

## NASHUA MIDDLE SCHOOLS PROJECT

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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### GENERAL

**Q. Why was this middle school improvement program initiated?**

A. *After a careful review of the three Nashua middle schools beginning over a year ago, it was determined that there were several infrastructure issues with all three middle schools. The issues needed to be addressed to improve middle school education in Nashua and improve security at the middle school level for students and staff. A detailed engineering evaluation was conducted at all three middle schools and evaluation of a possible new middle school in south Nashua. An architect and construction manager competitive bid process were undertaken, Harriman was selected as the project's architect and Harvey Construction was selected as the construction manager. A one-year concept design phase was undertaken and is now complete including a very detailed report on all three existing schools and the new proposed site.*

**Q. Will there be staff and student participation in the design?**

A. *Yes, some level of design input from staff members has already occurred. Once in the detailed design phase, further design input will be included from both staff and students through several avenues of engagement.*

**Q. How will parents, staff, and student meeting notifications be made?**

A. *Meeting notifications will be made through email, via City website, and/or by visiting the "Middle Schools – Stay Connected" page at [www.nashua.edu](http://www.nashua.edu).*

**Q. Are all schools getting the same upgrades to technology?**

A. *The project budgets at all three middle schools have allotted funds for technology. The District will evaluate existing technologies and develop an upgrade plan to provide an equitable experience for students in all schools.*

**Q. Where do the memorial and dedicated plaques at each school get placed?**

A. *Plaques and Trophies: For Elm Street Middle School, the final determination on a location has yet to be decided but they will not be lost or misplaced. The Board of Education will ultimately decide where these will be located. At Fairgrounds and Pennichuck, the trophies and plaques will remain where they are today.*

*Building Construction Plaques: The Elm Street plaque is located in the Keefe Auditorium and for now will remain there. At Fairgrounds and Pennichuck they will only be relocated if necessary due to construction. New updated plaques will be located in the same areas.*

**Q. Is there a budget for packing and moving?**

*A. Yes, moving costs are included in the budget.*

**Q. Will there be new furniture? How will the furniture specifically ensure for long term durability?**

*A. The project will have some funds dedicated for purchase of furniture. The selection of new furniture will consider several factors. Two of those factors include quality and aesthetics. Quality will be a factor of high priority. To the greatest extent possible, the process of selection will involve school staff and student in those decisions.*

**Q. Will there be an opportunity to test the new furniture before it is purchased?**

*A. The intent will be to allow for staff and students test furniture prior to final selection.*

**Q. Will there be sidewalk upgrades at all schools?**

*A. Although some sidewalk work is being identified as part of these projects, many sidewalks will be outside the scope of this project. The Department of Public Works maintains many of these sidewalks and current and future projects will need to be reviewed with that department. The new school will include a new sidewalk connection from Buckmeadow Road to the new site.*

**Q. Was an enrollment study completed?**

*A. The School District has enrollment studies and has the responsibility to update these student projections. We have been told that these projections will be updated again shortly but over many years these projections do not change significantly.*

**Q. Will there be redistricting costs? Will redistricting happen at the elementary schools too?**

*A. Redistricting is conducted by the Board of Education and the School District. If the redistricting falls on a pure geographical aspect of Nashua, there should be little cost impact due to this project. Redistricting does not need to be addressed for a couple of years until the new school is almost complete and ready for the following school year.*

**Q. Will there be staff reassignment?**

*A. Yes, Currently Elm Street has over 1200 students, the project is designed to balance the number of students at each of the Middle Schools once complete, some staff reassignments will be required. Staff reassignments are handled in accordance with policies laid out in the teacher's union contract and other labor union contracts.*

**Q. Will lessons learned from the high school construction be utilized?**

*A. Yes, several parties in the current design process were part of the construction of the high school projects and intend to utilize the best practices and lessons learned during the design and construction of these projects. The design team will also be engaging periodically with school district staff, principals and teachers in this regard as well.*

**Q. What are the latest enrollments?**

*A. For school years 2018-2019 the certified enrollment was 2,415 students for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The enrollment for 2019-2020 is 2,454 students for the same grades.*

