
SECTION 6.1 MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY (MSBA)

BACKGROUND

Symmes Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA) was hired in the June of 2005 to conduct this School System-Wide Master Plan. At the time, The MSBA had no Draft Regulations concerning the process and space needs for school design.

In May of this year, the MSBA published Draft Regulations. As of the writing of this report, final regulations have not been promulgated. The final regulations are anticipated in September 2006.

Space standards – At the time we conducted educational programming for the schools, the draft space standards were not available. If you were to compare the new draft standards against the space recommendations we developed, there are minor differences between the two. Once final standards are developed, it will be necessary to compare the program against those standards and make the necessary adjustments.

The one area that may affect the Educational Programs as contained in this report is at “classrooms”.

The Draft Regulations call for 950 square feet for all classrooms at all grade levels. At the High School, this is different than as currently programmed. It is also significantly different than the existing building contains or is capable of. If this requirement is inflexible, the numbers and sizes of spaces at the high school may need to be reduced in order to stay within the square foot standards.

NEEDS SURVEY

The Needs Surveys for all schools can be found in Appendix B of this report.

Leading up to the spring of 2006, MSBA conducted a review of all school buildings within the Commonwealth. The intent of this effort was to develop baseline data about the general physical condition of the school facilities. The results of the study were published in April of this year.

Schools were rated from 1 to 4.

Rating	Condition Description
Rating 1	Building in good condition with few or no building systems needing attention
Rating 2	The building is generally in good condition, however a few building systems may need attention
Rating 3	The building is in fair to poor condition and some building systems may need to be repaired or replaced
Rating 4	The building is in poor condition and a possible candidate for major renovation or replacement

The Grafton schools were rated as follows:

School	Rating
North Elementary School	1
South Elementary School	2
Grafton Elementary School	1
Grafton Middle School	2
Grafton Memorial High School	1

SMMA's investigation of the physical of the conditions of the older schools suggests that the state ratings may not adequately represent the actual conditions.

STATEMENT OF INTEREST FORM (SOI)

The MSBA has established the Statement of Interest Form (SOI) as the first step in the Application Process. The purpose of the SOI is to ascertain from communities whether they believe they have any deficiencies in their school facility that meets one or more of the statutory priorities.

The priorities are as follows:

- (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; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (2.) Elimination of existing severe overcrowding; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (3.) Prevention of loss of accreditation; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (4.) Prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments, which must be substantiated; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;

- (5.) Replacement, renovation or modernization of the heating system in any schoolhouse to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in the schoolhouse; as determined in the judgment of Authority;
- (6.) Short term enrollment growth; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (7.) Replacement or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements; as determined in the judgments of the Authority;
- (8.) Transition from court-ordered and board approved racial balance school districts to walk-to, so-called, or other school districts; as determined in the judgment of the Authority.

The Committee voted to submit an SOI for the Grafton High School. The Committee, the School Administration and SMMA worked together to evaluate the high school issues with respect to the SOI Priorities.

Priorities 2, 4, 6, and 7 were determined to have direct applicability. They include:

Priority 2

Elimination of Severe overcrowding – the high school is currently over student capacity by approximately 62 students.

Priority 4

Prevention of severe overcrowding expected from increased enrollments – there is a projected increase of 304 students within ten years and 417 students in fifteen years.

Priority 6

Short term enrollment growth - there is a projected increase of 107 students over the next five years.

The Committee presented the Statement of Interest Form to the Grafton School Committee where it was approved. The document was signed on April 24, 2006. The Committee presented the Statement of Interest Form to the Grafton Board of Selectmen where it was approved. The document was signed on April 24, 2006. It has since been submitted to the MSBA. A copy of the SOI can be found in Section 6 of this report.



GRAFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

30 PROVIDENCE ROAD
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519-1178
Phone: 508-839-5421 • Fax: 508-839-7618

JOSEPH F. CONNORS, Ph.D.
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 9, 2006

Ms. Katherine P. Craven
Massachusetts School Building Authority
3 Center Plaza, Suite 430
Boston, MA 02108

Re: Grafton Public Schools
Statement of Interest Form

Dear Ms. Craven:

Enclosed please find the completed Statement of Interest form required by the Massachusetts Building Authority.

