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# Advisory Team - Interior & Exterior Design 2

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| Project Name: | Medford High School | Project Number: | 25100 |
| RE: | Advisory Team - Interior & Exterior Design | Meeting Date: | 01/15/2026 |
| Prepared by: | Soala Ajienka | Meeting Number: | 02 |
| Distribution: | Attendees | | |

**Owner**

- [ ] Lujayen Alsayrafi, *MHS Student*
- [x] Libby Brown, *SBC Member*
- [ ] Alex Bushkoff, *Medford Resident*
- [ ] 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*
- [ ] Nicole Morell
- [x] William Pipicelli
- [x] Jennifer Rigano, *Medford Teacher*
- [x] Annemarie Rigas, *Medford Parent*
- [x] Paul Ruseau, *SBC Member, School Committee Member*
- [x] Jesse B. Strauss, *Medford Resident*
- [x] Delia Wendel, *Medford Resident*
- [x] Eric Zeckman, *Medford Resident*

**SMMA**

- [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 |
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| 02.01 | Record | Meeting # 2 Agenda<br>- Welcome & Introductions<br>• Topics & Priorities– Takeaways from Meeting #1<br>• Meeting #1 Recap<br>○ Medford's Civic Architecture<br>○ Exterior Materials<br>○ Interior Design and Materials<br>○ Experiential Graphic Design (XGD)<br>• Next Steps |
| 02.02 | Record | **Project Timeline**<br>• Progress: The schedule is on track, with a projected opening in Fall 2030 |

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| | | • Design team presented Alternatives to be costed to the School building committee in 01/14/2026<br>• 29 different costing options were put forward as discrete cost approaches . |
| 02.03 | Record | **Topics & Priorities – Takeaways from Meeting #1**<br>Key Phrases conveyed in last discussion: Flexibility, community, Timeless over Trendy, Simplicity and Restraint, Value Driven material choices, Learn from the existing building, Every material must earn its place<br><br>• Materials, Health and Sustainability<br>○ Healthy materials as a baseline<br>○ Occupant wellbeing is paramount<br>○ Maintenance realism<br>○ Sustainability expectations are high<br>• Community Hub and Civic Role<br>○ High School as a true civic Asset<br>○ Clear entrances and circulation<br>○ Public gathering space<br>○ Visible and celebrated<br>○ Beacon in times of crisis<br>• Flexibility, Adaptability and Student Ownership<br>○ Classrooms and common spaces must evolve when necessary<br>○ Materials should allow easy replacement, reconfiguration and personalization<br>○ Student Ownership: incorporating artefacts, items of care students have created and making sure they see themselves in the school<br>• Site, Views, Nature and Place<br>○ Preserve and maximize views to the Fells and the Boston Skyline<br>○ Strong connection to nature<br>○ Landscape Durability<br>○ Site has history<br>○ Building that's rooted in Landscape<br>• Identity, Belonging and School Pride<br>○ The school should feel strongly like Medford High School and not somewhere else<br><br>*"We start with belonging and purpose, express that through timeless identity, deliver it with purposeful materials and healthy systems, and enable it through flexible spaces that evolve over time."*<br><br>• <u>Discussion:</u><br>○ The three rings are a good way to frame the topics of discussion.<br>○ One of the most impactful stages of the process was getting to hear the students express their opinions of the space they wanted to see during the visioning process. |
| 02.04 | Record | **1. Medford's Civic Architecture**<br>Civic Buildings are a great way to identify materials that have meaning in the community.<br>• Armory, 1891 Romanesque Revival: Rustic stone, castle-like turrets<br>• Bigelow Block, 1886 Late Victorian/Queen Anne Style, brick and copper as key materials<br>• Chevalier Theater, 1939 Greek Revival, built during a time of crisis after the Great Depression. An example of wanting to evoke nostalgia for a previous time<br>• City Hall, 1937, Colonial Revival<br>• Medford Public Library, 2022 Contemporary Civic. Rooflines inspired by shipbuilding, and Clippership Wharf<br>• Medford Police, 2021 Contemporary Civic demonstrates its utility<br>• Medford High School is contemporary to the times in the 70's. A publication spread from that time gives an insight into how people saw the school<br>• <u>Discussion</u>:<br>○ Medford High School and the Police Station feel different from the rest of the buildings in the presentation. City Hall feels warmer in contrast with Medford High School that now feels cold.<br>○ The difference between a lot of the civic buildings highlighted and Medford High School is the civic component. The High School provides an opportunity to teach students how to be civic minded and show up for each other in the community.<br>○ Nostalgia is not an appropriate method of communicating the story of the city. While shipbuilding is a part of the history of Medford, there were also enslaved people at the time these buildings were constructed.<br>○ The focus should be on the future and not nostalgia for the past. The question is how do we create a better future for students and not just a reflection of what has existed before.<br>○ A good narrative here is the disparate nature of the character of the buildings in Medford. The |