## **FAIRGROUNDS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Q. Will there be parking/parent drop-off conflicts?**

*A. The design team will review options to alleviate potential conflicts with the parking and parent drop-off traffic patterns. As currently designed, there will be opportunities for teacher parking in the rear of the building and access via the access drive that is separate from the parent drop-off. An extra queuing lane on Cleveland Street will also assist to alleviate traffic congestion.*

**Q. Is there lighting being planned in the new parking lots?**

*A. Although not shown in the Concept Design plans, a budget is accounted for to add new lighting to the new parking lots.*

**Q. Will new furniture be included in old spaces?**

*A. A budget for some new furniture has been included in the project. It is unlikely that all spaces will receive new furniture, but some spaces may. An inventory of furniture conditions will be done and assessed during the fit-up of the building. The furniture budget is a percentage of the construction costs. It is not the intent to get rid of any existing good furniture.*

**Q. Will the existing courtyard space be corrected for egress needs?**

*A. The existing egress has been reviewed and required updates will be made.*

**Q. Existing art rooms are very noisy. Will this be addressed?**

*A. The current scope moves the art rooms and mitigates noise issues.*

## **PENNICHUCK MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Q. Will the stage location be located adjacent to the Gym? Conflicts with after-school event schedules may take place.**

*A. During the Phase 1 process, a Concept Design was created to account for spaces, and the general locations of those spaces are used to determine the approximate size and shape of the building. During the next phase of the project, a further detailed design will provide*

*refinement of the plan with more in-depth feedback from user groups. The final design will consider the pros and cons of placing the stage adjacent to the gym or cafeteria.*

**Q. Has the pedestrian bridge been assessed?**

*A. The facility analysis did not review the existing pedestrian bridge over the Henry Burke road. This bridge has been fixed in recent years by the Nashua Department of Public Works.*

**Q. Will there be new furniture in the old spaces?**

*A. A budget for some new furniture has been included in the project. It is unlikely that all spaces will receive new furniture, but some spaces may. An inventory of furniture conditions will be done and assessed during the fit-up of the building.*

**Q. Will the new courtyard space accommodate for egress needs?**

*A. The new courtyard spaces will have appropriate doors to egress from the space should the need to arise. Final treatment of the courtyards will be determined during the detailed design phase.*

**Q. What is the cafeteria capacity? The concept design does not appear to be large enough to accommodate the increased capacity of students.**

*A. Using the requirements set forth by the 2015 International Building Code, the concept design for the Cafeteria would include 15 square feet per student in an arrangement of tables and chairs. As currently shown in the Concept Plans, the space would allow for a capacity of over 300 students and staff. Based on three lunch periods, this space would meet the requirements for the proposed enrollments.*

**Q. Will the Media Center be appropriately sized to meet the proposed enrollment?**

*A. Yes, the proposed Library/Media Center meets the recommended space allowance outlined in the current Manual for Planning and Construction of School Buildings, prepared by the New Hampshire Department of Education. The recommended space allowance is 40 square feet/pupil for 10% of the design capacity.*

**Q. Will ventilation to existing interior rooms be addressed?**

*A. There are several rooms created during a previous renovation that appear to have inadequate ventilation. These spaces will receive adjustments as needed to bring the spaces into alignment with current requirements.*

**Q. The existing Nurse space has limited exam spaces, will this be addressed in the design?**

*A. The design team will review this during the detailed design phase and propose options to accommodate appropriate support spaces.*

**Q. Will lockers be replaced?**

*A. Yes, this is currently included in the scope.*

**Q. Folding partitions are useful but are in disrepair. Will they be replaced?**

*A. Yes, cost of replacement is currently included in the scope of the project. Final direction on replacement versus creating permanent walls will be made with user groups during the detailed design phase.*

## **NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Q. Will the stage location be located adjacent to the Gym? Conflicts with after-school event schedules may take place.**

*A. During the Phase 1 process, a concept design was created to account for spaces, and the general locations of those spaces are used to determine the approximate size and shape of the building. During the next phase of the project, a further detailed design will provide refinement of the plan with more in depth feedback from user groups. The final design will consider the pros and cons of placing the stage adjacent to the gym or cafeteria. Ultimately the School District, the Board of Education and the school staff will help determine any stage locations.*

