at one time. With classes of 25+, however, it becomes almost impossible to use this space effectively.

The Pollard Auditorium is not large enough to accommodate a whole grade for any activity. The lighting and sound systems are sorely in need of updating/upgrading; they are constantly being repaired. The dimly lit and inadequately sized auditorium is limiting. The stage is not handicapped accessible, the carpet is threadbare, exit stairs are in need of repair, the acoustics are quite poor, and the overall design limits programs and learning opportunities.

Additionally, the school lacks a sufficient number of guidance, special education, and ELL spaces. Not only do we have shared learning centers and not enough space for our additional ILC students, but we also lack dedicated ELL space for English Language instruction for our non-English speaking students and the school lacks appropriate space for curriculum meetings, resource materials, or offices for the Literacy Specialist and Curriculum Coordinators. Due to shared classrooms, teachers also do not have a dedicated space for their preparation time and often use the hallways, a table in the cafe, or library if available for quiet space to plan, develop, and assess students.

The configuration and layout of the existing classroom spaces do not reflect the District's 'next generation' learning priorities, nor its focus on providing equitable access and opportunity for all learners. A reconfiguration of the classroom spaces would be needed to accommodate project-based learning, team-teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration, and special education delivery methods.

To accommodate the current student population, the School has implemented split lunches. As a result, Pollard does not work on a bell system. Thus, teachers must rely on personal clocks for guidance and our hallways are congested particularly the two small staircases which are required to access the gyms, cafe, lecture hall, and the modulars. Although we have 3-4 minutes reported as passing time, students are often late due to congestion and the “no bell” system.

Finally, the lack of administrative space is evidenced by the tight quarters that the administrative personnel occupy, and the use of the lobby space as additional work and copy layout space. Most of the administrative offices and the 2 small conference rooms used for meetings are internalized and lack natural light.

Please also provide the following:

Cafeteria Seating Capacity: 381

Number of lunch seatings per day: 4

Are modular units currently present on-site and being used for classroom space?: YES

If "YES", indicate the number of years that the modular units have been in use: 21

Number of Modular Units: 10

Classroom count in Modular Units: 10

Seating Capacity of Modular classrooms: 24

What was the original anticipated useful life in years of the modular units when they were installed?: 20

Have non-traditional classroom spaces been converted to be used for classroom space?: YES

If "YES", indicate the number of non-traditional classroom spaces in use: 10

Please provide a description of each non-traditional classroom space, its originally-intended use and how it is currently used (maximum of 1000 characters):

Due to the lack of music rooms, orchestra classes are held in the Pollard Lecture Hall, which in turn, has limited the use of that space. The Pollard Auditorium and Library are used for classes; these are moved on a constant basis to make the spaces available for other large class/cluster presentations. The Principal’s office was converted into an ELL teaching space and guidance office and at least 2 conference rooms were converted into classroom spaces. Finally, two former storage spaces are now being used as office spaces and students and teachers can often be found in the hallways at desks and tables completing work. Finally we have no dedicated space for deescalation of students, quieter lunch spaces, lactation spaces, or meeting space for teachers, students or parents/caregivers.

Please explain any recent changes to the district’s educational program, school assignment polices, grade configurations, class size policy, school closures, changes in administrative space, or any other changes that impact the district’s enrollment capacity (maximum of 5000 characters):

During the 2019/20 School Year, the District opened the Sunita Williams Elementary School, to replace the aging Hillside School. The Williams School provided some needed capacity to address growing elementary enrollment, and now houses many of the District’s elementary intensive learning center programs. Also in the 2019/20 School Year, the District introduced full-day kindergarten for residents. Previously, a half-day program had been provided, with a tuition-in afterschool enrichment program for interested families.

Additionally, in March of 2019, the School Committee approved policy #JFABC “Assignment of Elementary Students to School.” This policy governs the registration of students who wish to attend a school other than the school in their assigned attendance area. It also addresses the enrollment of new students in the event of overcrowding, in the event of under-enrollment, when there is development of a new residential area, when a new school opens, or in other extenuating circumstances. Finally, it provided guidelines around the establishment of buffer zones, and the assignment of students within buffer zones.

There have been no recent changes to the school committee's class size policies.

What are the district's current class size policies (maximum of 500 characters)?:

School Committee Policy #IHB specifies that student/teacher ratios should be within the guidelines: 18-22 in Grades K 3, 20-24 in Grades 4-5, and 'reasonable class size' in Grades 6-12. These guidelines are recommendations, however, rather than absolute limits requiring strict, literal adherence.

Priority 7

Question 1: Please provide a detailed description of the programs not currently available due to facility constraints, the state or local requirement for such programs, and the facility limitations precluding the programs from being offered.

As previously noted, facility deficiencies constrain the educational program, opportunities, and access.

