



Recovery, Futuring and Long-Range Facilities and Capital Decision-Making

**The Town of Natick Financial Ecosystem
Johnson/Memorial Capital Decision-Making**

October 25, 2021

Agenda

- Presentation - 7:00 p.m. - 7: 20 (20 minutes)
 - History of building and space planning
 - Review of key data
- Q&A and/or Comments - 7:20 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
(1 hour and 40 minutes)
 -

Q&A Structure

- Two questions. 3 minutes for comment.
- Use [Google Form](#) or raise hand to ask questions.
- If more than two questions, circle back after everyone has had an opportunity.
- Do our best to get to all questions answered as time permits.

Vision of Natick Public Schools

- Build upon the 5 goals of the strategic plan
 - Academic excellence and achievement of our Profile of a Graduate
 - Dismantle systemic barriers for equitable access to opportunity
 - Develop a social-emotional learning and healthy living framework
 - Excel at financial and strategic planning
 - Build trust and transparency through communication and engagement
- Outstanding professional staff
- Facilities that support 21st century learning
- Operate within the resources provided by the town and supported by the community



Natick 2030 Report Stated Goals:

- ***Natick's schools and programs considered among the best***
- ***Natick's public infrastructure and buildings fulfill their function efficiently and effectively, to the satisfaction of the community, and are maintained in good working order.***

We aspire to use reliable operating and capital town resources to continue our journey towards continued excellence in NPS

Grant funding has allowed us to push supports into every level of NPS but cannot be continued after grant funding is expended.

Pandemic needs are emergent now and exposes the lack of classroom support we have been able to provide in the last decade (example, Math specialists on the budget list for a many years).

**COVID needs are urgent.
Grant funds are not forever.**

More push in services and intervention supports for K-8 classes and smaller class sizes at high school level allow us to scale more support across the district

Town has asked us to undertake the same program they have: evaluate buildings for divestiture & capital planning and to explore cost containment in operating costs.

Town will divest itself of 5 Auburn Street and Cole Facilities, have deferred position additions, used AARPA funds for capital needs.

Begun w 2012 Master Plan, decisions about the Johnson and Memorial Schools need to be made. Cost-Benefit Analysis is before us.

200 students at the 72-year old JES with an annual salary spend of \$2.4 million and annual operating cost (\$38,000 for gas and heat) equal to the much larger 53 year old Memorial facility, both facilities need work and a statement of interest to MSBA needs to be made for our prioritized facility and redeployment of staff helps contain costs.

The Problems Before Us

Calendar Considerations

- **October** is when school district must begin budgeting process (hence Mr. Harrigan's presentation and MS/HS class size reports)
 - These needs drive our discussion of how we will sustain COVID positions if needed beyond 2023 and add any new positions we feel we need
 - **November 15** principal zero based budgeting meetings and NPTS updates on staffing (who is staying, who is possibly not renewed)
 - **Caseload Location:** Need to start long range program planning for schools should changes need to be made given new classroom configurations (Title I services, ELL, special education). Services provided at every school but caseloads would shift.
 - **December** : Deadline for capital 5-year plan updates
 - **January** Start of Kindergarten Registration
 - MSBA Application process takes 6-9 Months to complete, Natick's history 3 years of applications before acceptance.
 - **June:** Relief monies realized through savings and grants begin phase out at the end of this school year.
- Why haven't we done this sooner? Turnover of 3 new facilities directors, 2 town administrators and 2 operations deputies has delayed this process for three years and has created inconsistencies in some of the assessments of items and caused delay on continuing long-range plans began 10 years ago.**



Positions Requested Yearly

	POSITIONS REQUESTED	POSITIONS ADDED	COST OF POSITIONS ADDED
FY12	0.00	0.00	\$ -
FY13	24.00	9.00	\$ 784,092
FY14	23.50	11.10	\$ 1,335,355
FY15	22.50	7.40	\$ 1,034,000
FY16	23.10	9.90	\$ 780,648
FY17	23.30	17.10	\$ 1,245,669
FY18	32.70	24.80	\$ 1,382,949
FY19	21.70	14.20	\$ 786,535
FY20	20.20	16.20	\$ 925,260
FY21	24.00	8.70	\$ 433,445
FY22	27.60	14.60	\$ 735,301

