



Barrington Public Schools

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 26, 2016

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Barrington School Committee approves two design proposals for a new Barrington Middle School

District will submit to the state School Building Authority options for new construction, or renovation plus addition to the existing school

BARRINGTON, RI – The Barrington School Committee yesterday approved proposals to submit for state funding to transform Barrington Middle School into a state-of-the-art educational facility.

The School Committee, after the unanimous approval of a recommendation by the Building Committee, approved two design options for the project, in keeping with state requirements for reimbursement from the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE) School Building Authority: construction of a new school on property adjacent to the existing building, or complete renovation of the existing building, including construction of a new addition. The district will now request approval of the design options by the Barrington Town Council prior to submission of both proposals to the State for "Stage II" approval, having received preliminary approval for the project in December.

"We are very pleased to continue moving this exciting project forward," said Kate D. Brody, School Committee Chair. "These proposals represent a tremendous opportunity to build a middle school that reflects the first-rate education offered in the Barrington Public Schools. The School Committee recognizes and appreciates the significant contributions of the Barrington Middle School Building Committee, throughout a timeline spanning several years, to achieve this milestone in the process."

Superintendent Michael B. Messore III said that the existing building on Middle Highway, built in 1952 and not renovated extensively since 1968, does not meet the educational and extra-curricular needs of the school community. In particular, he said, the outdated layout of the school and its classrooms is not conducive to the current models of collaborative teaching and learning. He said that classrooms, athletic facilities, the auditorium, and the library are in need of significant upgrades.

"For our students to be competitive and successful, we need state-of-the-art school buildings," said Messore. "The new Barrington Middle School will be designed to support STEAM education – science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics – and other cutting-edge areas of study, to prepare our students for 21st century career opportunities."

The new building would feature adaptable classroom and collaboration spaces, science laboratories, the latest instructional technology, rehearsal and performance spaces, indoor and outdoor athletic facilities, as well as infrastructure investments to improve safety and energy efficiency.

In order to finance the project, the district is seeking 35% reimbursement from the RIDE School Building Authority. If the project receives approval from RIDE, following a vote by the General Assembly, state and local officials will schedule a referendum vote among Barrington residents. If the voter referendum is successful, the district will begin the bidding process to select a contractor for the project. The district aims to begin construction in 2017, with a targeted completion date of August 2020, although the renovation/addition option would likely require a longer construction period.

Initial conceptual cost estimates for the project are \$80.7 million for new construction and \$89.6 million for complete renovation and addition.

The project is overseen by a Building Committee, – comprised of parents, school and district leaders, and town officials – charged with managing the design, approval, and construction process, including opportunities to gather input from the public. The Building Committee, Co Chaired by Mark Zawatsky and School Committee member Patrick A. Guida, has been meeting for more than a year in anticipation of the expiration of the moratorium on school construction, holding public meetings as well as “visioning sessions” last fall to engage the community in discussion about the needs of the school and the scope of the project.

A series of public information sessions will be scheduled in the near future to inform and engage the Barrington community about the project. The architect for the project is Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc.

For more information, including the proposed school designs, visit www.barringtonschools.org.