Program offerings at Pollard are diminished by the many building and design inefficiencies. As noted above, the academic classrooms are undersized, overused, and inadequate. Moreover, the small, subdivided classrooms; the inadequate spaces for teacher collaboration and planning; and the crumbling classroom walls, tables, and cabinets, all mean that teachers take shortcuts and avoid certain experiments and learning opportunities that would otherwise be available in more appropriate spaces. Art, science, performing arts, special education, technology, ELL, and other programs are unable to expand due to a lack of adequate and appropriate teaching or learning space. At the middle school level, these programs are essential for students, yet the school is unable to achieve its vision or mission of providing all students with excellent academic programming, nor can the school expand due to the many inefficiencies and inadequacies described.

Pollard lacks dedicated spaces for ELL instruction, increased special education programming, or to implement multi-tiered supports or interventions at Pollard. In addition, inadequate curriculum space has limited the ability of the K-12 Directors or Department Heads to meet with teachers and build a lending library of reference materials or for teacher teams to meet and collaborate as intended with our cluster model. Further, our student support services including OT, PT, SLP, BCBA, Reading Supports, ELL, and guidance and/or adjustment counselors are all in shared spaces without conference rooms or smaller break out spaces for small group sessions.

The undersized common spaces, such as the gymnasiums, Auditorium, Cafe, Lecture Hall and Library, all limit the academic program. As noted above, these spaces are too small to accommodate a grade level of students. Additionally, none are used for their intended purpose; all are shared by multiple classes, which limits their use for large gatherings or assemblies. As shared above, the Pollard Auditorium is not large enough to accommodate a whole grade for any activity, and the lighting and sound systems are in a constant state of disrepair. Finally, without a complete overhaul of the PA system/ loud speakers, the school lacks a way to respond to a safety concern on the campus.

The HVAC deficiencies, leaking roof and plumbing problems also create limitations for the educational program. The HVAC system, which has had multiple issues over the years, including the loss of heat and air conditioning on school days, and inadequate ventilation, has made teaching and learning even more difficult. These issues have resulted in staff grievances, school cancellations, and the relocation of classes. The constantly leaking roof has led to overcrowding, shared spaces, and mildew and mold concerns, especially with our library books. Finally, although the student (larger) restrooms were updated in the past five years, none of the private restrooms, which are deemed *All Gender*, have been updated in more than 40 years. Plumbing issues are a constant in each of the restrooms, causing congestion for staff and students in the few restrooms that do work.

Finally, although improvements were made to the parking areas in 2018, the total parking provided on site (113 cars) is deficient, when compared with current zoning requirements by 66 cars and a staff of 135. This forces some teachers, traveling teachers and staff, and visitors to park on the surrounding streets during daytime visits and congests local traffic on Harris Ave. at the start and end of the school day. The front driveway is not long enough to accommodate all 17 buses, so the school is forced to double load the driveway during release time. This is considered a safety issue as students must pass in front or between buses to access their bus. Additionally there is

no clear path for emergency vehicles while buses are stacked in the driveway. There are no dedicated visitor or medical emergency spaces.

Priority 7

Question 2: Please describe the measures the district has taken or is planning to take in the immediate future to mitigate the problem(s) described above.

To mitigate the lack of appropriate and appropriately-sized classroom space for core curriculum, the Pollard School has been required to increase class size, and convert/subdivide available space to create the required number of classrooms. Students have been squeezed into science and engineering classrooms, which do not all contain enough tables for enrolled students, or which are too small to conduct a full complement of engineering projects. As a result, science teachers have modified the existing curriculum, particularly experiments, to meet the space and equipment constraints of their classrooms. As previously noted, the science rooms are undersized, are lacking in adequate prep rooms or storage spaces, and are in poor condition. (Some classrooms have non-working sinks.) Similarly, the limitations of the engineering classrooms (including limited storage space) have limited the type and scope of student projects able to be accomplished in those classrooms..

Additionally, non-traditional spaces have been used for specialized instruction, which has limited the educational program in other ways. For example, due to the use of shared spaces, teachers are forced to find other locations to engage in collaboration or planning, while their assigned classroom is being used. Most, if not all classrooms, are used all periods, which compounds teachers' inability to collaborate, plan, and assess students in a private and thoughtful way. Our common spaces, such as the Cafeteria, Lecture Hall, Library and Auditorium are often used for classes, which are moved constantly to make these spaces available for presentations or large group programming. Specialized programming, such as ELL instruction, is conducted in the Library due to lack of dedicated space, where instruction is often interrupted by the activities of other students. Curriculum instruction and job-embedded professional development has been offered to teachers, but is often provided in the Cafeteria, where teachers are quite uncomfortable, and the space lacks technology, temperature control, or proper seating for professional development.

Priority 7

Question 3: Please provide a detailed explanation of the impact of the problem described in this priority on your district's educational program. Please include specific examples of how the problem prevents the district from delivering the educational program it is required to deliver and how students and/or teachers are directly affected by the problem identified.