History - School Building Conversions and Consolidations

Name/Building	Converted to:	Year
West	Housing Authority	1981
Eliot	Town Rental	1981
Coolidge	Housing Authority	1981
East	Park/Offices	80's
Murphy	Park	80's
Bacon	Loker Park	80's
Center	Town Hall	78
Lincoln	Courthouse/Senior Center	Mid 80's
Cole	Recreation Department	Late 80's

History - School Building Renovations and Replacements

- **Brown (Renovation/Addition) - 1993**, doubled enrollment of school from 200 students to 400, students moved to NHS to attend school while reno occurred. Superintendent at the time proposed a 600 person school for Brown and Lilja. SC did not agree to it.
 - Modularity added in 2016
- **Lilja (Renovation/Addition) - 1997**, same exact upgrades as Brown, also attended NHS
 - Modularity added in 2017
- **Ben-Hem (Renovation/Addition) -1999**
 - Increased to 5 classes per grade (was 3 or 4 per grade) but school was too big to fit at NHS, so attended at BH with some parts shut down. WMS was overcrowded and grade 5 was sent to Ben Hem until new WMS was completed.
- **Wilson (Replacement - MSBA Project) - Completed 2003**
- **High School (Replacement - MSBA Project) - Completed 2012**
- **Kennedy (Replacement - MSBA Project) - Completed 2021**

History - Space Studies and Reports Completed



Dore & Whittier Master Study (May 2012)

Studied space Kennedy, Johnson, Memorial



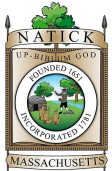
TBA Architects (December 2020)

Studied space at all schools



Space Advisory Committee (May 2021)

Through School Council representatives, feedback solicited from middle and elementary school communities



Interim Town Administrator Working Group Report (August 2021)

Committee studied possible infrastructure and operational efficiencies that could be realized to maximize town resources

Why Now?

Johnson (72 yrs old) and Memorial (53 years old)
are oldest school buildings not yet
renovated/replaced

Kennedy Project
Complete



**What is the path forward for
our school facilities?**



Enrollment
changes in Natick



Structural Budget
Deficit



New/renovated facilities take time to
plan and construct (especially if state
funding is considered)

End of 3 year
union contracts.
Negotiations to
commence this
year to create new
3 year contracts.

Financial Pressure Points

Continued implementation of identified needs for student support - academic, programmatic, and social/emotional.



Priority to recruit
and maintain top
teaching and
support staff



COVID Recovery



Town Structural Budget Deficit

Enrollment - Past vs. Future?

Historical Percentage Changes			
Year	K-12	Diff.	%
2010-11	4739	0	0.0%
2011-12	4852	113	2.4%
2012-13	4955	103	2.1%
2013-14	5171	216	4.4%
2014-15	5258	87	1.7%
2015-16	5329	71	1.4%
2016-17	5258	-71	-1.3%
2017-18	5289	31	0.6%
2018-19	5409	120	2.3%
2019-20	5388	-21	-0.4%
2020-21	5175	-213	-4.0%
Change	436	9.2%	

Projected Percentage Changes			
Year	K-12	Diff.	%
2020-21	5338	0	0.0%
2021-22	5348	10	0.2%
2022-23	5340	-8	-0.1%
2023-24	5326	-14	-0.3%
2024-25	5282	-44	-0.8%
2025-26	5198	-84	-1.6%
2026-27	5127	-71	-1.4%
2027-28	5037	-90	-1.8%
2028-29	4966	-71	-1.4%
2029-30	4903	-63	-1.3%
2030-31	4851	-52	-1.1%
Change	-487	-9.1%	

