

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

West Parish School / MSBA Building Project

UPDATED by Program Subcommittee October 3, 2012

In an effort to answer many questions that have been posed to the Gloucester School Committee and Superintendent Safier, our Committee has developed these Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about the West Parish Elementary Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) process. With the continued enthusiastic support of the community, administration, Mayor Kirk, and the City Council, we hope to be able to move forward in the MSBA process in order to achieve our long-term goal of building a new 21st century West Parish elementary school.

This document may be updated as new material is presented. For full information on the MSBA School Building process, please see www.maschoolbuildings.org.

We hope that parents/guardians, staff and community members will bring any additional questions to our Committee's attention. Committee responses to selected frequent questions will be provided in updates to this document. Please submit questions to: committeeresponds@gloucester.k12.ma.us

<u>Why did the School Committee/City submit a new building application to replace the West Parish School in 2010?</u>
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What are the projected other multiyear capital requests for the school buildings?

How can members of the public and parents/guardians get involved with these decisions and be heard?

FAQs

BACKGROUND

Why did the School Committee/City submit a new building application to replace the West Parish School in 2010?

The 2002 Mt. Vernon Report survey of building conditions found that the overcrowded West Parish elementary school was the district building requiring immediate capital investment. The building was constructed in 1949. According to the City's DPW Director, the heating, plumbing and electrical systems are now obsolete and require continual costly maintenance expenditures. There are safety issues related to parking and space.

How were the options for West Parish presented to the MSBA?

Click [here](#) to see the original statement of interest.

What was the event that put this on hold?

The MSBA project was put on hold in 2010 because the City was faced with major infrastructure emergencies, including water and sewer systems that had deteriorated. Funding this project was not possible because of what were then deemed more urgent capital requirements.

CURRENT STATUS

What is the current status of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) project?

On July 15, 2012 the MSBA voted unanimously to invite Gloucester into the Feasibility Study Phase, concluding the Eligibility Phase of the project.

What is the scope of the Feasibility Study?

The Feasibility Study is a collaboration between the District (City / School Department) and the MSBA to do a complete study of plans for the renovations or repair of an existing building, or the construction of a new school building. The work to be done in the Feasibility Study includes documenting existing conditions of the current facility, establishing design parameters for any replacement facility, and developing three alternative designs. It includes a design for the internal layout that meets the educational needs of the school and student population. Ultimately, the completed study will recommend the most cost effective and educationally appropriate solution to the MSBA Board of Directors.

<http://massschoolbuildings.org/building/feasibility>

How is the Owner's Project Manager chosen?

The initial task of the Feasibility Study is selecting an Owner's Project Manager. A five member subcommittee of the School Building Committee selects the Owner's Project Manager. This subcommittee includes Jim Duggan, Dr. Richard Safier, Donna Compton, Kathleen Clancy and Nick Taormina.

The selection process consists of issuing a Request for Services, evaluation of Request for Services proposals, interviewing final candidates, and negotiating the contract.

The Request for Services timeline is as follows:

- September 5, 2012 Advertise RFS in Central Register of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and local papers
- September 13, 2012 Informational meeting and site visit
- September 14, Last day for questions from respondents
- September 21, 2012 Responses due
- September 27, 2012 Respondents short-listed
- October 3, 2012 Interview short-listed Respondents
- October 10, 2012 Negotiate with selected Respondent
- October 19, 2012 Final selection submitted to the MSBA for review and approval
- November 9, 2012 Execute contract

What did the Eligibility Phase entail?

The West Paris School Project entered the Eligibility Phase on January 25, 2012, and completed this phase upon being accepted by the MSBA into the Feasibility Phase. During the Eligibility Phase, the district, working in partnership with the city, completed seven preliminary requirements. The descriptions of these steps required for the 270-day phase can be found on the MSBA website, www.massschoolbuildings.org.

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| 1. Submission of Initial Compliance Certification | Completed 1/25/2012 |
| 2. Formation of School Building Committee | Completed March 2012 |
| 3. Summary of City's Funding Capacities | 4/9/12 submission to MSBA |
| 4. Summary of City's Existing Maintenance Practices | 4/9/12 submission to MSBA |
| 5. Certification of a Design Enrollment for the Proposed Project agreed upon with MSBA | 4/9/12 submission to MSBA |
| 6. Confirmation of City Council for authorization and funding to proceed with feasibility study | Approved by City Council 5/22/12 |
| 7. Execution of MSBA Feasibility Study Agreement | Executed on July, 2012 |

A key initiative in the process is the confirmation of the anticipated enrollment projections for West Parish and for the district as a whole. After its analysis, the MSBA has determined and set the enrollment for the West Parish School project at 355 students.

