



Model School Program – Evaluation of the Program for use at the Hastings ES project

Summary overview

The Model School Program offered by the MSBA is designed to take the design documents from a pre-selected list of MSBA projects and “re-using the design documents with minimal adjustments” to build a school district’s project. The first criteria to apply for an “invitation to participate” in the program is a local determination that building “NEW” is the best option and then have the MSBA staff agree that this is the best solution.

A school district must declare their desire to be “invited into the program” by the MSBA at the end of the Feasibility Study Phase (Preferred Schematic), prior to Board acceptance to move into Schematic Design. The MSBA decides if the school district should be “invited” into the Model School Program. It is important to note, that the criteria to be accepted and restrictions on any changes to the “Model School” design are significant.

Model Schools and selection factors

There are 5 Elementary School Model School design options to consider and they must fit the school districts specific criteria to be a viable consideration. The major factors for consideration are:

1. Design enrollment must be within 20% of the district’s enrollment.
2. The Model School option must meet the educational program requirements identified for Hasting ES without substantial modification.
3. The Model School option must fit on the site being considered.
4. There must not be substantial modifications to the Model School design, which includes all systems within the building.

Reimbursement and schedule

The Model School program no longer offers any financial MSBA reimbursement incentive to communities participating. There are potential time saving elements in the design timeline of the Model School program if all other schedule components are synchronized effectively.

Consultant fees

Designer: MSBA’s reimbursement of Design fees is capped at 4.75% of the construction value, which is potentially 2 to 4% less than what a district is likely to spend. Therefore, the increased design fee percentage is 100% locally funded. The district would go through a new selection process based on the model selected and negotiate this fee with that design firm. If there is not a successful negotiation with the selected Model School design firm, then another model would need to be selected and repeat the negotiations with that designer.

OPM: The Owners Project Managers fee is capped at 3.3% which is likely to be acceptable with a shortened design schedule.

Potential benefits

1. Model School’s may enhance the predictability of project costs.
2. The design should have fewer change orders to fill in the gaps as the documents should be complete.

3. By seeing a completed project in the “Model” selection process the district can experience the finished building.
4. There may be a shortened design schedule and therefore shorter overall project schedule, time is money.

Potential challenges

1. The Model School program does not allow for substantial modifications. Therefore, the Model School program significantly limits modifications to the design.
2. The timeline for design is shortened and will limit community input and involvement.
3. The overall schedule saving may not be substantial in the Design phase as the selection process can eliminate time efficiencies.
4. Site modifications maybe increased due to Model School fixed building footprints and those costs will likely be 100% locally funded. (any site costs in excess of 8% are 100% local funded).
5. Local identity and considerations for the building are not a component of the process.
6. Design teams that were assembled for the Model School selected may not be available to provide service for the selected Model and the design synergy may be lost.

Hastings Elementary School evaluation

It is our understanding that the MSBA has not, nor will they provide the floor plans, etc. of the schools due to security concerns. We also understand that the MSBA will not consider if a building fits on the site before they understand if the Hastings Program will work with the Model School Program. They work in a linear fashion as follows:

1. Enrollment - if it meets the enrollment then they look at program
2. If the program fits they look at size
3. If the size fits they look at site

Design Enrollment compatibility:

- Hastings ES agreed upon enrollment is 645, so the enrollment range for a Model School candidate is one that is designed for 516 to 774 students. The Model Schools that fit this range are; Andover Bancroft, Lexington Estabrook, New Bedford Lincoln, Norfolk Freeman-Kennedy

Educational Program fit:

- The Hastings Educational Program has a significant SPED Component that is unique when compared to other elementary schools. This will likely require in-depth study and collaboration with DESE to determine if an existing Model School can be modified without triggering “Substantial Modifications” which would impact an “invitation” to the Model School program. Until this evaluation is

complete we would not be able to determine which Model School could be considered. Due to the significant SPED requirements (number of spaces, size of spaces, adjacency of spaces) of the Hastings ES program, it is unlikely that the Hastings Program will fit a Model School program.

Site Constraints:

- The existing Hastings ES site is significantly constrained by the existing building placement and the wetland areas. This may eliminate Model Schools that will fit on the site. The area currently selected as the “best placement location” for a new building will not fit a Model School so we would be sacrificing “green space” to use a model school.

Estabrook Model School

As we have the data on the Estabrook project, we can look at a couple of preliminary observations:

- Estabrook barely meets the enrollment (+20%)
- Estabrook’s SPED program does not come close the requirements of the Hastings program
- Estabrook layout will not accommodate the Hastings program with the required adjacencies, etc.
- Estabrook was designed and built prior to several new Lexington initiatives that would “substantially Modify” the design in terms of systems, thus eliminate the Estabrook as a Model for Consideration.

Two worth noting are:

- The Lexington Board of Selectmen have a goal to adopt a “Better Building” policy with clearly defined policy objectives., including Healthy Buildings, energy efficiency, and other stretch goals.
- The Lexington Sustainability Committee has been tasked with initiating the policy discussion with a presentation to the Board of Selectmen.

NOTE: If we comply with these new initiatives, it will Substantially Modify the Estabrook design

Community Considerations

By following an accelerated Model School process, there will be limited opportunities to involve the community and their recommendations. During the visioning meeting on October 20, the community expressed a vision of the lobby and library areas that would not be adaptable into an Estabrook model. It is important to understand that the only time to be substantially inclusive is in the selection of the preferred model, all other opportunities for input are restricted to minor changes in the project. This may be a reason to reject the Model School program.



Schedule

The study previously done by the team on concept project schedules, and submitted to the PBC in October, showed that the Model School program would not turnover the building in the September 2019 desired timeframe. We determined that the time benefit amounted to approximately 1 to 2 months and does not turn the building over at a convenient time in the fall of 2019. Therefore, there is not a schedule benefit to this program.

Conclusion

It appears to the project team that there is not a compelling benefit to enter the Model School program for the Hastings ES Project. We see the Model School program as having restrictive elements that could disappoint the residents, students and school administration. The Model School program will not enable opening the school for September 2019, and as this is meant to be a 50-year solution, we think that this project would be better suited to be a part of the MSBA core building process.