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Advisory Team - Interior & Exterior Design 1

Project Name:	Medford High School	Project Number:	25100
RE:	Advisory Team - Interior & Exterior Design	Meeting Date:	12/16/2025
Prepared by:	Sarah Long	Meeting Number:	1
Distribution:	Attendees		

Owner

- [ ] Lujayen Alsayrafi, *MHS Student*
- [x] Libby Brown, *SBC Member*
- [x] Alex Bushkoff, *Medford Resident*
- [x] Marta Cabral, *MHS Principal*
- [x] Griscel Diaz, *Medford Resident*
- [x] Chloe Dorcellus, *MHS Student*
- [x] Paul Ellis, *Medford Resident*
- [x] Suzanne B. Galusi, *MPS Interim Superintendent*
- [x] Jenny Graham, *SBC Chair, School Committee Vice Chair*
- [x] Brian Hilliard, *SBC Member*
- [ ] Din Ho
- [x] Ken Lord, *MPS Chief Operating Officer*
- [ ] Lisa Malone
- [ ] Nicole Morell
- [ ] William Pipicelli
- [x] Jennifer Rigano, *Medford Teacher*
- [x] Paul Ruseau, *SBC Member, School Committee Member*
- [x] Jesse B. Strauss, *Medford Resident*
- [x] Delia Wendel, *Medford Resident*
- [x] Eric Zeckman, *Medford Resident*

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- [x] Soala Ajienka, *Architectural Designer*
- [x] Lucas Carriere, *Architectural Designer*
- [ ] Helen Fantini, *Project Manager*
- [x] Sarah Long, *Sr. Interior Designer*
- [x] Michael Pardek, *Director of Design, Architect*
- [x] Matt Rice, *Principal-in-Charge, Architect*
- [x] Abigail Ransmeier, *Head of Research*

Leftfield

- [x] Jen Carlson, *Project Director*
- [x] Matt Gulino, *Project Manager*

Item No.	Action	Discussion
01.01	Record	Meeting # 1 Agenda - Welcome & introductions - Overview of the Advisory Team process & milestones - Goals & aspirations discussion - listening - Next steps
01.02	Record	Overview of Advisory Team Process & Milestones - Four Advisory Teams - not individual silos of discussion; all are connected but each team gives space for deeper discussion ○ Each team will produce a set of recommendations for the full SBC to review and approve - Objective of Exterior & Interior Design AT: Reviews exterior design concepts including composition of form and exterior material selections. Review of the products and materials selected for interior finishes such as flooring, paint colors, wall finishes and ceilings.