Grafton is one of the fastest growing school systems in the state. The Selectmen and School Committee have reached consensus that a new school is required to meet the needs of our growing school population.

On May 8, 2006 the Grafton town meeting approved the formation of a School Building Committee. It is our intent to have a completed Building Assistance Application submitted on July 1, 2007. Please keep me informed regarding the pending regulations and application process.

If you required any additional information please contact me at 508-839-8511. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph F. Connors".

Joseph F. Connors, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Massachusetts School Building Authority

Statement of Interest Form

The purpose of this Statement of Interest Form (the "Form") is to ascertain from cities, towns, and regional school districts whether they believe they have any deficiencies in their respective school facilities (1) that meets one or more of the statutory priorities set forth in M.G.L. c. 70B, § 8 and (2) for which they anticipate filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (the "Authority"). This Form is **NOT** intended to obtain information about any plans or designs of any construction or renovation project that a city, town or regional school district may be considering, and no such information should be included in or submitted with this Form.

The Authority anticipates a multi-phase approach to the planning and submission of applications for funding. A critical element of this initial phase is for the city, town or regional school district, through this Statement of Interest Form, to clearly and concisely identify what they believe are deficiencies in a school facility. After July 1, 2007, the new school building assistance program will require that the Authority and the city, town or regional school district agree first on the problem necessitating a solution and then on the solution to the problem. Receipt of funding from the Authority will require a collaborative effort throughout all stages of a project, beginning with the identification of deficiencies in school facilities.

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B, § 8, the Authority shall consider applications for school construction and renovation projects in accordance with the priorities listed below:

- (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; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (2.) Elimination of existing severe overcrowding; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (3.) Prevention of loss of accreditation; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (4.) Prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments, which must be substantiated; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (5.) Replacement, renovation or modernization of the heating system in any schoolhouse to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in the schoolhouse; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (6.) Short term enrollment growth; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (7.) Replacement or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;
- (8.) Transition from court-ordered and board approved racial balance school districts to walk-to, so-called, or other school districts; as determined in the judgment of the Authority;

This Form is NOT an application for funding. Submission of this Form in no way commits the Authority to accept an application, approve an application, provide a grant or any other type of funding, or place any other obligation or requirement upon the Authority.

The application will be a separate document(s) that must be completed and submitted to the Authority for consideration for a grant pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B and the Authority's regulations and policies. The Authority will not consider any project for funding without a properly filed application. The

Authority will not accept any applications for funding until after July 1, 2007, or such later date as may be determined by the Authority.

Submission of this Form does not commit a city, town or regional school district to filing an application for funding with the Authority.

Instructions for submission of this Statement of Interest Form:

This Form must be completed by a city, town or regional school district and submitted to the Authority **BEFORE** filing an application with the Authority pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B and the Authority's regulations and policies. This Form will be a prerequisite for presenting an application to the Authority

The Authority expects that this Form can be completed at no cost to the city, town or regional school district. The Authority will **NOT** reimburse for any expenses that may be incurred in connection with the completion of this Form.

A separate Statement of Interest Form should be submitted for each school for which the city, town or regional school district may have an interest in applying to the Authority for funding. Please identify the priority category(s) for which you are expressing interest, provide a brief description of any deficiencies, and provide any readily available supporting documentation. More than one priority may be checked off for each school.

In the case of a city, **majority votes** of both (1) the City Council/Board of Alderman **AND** (2) the School Committee, authorizing the Superintendent to submit this Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority, taken in accordance with the local charter, by-laws, or ordinances, are required. In the case of a town, **majority votes** of both (1) the Board of Selectmen or the equivalent governing body **AND** (2) the School Committee, authorizing the Superintendent to submit this Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority, taken in accordance with the local charter, by-laws, and ordinances, are required. If the school district is a regional school district, a vote of the Regional School Committee authorizing the Superintendent to submit this Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority is required. A form of each vote required is set forth on page 12 of this Form. Proper documentation of each vote must be submitted with this Form, as described on page 12.