To mitigate the lack of appropriate and appropriately-sized classroom space for core curriculum, the Pollard School has been required to increase class size, subdivide existing space and/or modify the existing curriculum, to the detriment of the educational program. Given the lack of additional classrooms, teachers have modified the existing curriculum, particularly experiments, to meet the existing facility constraints. Units are often designed with safety and facility conditions in mind, rather than promoting student interest or delivering the middle school programming. Similarly, most teachers have limited the type and scope of student projects to those which can be accomplished within the limited classroom and storage space of the classrooms. As enrollment increases, the quality of instruction will be further eroded as more students are squeezed into these spaces or as additional standard classrooms are converted into shared spaces.

Additionally, non-traditional spaces have been used for specialized instruction, which has limited the educational program in other ways. For example, the lack of a dedicated space for ELL instruction compromises the type of focused, 1:1 instruction, Multi-Tiered Level of Instruction that our multilingual students require. Additionally, due to the lack of available space, special education spaces are shared or public, thus compromising the program and confidentiality of our students.

Common spaces such as the Pollard Auditorium, the gymnasiums, the lecture hall, the Library, the Fitness Center, and the Lecture Hall are not large enough to accommodate a whole grade for any activity. Additionally, these spaces are scheduled at 80-100% usage every day, which causes shared spaces and congestion/ overcrowding through the building.

The inadequate space available for curriculum instruction has compromised the professional development program for teachers. As previously noted, the teachers who participate in professional development workshops either are squeezed into too-small spaces, or rotated through a series of venues, neither of which are conducive to promoting effective teacher learning. Additionally, the limited available space constrains Needham's plans to increase collaboration among the professional as there are no teaching collaboration or workspaces.

Finally, the HVAC deficiencies, leaking roof and plumbing problems negatively affect the educational program. The HVAC system, which has had multiple issues over the years, including the loss of heat and air conditioning on school days, and inadequate ventilation, has made teaching and learning even more difficult. These issues have resulted in staff grievances, school cancellations, and the relocation of classes. The constantly leaking roof has led to overcrowding, shared spaces, and mildew and mold concerns, especially with our library books. Finally, although the student (larger) restrooms were updated in the past five years, none of the private restrooms, which are deemed *All Gender*, have been updated in more than 40 years. Plumbing issues are a constant in each of the restrooms, causing congestion for staff and students in the few restrooms that do work.

CERTIFICATIONS

The undersigned hereby certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge, information and belief, the statements and information contained in this statement of Interest and attached hereto are true and accurate and that this Statement of Interest has been prepared under the direction of the district school committee and the undersigned is duly authorized to submit this Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The undersigned also hereby acknowledges and agrees to provide the Massachusetts School Building Authority, upon request by the Authority, any additional information relating to this Statement of Interest that may be required by the Authority.

Chief Executive Officer * School Committee Chair Superintendent of Schools

_____	_____	_____
(signature)	(signature)	(signature)
Date	Date	Date

* Local chief executive officer: In a city or town with a manager form of government, the manager of the municipality; in other cities, the mayor; and in other towns, the board of selectmen unless, in a city or town, some other municipal office is designated to the chief executive office under the provisions of a local charter. Please note, in districts where the Superintendent is also the Local Chief Executive Officer, it is required for the same person to sign the Statement of Interest Certifications twice.



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **Action**

Approve Middle School Baseball User Fee Proposal

Background Information:

- Director of Athletics, Dan Lee, is proposing a pilot baseball program this spring and has provided a cost analysis with a user fee of \$235, the same amount currently charged for the middle school softball program.

Action Recommended:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Needham School Committee approves the Middle School Baseball User Fee as submitted.



**NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**
"HOME OF THE ROCKETS"

February 27, 2023

To: Dan Gutekanst, Superintendent of Schools

From: Dan Lee, Director of Athletics

Middle School Baseball User Fee Proposal:

In recent years, there have been a number of students who have inquired about starting a middle school baseball program. We have successfully implemented a middle school softball team and having a baseball team to compliment that would be a natural progression. In a meeting with members of the youth baseball program in Needham, they indicated there is significant interest amongst current 7th and 8th graders to play for their school.

We are looking to pilot baseball this upcoming spring season and believe that we can make it work. The costs of running the pilot this year, would include \$2000 for Transportation, \$700 for umpires, and \$600 for equipment. Needham Youth Baseball has agreed to donate uniforms. To be able to cover these costs, we would like to charge a user fee of \$235 per student. With a projected 16-20 athletes these expenses will be covered. We would reallocate an unused MS XC Stipend (Cat XII, Step 3: \$1949) to compensate a coach this spring. If the program were successful, we would move to a formal budget request during next fall's budget cycle. I would like to ask for approval to add a user fee of \$235 for this 2023 Spring Season. It would match the current user fee for MS Softball.

Thanks in advance for the consideration of this request and please let me know if you have any questions.



Needham School Committee

March 7, 2023

Agenda Item: **School Committee Comments**

Background Information:

- Members of the School Committee will have an opportunity to report on events, information, and matters of interest not on the agenda.

Members of the School Committee available for comment:

Matthew Spengler, Chair

Andrea Longo Carter, Vice Chair

Connie Barr

Michael Greis

Elizabeth Lee

Michael O'Brien

Alisa Skatrud

Dilin Meloni, Student Representative member of School Committee