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| | | narrative should be on accessibility and making the school a welcoming and open place for everyone as opposed to the current building form now which looks like hydro power plant<br>○ One thing that the Medford building affords in its rather extraordinary DNA are opportunities for diverse relationships to exterior space (far more than any of the other Civic examples on the slide that was shared previously during the civic building discussion). At current MHS, exterior gathering spaces are forgotten, poorly connected and underutilized, but they are there to be rediscovered, reimagined or to help guide potential designs. The best civic buildings have an element of democracy - open, inviting for diverse ways to exchange and share, moments to unite (at different scales). How can we ensure that the new MHS is a civic hub through its unique open character? What cues can we take from the building's current bones (regardless of re-use or re-build?) |
| 02.05 | Record | **2. Exterior Materials**<br>• In other School Buildings in the district, brick dominates<br>• A crucial point to consider and design with is the longevity and intended lifespan of the high school with materials that can last 70 years<br>• Brick/Stone/Precast, Thin Medford Stone, Metal Panes and Tiles, Porcelain Panel and phenolic Panels, Terracotta curtain wall as potential options<br>• Cost is a crucial factor in material considerations as well as Energy and sustainability<br>• Important to consider durability vs Cost of Materials. Brick is cheaper, lasts long and so it is often the most popular choice for civic buildings<br>• Important consideration is material adjacencies and compositions between glazing and opaque wall assemblies<br>• How would a building be used outside of school hours? How can it be a beacon?<br>• Light is an important tool to design with. At night, the reverse happens where glazing becomes the most visible<br>• Somerville High School, Roxbury Prep HS, Concord Middle School as SMMA precedents<br>• <u>Discussion</u><br>○ Interest and curiosity about the horizontal shading devices on windows that help reduce incident solar radiation<br>○ Windows in the new school would be operable to allow teachers have control over their immediate environment.<br>○ Interest in the landscape and material strategy of Concord Middle School. With how rich the Medford High School terrain is, could there be a concept around strata on the building façade, where layers from nature to the interior?<br>○ The site has a lot of material underneath that would be excavated. What are some opportunities when that material is uncovered, where the building can have a conversation with the environment, the striations<br>○ Conversations with the fire chief will be pursued about access around the site and into the courtyard outdoor classrooms. |
| 02.06 | Record | **3. Interior Design**<br>The crucial elements of Texture, Space, Color, Lighting and Pattern and appropriate illumination for learning activities<br>1. Purposeful, Durable and value-driven interior materials<br>2. Visual and physical connection to the interior<br>3. Designed to encourage student engagement and autonomy including patterns, colors and materials that provide wayfinding and stimulate movement<br>4. Design should be rooted in a timeless neutral palette that is intentional<br>Guiding Design Elements all influenced by the Programming Plan and intentions for the school<br>1. Connection to nature,<br>2. Celebrating Diversity<br>3. Flexible spaces,<br>4. Comfort and well being<br>5. Durable and timeless materials<br>6. Equitable and universal design<br>7. Access to daylight and Views<br><u>Discussion</u><br>○ Some floors are durable but there may be a look to them that's not appealing e.g. wax floors used in MHS Science Lecture Hall today<br>○ Health Assisting example from Waltham HS is a great example of good interior design. The flooring helps delineate the space in a great way<br>○ While the spaces are beautiful, there could be the issue of sensory overload for students who have a difficult time in such spaces. It is important to make interiors more accessible with enough contrast between elements to ensure that students have smooth time using the space |
| 02.07 | Record | **4. Experiential Graphic Design (XGD)/High Level Goals**<br>• Consider the experience of the students, staff, and community through space |

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| | | • Create Educational Opportunities through Graphics |
| 02.08 | SMMA | **Next Steps**<br>• Meeting #3: March 10 at 5.30, Remote/Hybrid<br>• Review the spreadsheet with all the topics from the first and second sessions<br>• Group will move through list identifying items to take forward and others to not move forward with. Color-coded assessment to be carried out by Advisory Team: Green (full agreement), Yellow (Items that may not be needed), Red (items that will not be taken forward)<br>• Subsequently, Items carried forward in agreement will be put before School Building Committee |