Additionally, this Form must be **signed and certified** by (1) the Local Chief Executive Officer*, (2) the Chairperson of the School Committee, and (3) the Superintendent. Certification information can be found on page 13 of this Form.

* Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 7, § 4 and c. 31A, § 2, Local Chief Executive Officer means: in a city or town with a manager form of government, the manager of that municipality; in other cities, the mayor, and towns, the board of selectmen, unless the town has designated some other office. Regional School Districts are exempt from the Local Chief Executive Officer signature and certification requirement.

Please do NOT submit applications, design documents, plans, schematics, or drawings with this Form. This form is NOT an application for funding. The Authority will not accept any applications or design documents, plans, schematics, or drawings prior to July 1, 2007 or such later date as may be determined by the Authority.

Please note that in some cases, the Authority may need to clarify the contents of this Form with the city, town or regional school district. The Authority reserves the right to request and obtain additional, follow-up information from the city, town or regional school district.

This Form, as signed and certified, along with the local vote described herein, must be returned to:

**Massachusetts School Building Authority
3 Center Plaza
Suite 430
Boston, MA 02108**

School District: Grafton Public Schools
 Name of School: Grafton High School

District Contact: Dr. Joseph Connors
 Date: 3/30/06

Enrollment Projections

Please provide the following enrollment information for EACH school building within a district if this Statement of Interest Form is intended to describe conditions associated with Priority 2 (existing severe overcrowding), Priority 4 (future overcrowding) or Priority 6 (short term enrollment growth)

Existing Enrollment (FTE)

2006	119	220	253	217	221	205	210	217	185	190	156	176	108
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Projected Enrollments (FTE)

2007	120	257	227	261	220	230	201	212	215	175	174	151	172
2008	112	258	265	234	265	229	225	208	210	203	160	169	147
2009	122	242	266	273	238	276	224	227	201	198	186	155	165
2010	124	264	249	274	277	248	270	226	225	190	181	180	151
2011	120	268	272	256	278	288	243	273	224	213	174	176	176
2012	120	258	276	280	260	289	282	245	270	212	195	169	172
2013	121	258	266	284	284	270	283	285	243	255	194	189	165
2014	121	261	266	274	288	295	265	286	282	230	233	188	184
2015	120	261	269	274	278	300	289	268	283	266	210	226	183
2016	121	259	269	277	278	289	294	292	265	269	243	204	220

Notes:

1. The above numbers do not include the Pre-K population
2. The town has developed enrollment projections through the year 2020 based on Rate of Growth and build out projections from EOEA.
3. FTE for Kindergarten are ½ current enrollments

Name of School: Grafton High School

Priority 1: NOT APPLICABLE

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.

Please provide a detailed description of the perceived health and safety problems below. Attach copies of orders or citations from state and/or local building and/or health officials.

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

Name of School: Grafton High School

Priority 2

Elimination of existing severe overcrowding.

Please describe the existing conditions that constitute severe overcrowding.

In January 2004 Grafton's Strategic Plan Facilities Action Committee published a Building Capacity and Enrollment Report. This report assessed the educational learning space at each school building. The capacity of Grafton High School was determined to be 568 students. This was calculated by utilizing Conrad's dynamic capacity technique. This process takes into account available square footage and the educational program.

The October 1, 2005 enrollment report indicates that there are 639 students attending Grafton High School. This is 62 students in excess of the overcrowding benchmark. The overcrowding has impacted all curriculum areas. The negative impact includes a shortage of science laboratory seats. Two and three students have been assigned to a station designed for one student. At times student overflow has resulted in hallways being used as learning space. The school schedule requires most classrooms to be utilized throughout the day. This has resulted in teachers not having adequate space for remediation sessions, parent conferences, or instructional preparation. The special education program includes a life skills classroom. Limited space has made it difficult to provide vocational and life skills experiences. The band/choral program operates in inadequate space. One room which does not have natural light serves as the instructional space for instrumentals, vocals, scenery, and is the dressing room for performances. The library is limited in space and provides an inadequate number of computer stations. The nurse's office has been cited by New England Schools and Colleges as lacking space. Guidance offices are small, lack conference space, and make confidential conversations difficult. Also, there are not adequate learning stations for physical education. Some classes are conducted in hallways. There are also issues of hallways being inadequate to provide for safe and timely student passage.

