

TO: School Committee
FROM: Tim Piwowar, Superintendent
DATE: May 3, 2024
RE: Facilities Study Update

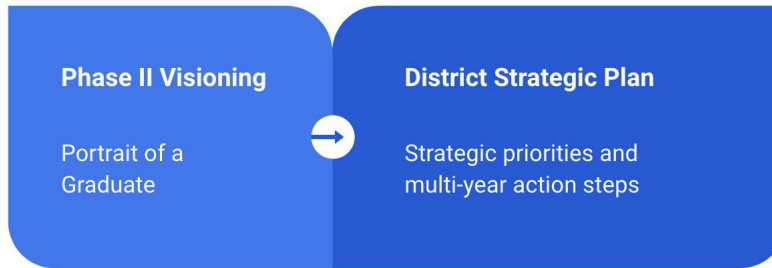
At the School Committee meeting on April 23, we discussed that Dore & Whittier has been contracted to conduct the comprehensive facilities study for both the school department and municipal government. I am happy to share that we have had an initial kickoff meeting for the school study, and that we are proceeding with the first phase of the project this spring.

Due to the timing of the procurement of the study, we have had to make some adjustments to how we will conduct the visioning work. While the original intent was to conduct full-scale educational visioning this spring that would inform both the development of facility options and the development of a new district strategic plan, we have had to break this work into two phases.

The first phase will be conducted this spring, and is visioning designed to inform the development of facilities options. This visioning will focus on approaches to teaching and learning, and is designed to inform how the physical layout and infrastructure of our buildings can best support high-quality learning experiences for students. By conducting this work prior to the end of the school year, and in conjunction with an assessment of our existing facilities, this will allow Dore & Whittier to develop master plan options that are responsive to this vision.



The second phase of visioning will be conducted in the fall, and will focus on the development of the Portrait of a Graduate of the Westwood Public Schools. This work is designed to identify the skills, competencies, and mindsets that we want to develop in students to best prepare them for college, career, and life, and will form the basis for the development of a new district strategy that will focus on how we build learning experiences for students from Grades PK-12 consistent with this vision.



—

For Phase I visioning, we will be assembling three teams of stakeholders - one for elementary grades, one for middle grades, and one for high school. All teams will have an initial kickoff meeting as one larger combined group, and then each team will have two 2.5-hour workshops focused on their specific grade span. The schedule for these meetings is listed below:

May 16, 3:30-4:30	Initial kickoff meetings for all groups
May 22, 10:00-12:30	Meeting #1 Middle Grades
May 22, 1:30-4:00	Meeting #1 High School
May 24, 10:00-12:30	Meeting #1 Preschool/Elementary Grades
June 6, 10:00-12:30	Meeting #2 Preschool/Elementary Grades
June 6, 1:30-4:00	Meeting #2 Middle Grades
June 7, 12:30-3:00	Meeting #2 High School

Stakeholder groups will include administrators, teachers and other educators, parents/guardians, and students. On Tuesday, May 7, an invitation will go out across the district for individuals to apply to be part of these stakeholder groups, with applications closing on May 10. Participants will be expected to attend the initial kickoff meeting and both meetings of their gradespan group.

Simultaneous with the Phase I visioning work, Dore & Whittier will conduct walkthroughs of our buildings and meet with principals and members of our facility team to document and assess the conditions of our current buildings. Walkthroughs will be done in late May/early June while school is still in session, with existing conditions assessments taking place shortly after the end of the school year.

—

The overall comprehensive facilities study will have two main components: a capital improvement plan (CIP), and a series of master plan options for future building projects. The

project schedule provides for a draft CIP to be ready in October 2024 in order to inform the development of our FY26 budget, with an overall draft report due in mid-December 2024.

The CIP will contain an itemized list of capital improvements for our buildings, which is work that would generally be funded through either our annual capital budget appropriation or through separate town meeting warrant articles (e.g., the Spring 2024 article for the high school roof restoration). The master plan options will present possibilities for sequencing future building projects, and will examine what the financial implications are for these options as part of long-range forecasting.

In working with Dore & Whittier, we are asking for the final report to present a set of possible options rather than one preferred option, as we believe that it is important to present a range of possibilities to the community to understand what solutions are best for Westwood to meet both our educational needs for students and our financial responsibility to the community.

I am excited that this work is underway, and I look forward to discussing this with you and answering your questions at the Committee meeting on May 9.