

NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Office of Business, Finance and Planning

M e m o r a n d u m

TO: David Fleishman, Superintendent

FROM: Sandra Guryan, Deputy Superintendent/Chief Administrative Officer
Joseph Russo, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education
Cynthia Bergan, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education

DATE: December 10, 2012

RE: Elementary School Space Recommendations (Final)
Vote on Elementary School Space Recommendations
Vote on Budget Transfer in Order to Fund the Design of Modular Projects
Middle School Space Update

As a follow up to the November 26, 2012 elementary and middle school space memo, this document provides final recommendations for the elementary schools in terms of managing future growth over the next two to four school years. As part of the final review, all aspects of these recommendations were discussed with Public Buildings and City Administrators to determine timing, funding and other implementation issues. The final elementary school recommendations presented include the purchase of seven modular classrooms as well as the necessary installation of sprinklers at one school, the reallocation of internal space, and the relocation of certain programs to other sites. Buffer zones will be reserved as an option for all schools; continuing work to expand or create new buffer zones will be reviewed and voted on in early spring.

Elementary School Recommendations

Six elementary schools have been identified with space needs over the next four years. These schools are Angier, Bowen, Burr, Horace Mann, Lincoln-Eliot and Mason-Rice.

The final recommendation for each of the five schools is as follows:

Angier (one additional classroom needed in 2013-2014 for expected enrollment increase)

- Reallocate internal space to allow for one more regular classroom. Possible solutions include using the existing specialist spaces as a regular education classroom; there are no more spaces readily available. The district will also examine new students in the current Angier/Countryside buffer zone to consider assigning students to Countryside.

Bowen (three additional classrooms to address enrollment growth in 2013-2014 and current overcrowding in grades 1-4)

- Purchase and install four modular classrooms. The existing modular classroom at Bowen will be moved to Burr, resulting in a net increase of three new classrooms.

Burr (one additional classroom needed in 2013-2014 for expected enrollment increase)

- Install one modular classroom, reallocated from Bowen.

Horace Mann (one additional classroom needed in 2013-2014 for expected enrollment increase)

- Purchase and install one modular classroom.

Lincoln-Eliot (one additional classroom needed in 2013-2014 for expected enrollment increase and current enrollment concerns at K)

- Relocate one preschool classroom to the Ed Center to free up one regular classroom.

Mason-Rice (address enrollment concerns in grades 3-5 in 2013-2014, and provide needed flexible classroom and special education space in 2014-15 through 2016-17)

- Purchase and install two modular classrooms and install sprinklers.

Timing, Implementation and Funding of New Modular Classrooms

In order to install the modular classrooms by the end of August for the 2013-14 school year, the project must first pass through the design process and the city approval process so that the contract can be awarded by mid-March. To that end, it is recommended that design work start immediately and that the project move through combined meetings of the Board of Aldermen in early calendar year 2013. It is further recommended that design funds of \$350,000 for the modular project be allocated from the unspent reserve in the FY13 school operating budget in order to expedite the timeframe; as reported in the October and November 2012 School Committee fiscal and operational updates to the School Committee, the reserve is the result of an additional state circuit breaker reimbursement received at the end of FY12. Upon School Committee approval of the spending of the design funds, a budget transfer of \$350,000 will be made to the Transfer to Capital account so that the process can begin. The full cost of the seven modular classrooms is still being refined and all costs plus associated sprinkler installation and contingencies are included in the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

Middle School Space Update

At this time, the district is still exploring middle school space possibilities given the large current Grade 5 class and future enrollment projections for the middle schools. Three middle schools have been identified with space needs over the next two years including Bigelow, Brown and Oak Hill. Bigelow in particular will experience overcrowding next year given the large projected incoming Grade 6 class of 219 students. Space remediation solutions (including a new buffer zone) will be discussed at the meeting. Enrollments at the middle schools for 2013-2014 indicate the need for *at least* one additional half team at all four middle schools, requiring at least two additional classrooms at Bigelow, Brown and Oak Hill.

Possible solutions for each school include:

Bigelow (two additional classrooms needed in 2013-2014 for expected enrollment increase)

- Explore the possibility of adding new buffer zone(s).
- Review location of the specialized program temporarily housed at Bigelow during Day construction.

Brown (two to four additional classrooms needed in 2013-2014 for expected enrollment increase)

- Reconfigure existing space to add two to four additional classrooms.

Oak Hill (two additional classrooms needed in 2013-2014 for expected enrollment increase)

- Reconfigure existing space to add up to two additional classrooms.