Grafton Middle School student capacity was determined to be 558 students. The October 1, 2005 enrollment report indicates an enrollment of 612 students, this being 54 students above maximum capacity. All available space is being used.

Of note, the Department of Education recently released FY07 foundation enrollment data. Grafton's percentage of enrollment increase is the highest in the state with the exception of one vocational school which has added three towns to its membership.

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

The Strategic Plan Action Committee in conjunction with the principals annually assesses the space needs of each school.

Storage areas have been converted to remedial instructional space. Classrooms have been partitioned and the stage has been converted into guidance offices. Student passage in hallways is difficult. There are also traffic issues at AM arrival and PM dismissal.

At the elementary level one computer lab has been converted into a regular education classroom. The computer lab has been relocated to the library. The greatest restraint is in regards to our kindergarten program. The Grafton School Committee is unable to move forward with a full day kindergarten program due to a lack of space.

At the high school, weather permitting, students utilize an outside walkway as an alternative to inside hallways in order to mitigate congestion. The school district is also considering utilizing space in the Municipal Center and securing portable classrooms. The Town is completing a space Master Plan which calls for building a new high school.

Name of School: **Grafton High School**

Priority 3 NOT APPLICABLE

Prevention of the loss of accreditation.

Please provide a detailed description of the *facility-related* issues that are threatening accreditation.

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

Name of School: **Grafton High School**

Priority 4

■ Prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments.

Please describe the conditions within the community and School District that are expected to result in increased enrollment.

Grades 9 – 12 10 year Enrollment Increase = 304 students; 15 year Enrollment Increase = 417 students

Grades 6 – 8 10 year Enrollment Increase = 239 students; 15 year Enrollment Increase = 341 students

Grades 3 – 5 10 year Enrollment Increase = 201 students; 15 year Enrollment Increase = 303 students

Grades PreK – 2 10 year Enrollment Increase = 62 students; 15 year Enrollment Increase = 166 students

Please describe the measures the School District has taken or is planning to take in the immediate future to mitigate the problem(s) described above.

The school district has a facilities goal as part of its Strategic Plan. The Facilities Action Planning Committee has conducted a discrepancy analysis comparing student enrollment projections to building capacity. The Facilities Action Planning Committee has established a procedure to annually assess space needs at each school building and to develop a bridge plan. The bridge plan looks to maximize existing space usage by making alterations in student schedules as well as by converting non-academic space into academic space. Consideration is also given to adding portable classrooms as well as temporarily utilizing space at the Municipal Center.

The town has established a Facilities Committee and hired Symmes, Maini, and McKee Associates to establish a Master Plan. This committee has confirmed a need for additional education space and has recommended a phased in plan of building and renovation/expansion. The first step of the Master Plan is to build a new high school. The Selectmen and School Committee are on board with this recommendation. The Facilities Committee is now evaluating sites for the new high school. The Selectmen and School Committee will have a warrant article supporting this project on the May 2006 town meeting warrant.

Name of School: **Grafton High School**

Priority 5 NOT APPLICABLE

Replacement, renovation or modernization of the heating system in a schoolhouse to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs.

Please provide a detailed description of the energy conservation measures that are needed and include an estimation of resultant energy savings as compared to the historic consumption.

Please describe the measures the School District has already taken to reduce energy consumption.

Name of School: **Grafton High School**

Priority 6

■ Short term enrollment growth.

Please describe the conditions within the community and School District that are expected to result in increased enrollment and describe why these conditions are only expected to exist in the short term.

The following figures are taken from NESDEC's Enrollment Projections dated March 8, 2006. These projected enrollment increases exacerbate already over crowded schools.