Additional options such as considering housing the district preschool or district administration at West Parish after construction will be explored during the feasibility phase. Construction related to preschool

population at West Parish would be eligible for MSBA reimbursement at the same rate as the total project, while administrative offices would not be eligible for reimbursement.

Who is on the School Building Committee?

School Committee Chairperson, Jonathan Pope, and Building and Finance Chair, Kathy Clancy, are participating in this 13-member team along with Superintendent Richard Safier. The other members are Carolyn Kirk, Mayor, Jim Duggan, Chief Administrative Officer, Jeff Towne, City CFO, Michael Hale, DPW Director, Donna Compton, City Certified Purchasing Agent, Jim Hafey, DPW Facilities Director, Talena Imel, Principal, West Parish Elementary, Lisa Groleau, parent/ PTO member at West Parish students. Members with construction experience / expertise are Tad Cunningham, Jim Groleau, and Nick Taormina.

Are the Building Committee meetings public meetings?

Yes, all Building Committee meetings are posted at City Hall and are open to the public. Meetings are held regularly and minutes are posted on the www.gloucesterschools.com website.

What is the cost of the Feasibility Study phase?

The City Council voted unanimously on May 22, 2012, to approve the loan authorization in the amount of \$500,000 to secure funding for this phase of the project. These costs will be reimbursed by the MSBA at 48.27% with a regular reimbursement schedule of 30 days as the City submits invoices. This will be funded by a loan authorization funded with general fund revenues.

It is estimated that the cost of the Feasibility Study will be \$500,000 less reimbursement of \$241,000 for an approximate net cost to the city of \$258,000

What is the anticipated cost to build a new West Parish elementary school?

The estimated cost for a new West Parish school is between \$2X million and \$28 million. For comparison, actual costs and estimates of current building projects undertaken by the MSBA can be found at www.massschoolbuildings.org.

The Building Committee, along with the Owner's Project Manager, will consider the MSBA Model School program (http://massschoolbuildings.org/programs/model_school), Green School (http://massschoolbuildings.org/programs/green_schools) and other options to maximize cost vs. benefit of construction alternatives. The MSBA Model School and Green School programs would increase the percentage of reimbursement the City / District would receive from the MSBA.

What other educational capabilities might a new school serve?

The Feasibility Study could suggest that additional educational functions might be appropriately served by the new West Parish School facility. For example, the study could recommend moving the district's pre-

school to the new facility. The details of these possibilities will be incorporated into the Feasibility Study to optimize the district's space and use of this new facility.

What are the options if we do not rebuild West Parish?

Built in 1949, West Parish is considered long past its useful life. We have an obligation to provide a safe place for staff and students. The Feasibility Study will develop alternative solutions for West Parish School.

What are the projected other multiyear capital requests for the school buildings?

Putting new roofs on five of our seven buildings (Plum Cove, Beeman, Veteran's Memorial, East Gloucester, and O'Maley Middle School) was a major step in protecting our investment in the future of these schools. In 2007, the city approved a loan in the amount of \$3.5 million for the purchase of ten state of the art modular classrooms that were added to three of our elementary schools as an investment in our schools. Other needs are being identified by City DPW Director Mike Hale. The School Committee's Building and Finance Subcommittee will be meeting during this year's budget process to identify capital priorities.

How can members of the public and parents/guardians get involved with these decisions and be heard?

You are encouraged to contact any of your elected officials, both School Committee members and City Council members. The names and email addresses for Committee members can be found on the School Committee link on the [Committee Website](#). The phone numbers and email addresses of the Gloucester City Council can be found [here](#). Upcoming outreach sessions will be scheduled and posted in the near future. The School Committee website will be updated as new material becomes available. In addition, the public may address the school committee during its regular meetings, held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at City Hall. Public comments are permitted at the beginning of these meetings. At that time, the public is welcome to speak to the full School Committee for up to three minutes.

We also encourage you to stay updated by reviewing the School Committee website, including meeting minutes and corresponding packets and presentations, found at www.gloucesterschools.com

These Frequently Asked Questions and Answers were approved unanimously by the School Committee at the April 4, 2012 meeting.

Updated October 3, 2012.