**NESDEC Enrollment Analysis - June 2021*

Enrollment - Surrounding Towns

Five Year PK-12 Enrollment Change in Surrounding Districts

School Year	Belmont	Brookline	Lexington	Natick	Newton	Needham	Wellesley	Westwood	Wayland	Weston
2020-21	4,420	6,891	6,901	5,251	12,024	5,483	4,432	2,952	2,700	1,906
2019-20	4,700	7,777	7,190	5,529	12,779	5,706	4,862	3,000	2,707	2,039
2016-17	4,466	7,695	7,072	5,472	12,827	5,588	5,018	3,162	2,646	2,154
1 Year Change	-280	-886	-289	-278	-755	-223	-430	-48	-7	-133
1 Year Percentage Change	-6%	-11%	-4%	-5%	-6%	-4%	-9%	-2%	0%	-7%
5 Year Change	-46	-804	-171	-221	-803	-105	-586	-210	54	-248
5 Year Percentage Change	-1%	-10%	-2%	-4%	-6%	-2%	-12%	-7%	2%	-12%

Massachusetts DESE School Profile Enrollment as of October 1, 2020

**Source, McKibben Study,
Newton, 2019**

Impact of Development on Enrollment

- Developments of 10+ units of housing = 3,296 units total
- 393 students currently live in these units
= Average of 1 student per 8.4 units of housing
- Impact of development can fluctuate
 - Sometimes projections are above, sometimes below
 - Enrolled students can vary year to year based upon populations attracted to the housing
- Worry over surge from developments has not realized a greater burden on the school system

What We Know About Johnson Space

Using MSBA Guidelines, Dore & Whittier, 2012

- Building as a whole is 60% of current size guidelines
- Gym is 33% of current size guidelines
- Library is 50% of current size guidelines
- Art and music share classroom
- Special education has 50% of suggested space
- Building contains different levels throughout making navigation challenging (ADA accessibility.)
- Lunch cannot be prepared on site and doing so is more desirable
- Parking and traffic circulation has been mentioned in more than one town-related study.

What We Know About Memorial Space

Using MSBA Guidelines, Dore and Whittier, 2012

- Building as a whole is 80% of current size guidelines
- Gym is 70% of current size guidelines
- Library is 60% of current size guidelines
- Special education has 45% of suggested space
- Building is currently ADA accessible

Cost to Maintain Facility Status Quo at Johnson

JOHNSON		1 - 5 YEARS	6 - 10 YEARS	11 - 20 YEARS
ROOF	Roof	\$ 20,000		
HVAC	Boilers			
	Unit Ventilators			
	Water Heaters			\$ 75,000
ELECTRICAL / PLUMBING	Electrical			
	Plumbing	\$ 30,000		
EXTERIOR ENVELOPE	Windows (Classrooms)			
	Windows (Gymnasium)		\$ 150,000	
	Caulking			\$ 75,000
	Masonry/Foundation	\$ 75,000		
SPACE RENEWAL	Flooring	\$ 25,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 25,000
	Walls/Window Treatment	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
	Doors/Hardware		\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
CODE	Sprinklers	\$ 125,000		
	Alarm Panel			\$ 100,000
	Accessibility (ADA)	\$ 3,000,000		
TOTALS		\$ 3,285,000	\$ 335,000	\$ 310,000

**assessment by
Bill Spratt,
Natick Director
of Facilities*

Cost to Maintain Facility Status Quo at Memorial

MEMORIAL		1 - 5 YEARS	6 - 10 YEARS	11 - 20 YEARS
ROOF	Roof			
HVAC	Boilers			
	Air Handlers	\$ 25,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000
	Unit Ventilators			
	Water Heaters			\$ 75,000
ELECTRICAL / PLUMBING	Electrical		\$ 250,000	
	Plumbing			
EXTERIOR ENVELOPE	Windows	\$ 50,000	\$ 1,000,000	
	Caulking	\$ 75,000		
	Masonry / Foundation			
SPACE RENEWAL	Flooring	\$ 130,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
	Walls / Window Treatment	\$ 30,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
	Doors / Hardware	\$ 25,000		\$ 75,000
CODE	Sprinklers*			
	Alarm Panel			\$ 100,000
	Accessibility (ADA)			
TOTALS		\$ 335,000	\$ 1,415,000	\$ 415,000

**assessment
by Bill Spratt,
Natick
Director of
Facilities*

Do We Really Realize Savings from Closing Johnson?