Grades 9 – 12 5 year Enrollment Increase = 109 students

Grades 6 – 8 5 year Enrollment Increase = 128 students

Grades 3 – 5 5 year Enrollment Increase = 179 students

Grades PreK – 2 5 year Enrollment Increase = 72 students

Please describe the measures the School District has taken or is planning to take in the immediate future to mitigate the problem(s) described above.

The district's Facilities Action Planning Committee is responsible for developing a Bridge Plan to address space needs issues. The Bridge Plans will articulate steps that are viewed as temporary solutions. These solutions include redefining school catchment areas, converting specialist space (computer labs, music and art) into regular classroom space, conducting specialist instruction in an itinerant manner by bringing this instruction into the regular classroom or in libraries, relocating pre-school and kindergarten classrooms from school buildings to municipal office space, and eliminating storage areas in order to expand the High School cafeteria. In addition non-academic space has been converted into classrooms. The stage area has been converted into a guidance office. The former guidance office has been converted into a classroom. If a permanent solution to our space needs problems are not secured in the near future consideration will be given to the use of modular classrooms.

Name of School: Grafton High School

Priority 7 NOT APPLICABLE

Replacement or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements.

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.

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

Name of School: Grafton High School

Priority 8 NOT APPLICABLE

Transition from court-ordered and board of education approved racial balance school districts to walk-to, so-called, or other school districts.

Please provide a copy of the court-ordered and board of education approved racial balance school districts plan.

Please provide a copy of the redistricting plan.

Name of School: Grafton High School

AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS

In the case of a city, **majority votes** of both (1) the City Council/Board of Alderman AND (2) the School Committee, authorizing the Superintendent to submit this Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority, taken in accordance with the local charter, by-laws, or ordinances, are required. In the case of a town, **majority votes** of both (1) the Board of Selectmen or the equivalent governing body* AND (2) the School Committee, authorizing the Superintendent to submit this Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority, taken in accordance with the local charter, by-laws, and ordinances, are required. If the school district is a regional school district, a vote of the Regional School Committee authorizing the Superintendent to submit this Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority is required.

* A Town Meeting vote is not required to authorize the Superintendent to submit this Form.

Documentation of each vote must be submitted as follows: For the vote of the City Council/Board of Aldermen or Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body, a copy of the text of the vote with a certification of the City/Town Clerk that the vote was duly recorded and the date of the vote. For the vote of the School Committee, Minutes of the School Committee meeting at which the vote was taken, signed by the Committee Chairperson.

Form of Vote required from both City Council/Board of Aldermen, Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body AND the School Committee. If a regional school district, a vote of the Regional School Committee is required.

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on _____, the __[City Council/Board of Aldermen, Board of Selectmen/Equivalent Governing Body/School Committee]__, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated _____ for the _____[Name of School]_____ located at _____[Address]_____ which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future _____[Insert a description of the priority(s) checked off on the Statement of Interest Form and a brief description of the deficiency described therein for each priority]_____;

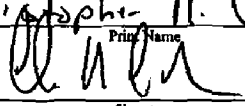
and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

CERTIFICATIONS

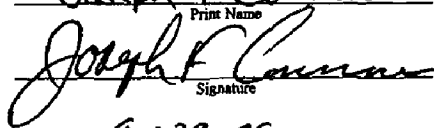
The undersigned hereby certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge, information and belief, the statements and information contained in this Statement of Interest and attached hereto are true and accurate and that this Statement of Interest has been prepared under the direction of the district school 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.

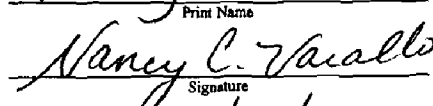
LOCAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(E.g., Mayor, Town Manager, Board of Selectmen)

Christopher D. Gilly
Print Name

Signature
4-24-06
Date

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Joseph F. Connors
Print Name

Signature
4-29-06
Date

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR

Nancy C. Varallo
Print Name

Signature
4/24/06
Date