**Q. Will OT/PT be located far from SPED?**

*A. During the Phase 1 process, a concept design was created to account for spaces, and the general locations of those spaces are used to determine the approximate size and shape of the building. During the next phase of the project, a further detailed design will provide refinement of the plan with more in depth feedback from user groups.*

**Q. Will there be a traffic light at the intersection of Main Dunstable and Buckmeadow?**

*A. This would be decided by the Department of Public Works and the City Engineer. In order for a traffic light or other traffic calming features to be introduced they must meet the guidelines that exist for public roads. Final road changes will be addressed and introduced by the City of Nashua's Department of Public Works.*

**Q. Has a traffic study been completed?**

*A. A Traffic Engineer has done a traffic study at all middle school sites and has reviewed impacts of the projects to the surrounding streets as well as projected trip generations.*

**Q. Will Guidance, Social Worker, and Psychology be located as shown?**

*A. During the Phase 1 process, a concept design was created to account for spaces, and the general locations of those spaces are used to determine the approximate size and shape of the building. During the next phase of the project, a further detailed design will provide refinement of the plan with more in depth feedback from user groups.*

**Q. Will there be an athletic track at the proposed new school?**

*A. The cost provided does include the introduction of a track around one of the athletic fields.*

**Q. Will there be additional bussing costs?**

*A. Preliminary discussions with the School District's Transportation Director indicate little or no additional bussing costs. If redistricting is done geographically many of the bus routes will be much shorter. Redistricting falls under the jurisdiction of the School Department with the Approval of the Board of Education and will be done later in the building process.*

**Q. Has a Photo Voltaic (PV), Bio-Mass, and/or Geo-Thermal payback study been completed?**

*A. The Architect has prepared payback analyses for Photo Voltaic (PV), Bio-Mass fuel heating, and Geo-Thermal heating and cooling. A PV system sized for production of about 660kw might have a payback of about 13 years. There was no payback term identified for Bio-Mass heating as the costs were more than the base selected systems. Geothermal heating and cooling might provide payback in 14 years over using natural gas boiler heating and chilled water cooling. Further evaluation will be done during detail design.*

**Q. Isn't the land at Medallion Court for the proposed school, conservation land?**

*A. This land, owned by the City, is not identified as conservation land. The lot was set aside by the developer of the property over 22 years ago for use by the City for a school. There is a small track of land directly behind many of the houses on Cherrywood that is identified as a buffer property. Beyond that is a parcel owned by the City for trails and recreation use before you get to the new school property.*

**Q. Have alternate sites been considered for the new school?**

*A. A review of other sites had been looked at early in the process by the City. There were no City-owned 25-acre lots identified. The purchase of a lot of appropriate size may cost upwards of \$6M or more. The lot off Medallion Court was set aside by the developer of the property for use by the City for a school.*

**Q. Was there an Environmental Study done at the new site?**

*A. Yes. The property was fully surveyed. The surveyor for the project has identified some minor wetlands and vernal pool areas. The Concept Design takes these spaces into account and has provided appropriate buffer. The site's natural features provide an additional learning opportunity for the school's students.*

**Q. What are the proposed setbacks from the new school to adjacent property owners?**

*A. The proposed design of the new school purposefully oriented the building to have public uses o away from the adjacent residential areas. A natural preservation area to the north end of the property limits how far north the building can be adjusted. The proposed south wall of the classroom wing is currently positioned approximately 150 feet to its nearest residential neighbor's property line. Tree buffer zones will be left in place between the school property and houses on Medallion and Cherrywood.*

**Q. What is the net square footage area per school?**

- A. *The net area per school is calculated by taking the area inside of the walls and removing spaces such as mechanical spaces, corridors, stairs, and restrooms. The net area gives the space that students and staff utilize for the learning experience. The results of dividing the net area by the calculated student capacity of each school is: Fairgrounds Middle School – 104 square feet/Student, Pennichuck Middle School – 100 square feet/Student, and the proposed new middle school – 103 square feet/Student. Slight modifications and adjustments may take place during the detailed design phase of the project.*