- **\$2.3 million in salaries** in total spent annually for fewer than 225 students.
- Last year we discussed \$1 million in salaries savings, as we hoped to redeploy staff to other schools vs. losing the positions outright (still assessing these needs)
- **\$38,000 a year in energy costs**, equal to larger facilities, in building energy costs
- Extra nursing, custodial, cafeteria, administrative stipends, secretarial and building support positions could be **saved outright (\$278,554)* (see next slide)**
- Classroom positions and supports could be redeployed as needed
- Each new staffer we do not need to add, **but can redeploy saves town \$71,000 (avg teacher salary) + \$16,695 (benefits) = \$87,695**
- Eliminates need to address JES maintenance costs/ADA accessibility (**prior slides, \$3,930,000**)
- Efficiencies in deployment of resources (tutors, paras, related services can serve multiple classes, buildings, and specific student groups)
- Meaningful savings begin in year 2 of phased closure
- Would need to add a bus, **\$75,557**, for additional travel needs, this cost may have been incurred regardless due to the increased ridership at KMS.

Staffing Redeployments/Impact to Savings?

Relates to slide 25--Redistricted Class Sizes, if we immediately closed JES completely

Recommended:

- ▣ Redeploy K teacher from JES to Lilja to add a section.
- ▣ Redeploy K position from JES to become grade 4 classroom at Brown
- ▣ Redeploy portion of salary savings from JES to create grade 4 classroom at Lilja
- ▣ Redeploy portion of salary savings for additional bus

Additional savings may be realized and other deployments based on analysis of caseloads, special education needs, COVID recovery support status, student achievement. For example, 5 paraprofessionals are at JES and one is a 1:1 aide. The rest may be redistributed for increased classroom support at other schools.

Each year of the transition, assessments would be made of what might be reduced, redeployed or reassigned based on student and programming needs.

***please note, that due to union contracts, yearly attrition and the need to not rehire open positions as dictated by yearly zero-based budgeting process, it's anticipated that the people and positions discussed in these two slides will not lose their jobs.**

What We Know about MSBA Program

After an October call with MSBA, we know:

- MSBA is focused on efficiency and maximizing investment
- Application to MSBA requires investment, commitment, and support of town and local elected officials
- Process includes feasibility study in which site options are explored and town enrollment is analyzed
- Process to be invited into MSBA program can take several years
- MSBA will include personalized analysis in their enrollment and forecasting reports as we guide them to do so, but ask that our best, prioritized facility proposal be put forth for consideration.
- Note: Westwood just closed two 200-person schools to build a 400 person one. [Boston Globe 10/19/21](#)

What are the Options?

- **Do nothing:** Address mandatory maintenance to maintain status quo for Johnson and Memorial.
- **Proceed with two elementary projects:**
 - Apply to MSBA to support replacement/renovation of both Johnson and Memorial.
 - Or, fund one renovation with town funds only and apply to the MSBA for the other school. Request investment and support from town administration and community for both projects.
- **Close Johnson Elementary:** Implement phased closure of Johnson. Apply to MSBA for Memorial Elementary project.

What Could a Johnson Closure Look Like?

- Immediate complete closure
(not recommended by superintendent)
- Phased closing beginning 2022-23 school year
 - Current grade 4 graduates to KMS, Grades 1-3 remain
 - No incoming K students.
 - Work with families with siblings to enact transition plan over two years.
 - Creation of swing neighborhood streets *(similar to like those that used to swing between Lilja and Ben Hem when Ben Hem and Lilja were more crowded or alternated crowding)*

What Does it Mean for Class Size Across the District?

