

Preparing for your presentation to the Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”)

October 17, 2019

Note: This document is meant to provide considerations for FAS presentations. It is not an all-inclusive list, nor does it represent requirements of the district and its consultants, or all of the MSBA’s requirements.

THE ROLE OF THE OPM AND DESIGNER

- 1) Encourage the district to start the Educational Program as soon as possible. Ideally there will be a first draft completed for the Designer’s review by the time the Designer joins the project team.
- 2) Encourage the district to plan the shift to a different instructional approach, where applicable. This can take years and requires substantial professional development as well as the support of school and district leadership.
- 3) Encourage the district to plan for student transitions, which may include the transition to a new building and in many cases to a new school community (e.g., teachers, classmates, administrators, families). This should also begin early.
- 4) Encourage the district to review the Educational Program template and sample plans on the MSBA website.
- 5) Encourage the district, as it develops its Educational Program, to include staff who can share hands-on, day-to-day operational perspectives (e.g., the curriculum director, principal, Special Education director, other staff).
- 6) Review the district’s daily course schedule and assist the district in evaluating whether sufficient time is allotted for hands-on, set-up-intensive courses such as Science. If the district is considering changing its schedule, assist the district in presenting this information clearly.
- 7) Assist the district in understanding how flexible spaces can be used to support multiple programmatic needs and can increase the efficiency of the proposed project.
- 8) Proof-read the district’s Educational Program. Check for typos, grammar, clarity, content (check against MSBA template), and specificity.
- 9) As part of the updated Educational Program included in the district’s Preferred Schematic Report, supplement the district’s Educational Program by providing the design response, including desired features and/or layout considerations. (See Appendix 3A of Module 3 for more information.)
- 10) Share with the district examples of previous projects that provided cost-effective, efficient schools that maximized multiple uses in spaces providing for long-term flexibility.

FAS PRESENTATION CONSIDERATIONS (CONTENT)

- 1) Focus the presentation exclusively on the proposed solution.
- 2) Focus the presentation on the ways the architecture has been developed to support and reinforce the Educational Program prepared by the district.
- 3) Begin with an opening statement of the overall vision/concept of the proposed school so the FAS members understand the district’s approach to developing its proposed solution.

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- 4) Have the district or Designer identify and summarize the following information from the Educational Program as applicable:
 - a. overview of the overall program including any special programs
 - b. proposed changes in grades or consolidation of facilities (Describe how these changes impact the proposed solution.)
 - c. proposed changes in teaching methodology or schedule
 - d. key adjacency requirements
 - e. flexible or multiple use spaces
 - f. distribution of Special Education spaces and any programs that require co-location
 - g. outdoor learning spaces
 - h. ongoing and future professional development efforts to prepare faculty and staff to occupy and take full advantage of the proposed solution

FAS PRESENTATION CONSIDERATIONS (VISUALS)

- 5) Ensure that graphics are clear, labeled, and legible.
- 6) Document site conditions that have informed the location of the building on the site including:
 - a. solar orientation
 - b. topography (If the site is sloped, provide site and building sections that identify different entrances and key programs at different levels.)
 - c. wetlands/rivers/streams
 - d. drainage
 - e. traffic
 - f. site ownership
 - g. areas subject to conservation commission review
 - h. any other constraints or assets that are located on the selected site
- 7) Show the transition from the site to the building. Identify any buffers separating traffic and parking from building areas and indicate the number of parking spaces provided.
- 8) Show the ground floor plan in the site plan in order to clearly illustrate the connections between exterior and interior spaces.
- 9) Show outdoor learning spaces described in the Educational Program on the site plan and describe how the location and the vision of the area fits the proposed educational use.
- 10) Provide massing diagrams and exterior views of the building that show the relationship of the building to the site and to its surroundings (e.g., neighboring houses, urban density, woods, open fields). The diagrams and exterior views should also illustrate how parking, landscape, play areas, fields, and loading docks relate to the building and the site.
- 11) Provide a concept diagram or 3D massing that shows the relationship of the programs, parts, and volumes. This is especially important if two schools are being combined.
- 12) If the project is an addition/renovation, provide an axonometric drawing that clearly differentiates the addition areas from the existing areas that will be renovated.
- 13) Describe the envisioned character of key project spaces. Using precedent images can be effective for this purpose. (Be sure to credit precedent designers if you take this approach.)

- 14) Note the distribution of Special Education spaces and include any programmatic reasons for co-located or specially-located spaces.
- 15) Document how the building could be organized in multiple ways. (i.e., demonstrate the design's future flexibility.)

COMMON TOPICS IN FAS DISCUSSIONS

- 1) Sustainability:
 - a. Orient classroom wings East-West for best solar efficiency. Note that there is a cost impact to projects when classroom wings are oriented North-South (e.g., cost for solar shades and air conditioning to manage heat gain).
 - b. Assess, mitigate, or eliminate water flow from elevated areas of the site to lower areas including neighboring homes, roads, and off-site structures.
 - c. Mitigate the loss of water-absorption areas caused by the introduction of impervious surfaces to the site (e.g., large building footprints, parking lots, black-top play areas).
 - d. Review sources of information for flood zones beyond current flood-zone maps.
- 2) Accessibility:
 - a. Provide protection from adverse weather conditions at building entries for individuals with mobility impairments.
 - b. Provide Braille and large-print instructions positioned at appropriate heights for use by wheelchair-bound, young, and short individuals.
 - c. Provide assistive listening technology throughout the facility, including in non-instructional spaces. Consider how easily assistive listening technology can be accessed/used by an instructor or specialist and consider providing and posting simple access instructions throughout the facility.
 - d. Provide at least two sinks in each grade K-5 classroom, one of which should be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
 - e. Ensure that space provided for Adaptive PE protects users from excessive noise, visual distraction and physical harm (e.g., from stray gym equipment).
- 3) Outdoor Learning Spaces:
 - a. Consider local climate and year-round maintenance. Areas developed for planting and harvesting should recognize the New England growing season and account for care and use during non-school times of year (e.g., vacations).
 - b. Involve custodial and maintenance staff in the design and care of outdoor gardening spaces, especially at the elementary level.
 - c. Describe courtyard use in the Educational Program and ensure that maintenance staff and equipment have easy access to courtyard space for snow removal and routine care.
 - d. Provide access for persons with mobility impairments so that they can fully participate in all planned activities and consider navigational time (i.e., how long it takes to arrive at the location and return from the location).
- 4) Interior Learning Spaces:
 - a. Design performance facilities for multiple-uses and long-term flexibility:
 - i. Consider combinations of dining/cafeteria/gymnasium space with appropriate sound amplification that can accommodate large assemblies.
 - ii. Consider providing small auditorium-like spaces rather than large, theatrically equipped auditoria. (Consider the educational benefit of

students putting on multiple performances: performances are smaller and more intimate, and multiple casts and stage crews can participate in different performances.)

- b. If proposing one or more maker spaces, consider how the space will be staffed and maintained. Consider also the target age group for the space. Refer to the Review and Recommendations of Best Practices for K-12 STEM Learning Spaces report (http://www.massschoolbuildings.org/sites/default/files/edit-contentfiles/Building_With_Us/Ed_Facilities_Planning/FINAL%20STEM%20Spaces%20Report%20Foster%2012-2018.pdf)
- c. Design educational program adjacencies thoughtfully and consider the flexibility of spaces over time (e.g., a school shifting from a departmental organization to interdisciplinary clusters organization).

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