

Joint Press Release from Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Elementary School Building Committee, Regarding Article 17: Center School Feasibility Study.

At Annual Town Meeting May 6, 2013, Hopkinton citizens will be asked to appropriate \$600,000 to fund a Feasibility Study for Center School, which currently houses Hopkinton's public kindergarten and 1st grade. Presented below are responses to questions the community may have about the Feasibility Study funding request.

What is Article 17? Article 17, sponsored by the School Committee, requests that Town Meeting appropriate up to \$600,000 to fund a Feasibility Study to document the need, evaluate alternatives and recommend a solution to the operational and educational constraints of Center School. Securing appropriation to fund a Feasibility Study is a required step in any renovation or construction project and also secures Hopkinton's ability to partner with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), which provides funds for school renovation and construction projects.

Why a new study - Hasn't the town done this before? Town Meeting approved an appropriation for a Feasibility Study for Center School in 2008. The ultimate product of that effort (a districted school at Fruit Street), was not supported by Town Meeting in 2011. Approval of this year's request will enable an appropriation needed to initiate the process of finding a future solution for Center School that will be embraced by the community.

Why \$600,000? The Elementary School Building Committee reviewed and validated the \$600k estimate through consultation with outside experts and community members with architecture and construction experience. The amount can be roughly broken down to \$350k to \$400k for the design portion including schematic design, \$100k to \$150k for project manager, and \$50k for testing. Additionally, information on the MSBA website reveals Feasibility Study costs over the past 2 years averaged \$562k, including project manager. In addition to vetting by the Elementary School Building Committee, School Committee, and Board of Selectmen, the figure has also been reviewed with the Appropriation Committee.

Will efforts be made to spend less than \$600,000? Yes. The article indicates authorization up to \$600,000; there is an opportunity to spend less than the full appropriation. Every effort will be made to deliver value to taxpayers at the lowest possible cost.

Can portions of the prior Feasibility Study be re-used, to reduce the overall cost of this Feasibility Study? While some portions of the prior Feasibility Study may be reused, the re-usable portions consist mainly of existing conditions information and other material provided by the town, not resulting in cost savings. The bulk of the costs of the feasibility study are the architecture and engineering related costs, which in the prior study focused on Fruit Street and finding a location for a K-5 districted solution, both different objectives than this time. Every opportunity will be taken to reuse any applicable portions from the previous study, but the current expectation from evaluating the prior study is that there will be minimal cost savings from

doing so.

What activities would be covered by the appropriation? The \$600,000 amount referenced in the article covers the full cost of the Feasibility Study, including schematics and project manager costs. The Feasibility Study documents the educational program, generates an initial space summary, documents existing conditions, establishes design parameters, develops and evaluates alternatives, and recommends the most cost effective and educationally appropriate preferred solution to the MSBA Board of Directors for their consideration, then proceeding to development of a robust schematic design of sufficient detail to establish the scope, budget and schedule for the Proposed Project.

Will the Feasibility Study take into account updated population assessment, to size any proposed new construction accordingly? Yes, the School Committee is seeking full updated MSBA and New England School Development Council (NESDEC) formula and population estimates for Hopkinton that would be included in the Feasibility Study as part of the project sizing.

Will MSBA co-fund the Feasibility Study? No. Because MSBA co-funded the prior Feasibility Study which culminated in a failed Town Meeting vote, the MSBA will not participate in co-funding the new Feasibility Study.

In light of past outcome, is Hopkinton still eligible for MSBA project participation? Yes, Hopkinton is eligible to participate in an MSBA funded project, has maintained constructive communication with MSBA over the past two years, and has submitted Statements of Interest to MSBA.

Do we know whether we are renovating Center School, or constructing a new building or what type of building? No. The Feasibility Study will initiate a transparent process in which active community engagement will be sought to determine the nature of the solution to the constraints at Center School. No decision has been made on whether the solution will involve renovation or rebuilding or what type of building.

Have sites for a solution been selected? No, a site has not been selected. Identification of potential sites, evaluation of those sites, and selection of a site are all part of the Feasibility Study. Additional community outreach and input are integral parts of the upcoming Feasibility Study.

What educational model will be expected to be addressed by the solution to Center School constraints? Hopkinton has made clear in the Statements of Interest submitted to the MSBA and in a School Committee press release that no changes to current grade configurations are planned as part of this project and this project will focus on a non-districted solution for pre-K, Kindergarten and Grade 1.

Would potential land acquisitions have to be completed prior to Feasibility Study? No. Any required land acquisitions would be identified as part of the Feasibility Study, not prior to it.

Any potential land acquisitions would have to be completed prior to project bonding, but not prior to Feasibility Study.

Has the Elementary School Building Committee reviewed material from the prior effort?

Yes, the ESBC has reviewed the prior Feasibility Study, as well exit poll data from the 2011 ballot vote, Boston Research Group community survey results, and other background material. A high level of community engagement will continue as a priority throughout the initiation and completion of the Feasibility Study.

Where can I find out more?

Related information is available on the Elementary School Building Committee website (<http://www.hopkintonma.gov/home/government/boards/esbc>), on Twitter ([@HopkintonESBC](https://twitter.com/HopkintonESBC)), and through the following contacts:

- Ben Palleiko, Chair, Board of Selectmen: bpalleiko@hopkintonma.gov
- Nancy Burdick, Chair, School Committee: nburdick@hopkinton.k12.ma.us
- Joe Markey, Chair, Elementary School Building Committee: jmarkey@hopkintonma.gov