

1 **Town of Southborough, Massachusetts**

2 **PreK–8 Building Committee Meeting Minutes**

3 Meeting Date: September 30, 2025 – 6:00 PM

4 Location: Hybrid (In-Person & Zoom)

5

6 PreK–8 Building Committee Members

7 Members Present: Mark Davis, Tim Fling, Howard Anderson, Gene Karmelek, Beth Witcoff

8 **Call to Order**

9 Chair Beth Wittcoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

10 **Approval of Minutes**

11 Motion: Approve the September 11, 2025 meeting minutes with amendments.

12 Moved by: Howard

13 Seconded by: Tim

14 Vote: Unanimous approval

15 Table the approval of August 26, 2025 meeting minutes until the next meeting.

16

17 **Public Comment**

18 No public comment was received.

19 **Matrix and Report Discussion**

20 Tim Fling presented a summary letter and updated comparison matrix. The committee
21 discussed content, feasibility disclaimers, clarity around educational space assumptions,
22 and submission timelines. Soft costs of 21.1% were applied based on MSBA data.

23 **Clarification on Space Requirements**

24 Members debated the validity of an 8-classroom per grade assumption and space needs at
25 Finn. Enrollment projections and room reuse strategies were discussed. Concerns were
26 raised about overstated or understated square footage requirements, programmatic
27 overlaps, and cafeteria constraints. General agreement: final feasibility should be addressed
28 during consultant review.

29 **Next Steps and Select Board Presentation**

30 The committee plans to present its findings at the October 7, 2025 Select Board meeting.
31 Tim Fling will share the matrix, Kelly Conklin will speak on the educational matrix and Beth

32 Wittcoff will help lead the presentation. Tim will finalize the matrix and documents to be
33 included in the Select Board meeting.

34 **Adjournment**

35 Motion: Adjourn the meeting by Tim Fling.

36 Moved by: Not specified

37 Seconded by: Gene

38 Vote: Unanimous approval

39

40 Documents Used at Meeting:

41 250930_PreK8_SchoolBuildingCommittee_PublicLetter.docx

42 250930_2.02_PK8_Research_Committee_Matrix_V4_OptionD_Updated_v2.pdf

Pre-K to 8 School Building Committee – Progress Report and Comparison Matrix Overview

September 30, 2025

The Pre-K to 8 School Building Committee has worked diligently through the 2025 summer to consolidate the prior Neary Building Committee's documentation and expand upon it. Our task has been to evaluate multiple potential school configurations for Southborough's Pre-K through Grade 8 students and to present these options in a consistent, "apples to apples" format.

While every effort has been made to develop cost estimates that are fair representations of each option, it is important to note that these figures are best viewed as **ballpark estimates** and are primarily based on cost per square foot.. A professional consultant would be required to refine any option into a full design and cost analysis. Nevertheless, the work completed provides the Town with a clear sense of scale and tradeoffs across the different approaches.

Committee Charge

The Select Board charged this ad-hoc committee with compiling a comparison matrix of potential baseline configurations (A–H). Each configuration is evaluated across sixteen criteria, including capital costs, reimbursement potential, operational impacts, safety, educational considerations, and potential domino effects. The goal is not to make a recommendation, but to ensure decision-makers and the public can weigh options confidently, with data and clear annotations.

Highlights of the Work Completed

- Compiled, catalogued, and updated documents from the Neary Building Committee.
- Developed preliminary cost estimates (renovation, addition, new construction) for multiple scenarios.
- Applied consistent escalation and soft-cost assumptions across all options.
- Considered building code requirements, energy codes, accessibility, and safety standards.
- Produced an annotated matrix to facilitate public review and discussion.
- Weighed space considerations and long-term expansion needs to ensure that each option was realistically framed against Southborough's future enrollment and program delivery.
- Developed an Educational Considerations Matrix to equitably compare all options and their derivatives, focusing on grade alignment, space flexibility, and educational outcomes.
- The **School Committee reviewed the options and voted on which scenarios best aligned with the district's educational vision; that input is incorporated directly into the Educational Considerations Matrix.**

- Completed the core 2.02_PK8_Research_Committee_Matrix_V4, which compares costs, building requirements, safety, operational, and other non-educational considerations.

Together, these tools allow for a balanced view of educational value alongside financial and logistical impacts.

Committee Membership

The committee includes a mix of voting members and ex-officio members:

Chair: Beth Wittcoff

Vice Chair: Howard Anderson

Advisory Rep: Erik Glaser

Select Board Rep: Tim Fling

School Committee Rep: Laura Kauffmann

Capital Planning & Improvement Committee: Stephen Holland

Resident Members: Mark Davis, Gene Karmelek, Kelly Conklin

Ex-Officio Members: Brian Ballantine, Keith Lavoie, Gregory Martineau, Steve Mucci, Rebecca Pellegrino, Mark Purple, Stefanie Reinhorn, Kathleen Valenti

PK-8 Matrix Cost Assumptions

Base Unit Costs (2024 PDP, 9.05 p.666)

New Construction	\$1158.12 / GSF
Addition	\$932.47 / GSF
Renovation	\$635.78 / GSF

Annual Escalation Rate

4% per year (compounded)

Escalated Unit Costs (\$/GSF)

Year	Renovation (construction cost)
2024	\$525.00
2025	\$546.00
2026	\$567.00
2027	\$588.00

Notes:

- GSF = Gross Square Feet, NSF = Net Square Feet.
- Escalation rate from PDP (9.05, p.666–667), used also in 11.08 'No' vote cost model.
- Applies uniformly across Options B–G in the PK–8 Matrix.