(if Johnson were closed today and we added/redeployed no additional staffing but one K class at Lilja

BEN-HEM		22	18	19	20	23											
		22	17	20	20	22											
		22	20	17	19	21											
		23	20	19	19	22											
		22	18	20	20	22											
Total		111	93	95	98	110										507	
BROWN		21	21	22	23	23											
		21	21	22	23	24											
		21	21	23	23	24											
		21	21	23	23	24											
		21	20	22	23		anticipated/recommended: add one class grade 4										
							one classroom available after this year										
							to allow for an added section to brown										
							26 classroom spaces										
Total		105	104	112	115	95										531	

Source:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19GaqxqLnZ_d8sAt2m9erSxuKIRixlvE0uaNgFFVKPt0/edit#gid=106776286

What Does it Mean for Class Size Across the District?

(if Johnson were closed today and we added/redeployed no additional staffing but one K class at Lilja)

43	LILJA		21	21	22	23	24										
44			21	21	22	23	24										
45			21	21	22	23	24										
46			21			23	24										
47	combo classes	*need to add 1 K section for Lilja, if we have same amount of K enrollment as this year.	21	8	10			Recommend: add a grade 4 class to Lilja or resurrect a 3/4									
48	combo classes			9	9			four classes available in the next few years, two immediate									
49	FY22 Remote	1 student is remote						must add additional K right away to Lilja									
50								26 classroom spaces available									
51																	
52	Total		105	80	85	92	96									458	
53	MEMORIAL		21	21	23	23	24										
54			21	21	23	23	23										
55			21	20	22	23	23										
56			21	20	22	23	23										
57						24		2 classes can be added in the next two years (lit center and									
58								23 classroom spaces available									
59																	
60	Total		84	82	90	116	93									465	
61	TOTAL		0	405	359	382	421	394	413	409	434	412	394	385	387	381	5176

Source:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19GaqxqLnZ_d8sAt2m9erSxuKIRixJvE0uaNgFFVKPt0/edit#gid=106776286

Possible Benefits to Students Attending Other Schools?

- Shared neighborhoods and contiguous neighborhoods exist in all three schools
- Students at Brown, Lilja and Memorial will now attend class with Johnson students who were on their sports team or in their dance class and are already known to them
- Resources that supported one school can be redeployed
- More social and interactive possibilities across new groups
- Easier transition to our middle schools and their size
- No room at JES for English Language Learner Services, so we bus them to Brown, this would no longer be the case (5)

A Draft Layered Plan

1. Move Preschool to East / share with other town offices
2. Place modulars on the capital plan for possible need in future years/swing space for building or enrollment changes
3. Phased closure of the Johnson facility
4. Submit to MSBA an application for Memorial renovation, repair or rebuild. Explore Coolidge Site as an alternative site for schooling if a walkable school site is desired
 - a. Enrollment study would be included in this as required by the MSBA
 - b. This would determine the sizing of spaces and possibilities for the town given current facilities, sites and needs.
 - i. MSBA indicates our next step is a statement of interest with our “best facility forward,” to engage the MSBA and gain the reports needed to satisfy them and conduct helpful studies for the town
5. Town then explores use of spaces once again with MSBA project begun.

What Could a Phased Closure Include?

- Johnson students moving to other schools would be cohorted/teamed in new schools to ease transition
- Discussion with Johnson families to hear about individual transition needs
- Additional guidance counselor oversight to monitor JES student transition
- Townwide planning committee for future of Johnson land
- Collaborative meetings to determine private and non-profit interest in property
- Street phasing and redistricting to ensure neighborhoods move to sensible new school districts, cutting travel times across town
- Class sizes in new schools commensurate with those at Johnson

Possible Vision: A New Memorial Elementary



**460 students -
from 2012
Dore & Whittier
Report*

Possible Vision: A Johnson Neighborhood Park



**from 2016
Natick Parks &
Rec Master
Plan*

Feedback Received by Committee

ThoughtExchange Community Perspectives

Question for the Community:

***What are your concerns about
closing Johnson?***

Follow Up

If you have any questions or comments please email the

School Committee at schoolcommittee@natickps.org

Or visit the Speak Up Portal on the NPS homepage to send a
message to Dr. Nolin and/or district administration