		- Overall process: 4 meetings ○ Listen > Review & Respond > Confirm & Recommend > Reconvene - Goal is for the new school to open in Fall 2030 - Currently in the "Empathy" and "Define" portion of design thinking
01.03	Record	Goals & Aspirations Discussion Four minutes were provided for each member; submit any additional thoughts or questions via email: • Exterior - simplicity/longevity/timeless design, do more with less for materials; maintenance is a concern so simplicity for materials is important; there is a lot to be learned from the existing building; Interior - chair of materials taskforce professionally; focus on healthy materials, red list free as a baseline, no PVC, durability/timeless materials; health and well-being of the occupants is priority; healthy, non-trendy materials to serve a purpose, being careful about selection and all materials should have a real reason to be there • Agrees with statement above, likes concrete and brick as well. This speaker's specialty is in construction administration and cost analysis - value for money with materials is extremely important, how do more with less. Sustainability is a huge issue - are we going for passive house/LEED/etc., environmentally friendly materials (no vinyl)? Asked how this will be bid, noting that Construction Managers are invaluable at the earliest possible stages. Adds that they have 25 years of experience in construction so happy to overlap with other groups; need to make the bureaucratic process as explicit as possible for all involved. [Matt Gulino from Leftfield noted that the project will likely pursue chapter 149a, CM at Risk.] • Exterior - agrees with statement above re: longevity, avoid trendy; wants modern but also warm and welcoming. The high school is on a beautiful plot of land and not a main road so sight lines out to the Fells and downtown Boston are important. Interior should also be timeless. Cleanliness is super important, walls and spaces that can be cleaned. Expressed hesitancy about carpet. Hopes that people see themselves in the building and adapt to the population; flexible spaces for students to have autonomy. Good sight lines for staff and students is important as is bringing Medford community inside the school. Design should be timeless but also make it feel like Medford HS just in a brand new space. Core values and the mustang mascot should be incorporated. Community spaces that hold all of us, not just Medford but students and staff as well • How to make this space safe and comfortable, physically and emotionally safe for staff and students and focus on well-being? Interested in flexible classrooms. How can this be a community hub and have spaces for the community to use? Maintenance is a concern - unfinished wood looks nice at first but doesn't weather well. Sustainability has been covered, but what is the connection to nature, how can we connect students to nature? How can we support student identity/school pride/Mustangs? Consider a mural; accessible and inclusive design • We have to keep it simple but want to make sure the design is inclusive and represents the culture and the whole community; safe space for every student; comfortable and relaxed; not trendy but wants it to feel like Medford. • Most things already mentioned. When deciding on materials, consider flexibility and how things can be changed out in time. Focus on demographics and diversity of Medford; entrances should be welcoming and building should be inviting, and wayfinding is important, especially for after hours and athletics. Public areas could incorporate Medford history and important people. Theater size for performances should be considered. Would like to see dedicated rooms for after hour clubs so they don't have to fight for space. Flexibility of the classrooms is critical as times change; combining vocational and classrooms - flexibility/adaptability is important. Colors and floors should be lively and not dull and dark. Japanese Language School of Greater Boston uses the current MHS, their space needs should be considered for the new school. Recommend taking into account that the existing school may have been built on top of a trash dump. Consider multiple languages for signage • Likes the idea of a sense of ownership - the expectation should be that this ownership changes hands as the students change, create intentional ways for the students to have ownership but also make it flexible and easy to evolve in classrooms as well as common spaces, create connection to other students, give students accountability/ownership, insists upon evolution as students move through the space; Mustang logo - lots of discussion around this offline that can be brought to this group. Exterior design - maximize the incredible view of the Boston skyline; special events and teaching spaces on roof. Wants to create a space students want to be in. What is possible for playing fields? Wayfinding is critical. There are cool artifacts in the bistro but wouldn't know the significance unless talked to a "Medford dinosaur" - how do we bring those elements in but also teach people? The building should tell its own story. • The speaker noted that he has a lot of educators in his family, son is in robotic/engineering, has an interest in CTE spaces; experience in architecture and working on schools, can be a liaison with teachers and the SBC; excited for what SMMA brings to the table - materials, cost analysis, timeless design; interested in space planning and programming; phasing/scheduling will be important and potentially complex. Important to adhere to the guiding principles from the students' perspectives as outlined in the student development meeting. There is a paradigm shift for how students learn and teachers teach so they walk into a space they are ready for in 2030 - things change now, not then. • The speaker noted that they were heavily involved in 7 school building projects; durability of materials

		is very important - concerns with too much drywall. Glazed block is very durable. Consider blending materials between reno/addition spaces. Roof top access for classroom use (science, views). Easily maintainable materials and building overall easy to maintain (easy access). Stormwater runoff water at exterior shouldn't wash away landscaping. Kids' Corner program with playground space is required. Ease of cleaning the building - no waxed floors. Enough display space for student work - purpose built spots for murals (not just tack on after the fact), and ways to hang things that won't damage the walls • The speaker noted that they had worked in the building for 18 years. Traffic and parking are big issues and the flow of entering the site and building should be considered; many people get lost going to the gym, better signage/entrances/wayfinding are needed as the building is used often after school. Interior should represent students and the school, do a great job doing this now and have designated painting locations for students. Recommends against a lot of white spaces; want it to be clean but balance with colors/murals is important. Classrooms should have ways to hang things up/paint, walls should be easy to hang things on so the school can be altered easily to reflect the students. [• [From chat: locations of classrooms in relation to CTE spaces and the cafeteria, light and windows are important, a good connection and layout with any part of the current building that is being kept needs to be thought through] • Architectural digest of most beautiful schools in each state and didn't agree with majority; Watertown (terrible site) and Newtown (liked). Keep in mind that the majority of voters don't have students but pride in the building is important; the exterior should reflect the wonderful teaching on the inside. Medford has very little public meeting space. Project should wow the community • Advocate for visual and performing arts - they should not be tucked away in corners of the building. Visual and performing arts are a highly valued part of the school and should be visible; this is an opportunity to proudly showcase Medford (like the library). • Health and environmental concerns are important - civic/public spaces are where we turn to in times of crisis and are beacons of hope, places of gathering. There are real social values attached to schools for the community. Looking for a school that is rooted in a wholesome history, inclusive in its reach and representation; should be designed in part with storytelling in mind - what is it like at drop off, what is it like to integrate nature. Recommends reinforcing the importance of context in history and culture; creative spaces and quiet spaces are important. Wants a school gesturing towards the future but anchored in history • Schools in Medford are important assets - schools bring people to a community; flexible/adaptable spaces. The library is a great example of an updated community resource; as technology and pedagogy changes want to make sure the building can be what we need to be in the future.
01.04	MR	Next Steps - Meeting #2: the design team will speak to the priorities brought up today, as well as: ○ Potential material and system palettes ○ Educational visioning input ○ Building orientation ○ Technical requirements ○ Precedents - recent high school designs ○ Medford design vernacular / context