Total Construction Cost- Cost per Square Foot (Construction Cost)

Soft Costs/non-construction costs: ~21.1% of construction costs
(across recent MSBA projects 10.01)

Bid Alternates CM Preconstruction Services Construction Contingency
Designer OPM & other Professional services FF&E/IT Legal Fees Other
Soft Costs Owner's Contingency Total Project Budget *****

Clarification on 'Addition' cost rate:

- The PDP (9.05 p.666) lists an Addition cost of \$770/GSF, lower than New Construction (\$948.50/GSF).
- In MSBA practice, however, large additions (like those in Options B, D, E) are costed at the New Construction rate because they often include new core spaces (cafeteria, gym, admin) and function like stand-alone buildings.
- For consistency, this matrix applies the New Construction rate to all added square footage.
- The Addition rate is retained here for reference; if MSBA permitted its use or the town would self-fund, costs could be lower than modeled.

Renovation categories assumed for planning:

- Light = 15–25% of existing building area
- Medium = 30–50%
- Heavy = ~75%

Applied to Finn = 76,000 SF (6.03, Mar 2024) at \$525/GSF baseline, +4%/yr escalation.

Existing building areas (from 6.03, Mar 2024): Finn = 76,000 SF; Woodward = 68,000 SF; Neary = 62,736 SF; Trottier = 130,000 SF.

Sprinkler system cost: \$8/sf (per 9.05 pp.679–687, Option B.1 Neary Add/Reno). Applied to Neary's 62,736 SF ≈ \$500K baseline (2024), escalating +4%/yr. Included as optional reference in deferred maintenance scenarios (e.g., Option C2).

5.02 (Code Red, Mar 2024) confirms code triggers (MEBC §804.2.2, MGL Ch.148 §26G) would require sprinklers in major renovation/addition scenarios. Therefore, sprinklers should be considered an expected cost in heavy renovation scenarios, not optional.

Renovation with (hard and soft costs) ~21.1%	Addition	Addition with (hard and soft costs) ~21.1%	New Construction (Hard)	New Construction with (hard and soft costs) ~21.1%
\$635.78	\$770.00	\$932.47	\$948.50	\$1,158.12
\$661.21	\$800.80	\$969.77	\$986.44	\$1,204.44
\$686.64	\$831.60	\$1,007.07	\$1,024.38	\$1,250.77
\$712.07	\$862.40	\$1,044.37	\$1,062.32	\$1,297.09

	Estimated Capital Cost
A: Trottier serves Grades 3–6, Woodward serves Grades 7–8	
B: Finn serves Pre-K to 2, Woodward serves 3–4, Trottier serves 5–8	0
C: Minimal renovation of Neary (assumed “deferred maintenance” only) *What level of investment will trip code compliance	Erik & Tim
D: Finn expanded or renovated to serve five grades (Pre-K to 3)	Greg & Tim & Mark
E: Full ADA/current code-compliant renovation of Neary	
F: New four-grade school	Mark
G: New Pre-K to 5 school at a suitable location (including possible use of the Finn site)	

**H: Finn Pre-K to 3, Woodward 4-5, Trottier serves 6-8
(Temporary move plans with modulars turned permanent at Finn & Woodward)** Howard

Summary of Major Cost Categories	Estimated State/Federal Reimbursement	Neary Site Demolition & Remediation Cost	Operational Savings or Added Costs (e.g., busing, staffing, utilities)
ex: Woodward renovation with auditorium			
N/A	N/A	N/A	
ex: ADA Upgrades, New roof, All new windows, New HVAC, etc.			
		Included in estimated cost	

Additonal classrooms and support rooms. at least 2 addtional classooms unknown quantity of support rooms

Start with MSBA submissions (400+ pages long) [detailed data is there]

Operational Cost/Savings Summary	Net Town Cost (after reimbursements and offsets)	Expected Renovation or Construction Timeframe	Life Expectancy (in years)
ex: X less staff, 5 less buses, etc.			Steve
Northboro PreK		N/A	Steve
			Steve

Safety Considerations (e.g., egress, suppression, lead/asbestos)	Educational Considerations (e.g., grade alignment, delivery model)	Domino Effects (e.g., reuse or sale of other town properties, additional investment in other structures for modified use)
	Kelly & Beth & Laura & School Admin	
N/A	Kelly & Beth & Laura & School Admin	Decommission Neary
	Kelly & Beth & Laura & School Admin	
	Kelly & Beth & Laura & School Admin	
	Kelly & Beth & Laura & School Admin	
	Kelly & Beth & Laura & School Admin	

Home Value Implication (e.g., proximity to a school changes)	Other Pros & Cons	Total Town Project Cost including domino effects and secondary investments

Executive Summary of Scenario