Massachusetts School Building Authority

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December 18, 2024

The Honorable Breanna Lungo-Koehn, Mayor
City of Medford
Medford City Hall
85 George P. Hassett Drive, Room 202
Medford, MA 02155

Re: City of Medford, Medford High School

Dear Mayor Lungo-Koehn:

I would like to thank representatives of the City of Medford (the "District") for meeting with Massachusetts School Building Authority (the "MSBA") staff on July 25, 2024, to review enrollment projections and methodologies for the Medford High School project (the "Proposed Project") and for the additional materials provided on August 19, 2024. As discussed, the next critical step is for the MSBA and the District to agree on a design enrollment for the Proposed Project.

The MSBA works with local communities to create affordable, sustainable, and energy-efficient schools across Massachusetts. A critical early component in achieving these objectives begins with an appropriate design enrollment that positions the District to efficiently meet space capacity needs throughout potential future enrollment variations.

The MSBA uses a data-driven enrollment projection methodology based on the widely accepted modified grade-to-grade cohort survival methodology (the "enrollment methodology"). The MSBA's enrollment methodology generates a baseline enrollment projection as discussed during the July 25, 2024, enrollment meeting, and as further described on the MSBA's website found under the 'Building With Us', 'MSBA Enrollment Methodology' section.

Based on discussion and information supplied by the District, data from sources such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ("DESE") and Department of Public Health, the MSBA has been able to create an enrollment projection for the Proposed Project, as follows.

Medford High School presently serves the District's grade 9-12 enrollment and a portion of the District's Pre-K enrollment. Based on the information provided by the District, the MSBA understands that the District would like the Feasibility Study to evaluate the potential of locating the District's therapeutic high school program, the Curtis-Tufts School, as well as the balance of

district-wide Pre-K enrollment, currently located within the elementary schools, to the proposed project.

As discussed, Pre-K enrollment is not included in these projections with the determination of required space determined during the feasibility study phase of the MSBA's process at the time of the review of the District's proposed educational space program for the proposed project. Accordingly, this analysis will be focused on the projections for grade 9-12 enrollment.

The table below illustrates the District's K-12 enrollment during the most recent ten-year period, including enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year, as reported by the DESE.

School Year	K-5	6-8	9-12	Total
2014-2015	2,086	970	1,349	4,405
2015-2016	1,977	928	1,411	4,316
2016-2017	1,978	982	1,400	4,360
2017-2018	1,876	960	1,376	4,212
2018-2019	1,885	920	1,292	4,097
2019-2020	1,871	921	1,265	4,057
2020-2021	1,711	893	1,266	3,870
2021-2022	1,803	915	1,211	3,929
2022-2023	1,874	917	1,268	4,059
2023-2024	1,938	884	1,195	4,017

A version of the above table with more detail regarding the District's historic enrollment may also be found in the District's updated Enrollment Projection package.

The total grade 9-12 enrollment in the City of Medford as reported by the District for the 2023-2024 school year was 1,195 students, which reflects a decrease of approximately 216 students (-15.31%) from the maximum grade 9-12 enrollment reported during the preceding ten-year period. Additionally, the 2023-2024 grade 9-12 enrollment reflects a decrease of approximately 108 students (-8.31%) from the average grade 9-12 enrollment reported during the preceding ten-year period. The MSBA understands that the District is proposing an enrollment to accommodate approximately 1,500 students in grades 9-12 plus an additional 200 district-wide Pre-K students. The grade 9-12 enrollment reported to DESE for the 2023-2024 school year was 1,195 students.

With respect to future enrollments, the MSBA's base enrollment projection indicates a declining trend early in the projection until 2031, then after a short increase is projected to stabilize through the 2033-2034 school year. In accordance with the MSBA's Enrollment Methodology, the baseline enrollment is calculated using the ten-year average of projected enrollments. As such, the average grade 9-12 base enrollment projection for Medford High School through the 2033-2034 school year is 1,227 (1,225 rounded) students.

As a result of a sensitivity analysis performed by the MSBA on this base enrollment projection and further discussion with the District, the following adjustment has been made to the base enrollment projection:

- Out-of-District Enrollment
    - In order to adjust for fluctuations in the out-of-district enrollment patterns of the District's residents over time, the MSBA has made an additional adjustment to the base enrollment projection.
    - In order to make this adjustment, the MSBA adjusted the grade-to-grade survival ratios for grade 9-12 enrollment by a total of 5.6% throughout a four-year period in the projection.
    - This adjustment added 45 students to the base grade 9-12 enrollment as compared to the projection without this adjustment.

- Development
    - Based on the discussions between the District and the MSBA regarding new housing developments and the potential zoning changes accommodating transit-oriented development, as well as the development information provided by the District, the MSBA enrollment model was adjusted to account for the potential impact of developments that are beyond what is typically experienced in the District.
    - This adjustment added 125 students to the base grade 9-12 grade enrollment as compared to the base enrollment projection.

As a result of the analysis of the average base enrollment projection, the adjustments to the base projection described above, as well as the historical enrollment trends of the District, the MSBA recommends a design enrollment of 1,395 students in grades 9-12 (plus Pre-K students) for the Medford High School proposed project.

As previously described, the MSBA understands that the District would like to include space for district-wide Pre-K and the District's therapeutic high school program, the Curtis-Tufts School. If this configuration is determined to be the Preferred Solution, the District will be required to establish in the Preferred Schematic Report the proposed future use or disposition of any existing spaces vacated or otherwise repurposed by this proposed project. The District will also be required to illustrate that the Preferred Solution has been approved by the School Committee and necessary District officials. Further, the MSBA will require a written plan from the District, describing the process for determining local support for this potential configuration.

Both the MSBA's enabling legislation, M.G.L. c. 70B, and the MSBA's regulations, 963 CMR 2.00 et seq. specifically address the issue of past MSBA-funded projects. Pursuant to these requirements and depending on the District's ultimate plan for the existing Medford High School, which was the subject of an MSBA-funded Science Lab Initiative renovation project, the MSBA may recover a pro-rated portion of the financial assistance that the District received under a previous grant. The substantial completion of the prior project at the existing Medford High School was on July 18, 2014. The exact amount to be recovered will be established at the conclusion of Module 4 – Schematic Design.

The MSBA believes that this design enrollment recommendation will position the District to efficiently meet space capacity needs throughout future enrollment variations. Please sign and return the attached certification within 21 calendar days to confirm agreement on this design enrollment. If the District feels that this design enrollment recommendation does not meet the needs of the District, please respond to this letter via e-mail to Allison Sullivan (Allison.Sullivan@MassSchoolBuildings.org) and propose three meeting/conference call times for which the District can be available.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Allison Sullivan at 617-720-4466.

Sincerely,

Michael P McGurl

Michael McGurl
Director of Capital Planning

Cc: Legislative Delegation
Isaac B. Bears, President, Medford City Council
Jenny Graham, Vice Chair, Medford School Committee
Dr. Marice Edouard-Vincent, Superintendent, Medford Public Schools
Dr. Peter Cushing, Assistant Superintendent for Enrichment, Innovation and Operations, Medford Public Schools
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