

For Release:

November 18, 2015

Contact:

Steven C. Sharek

781-861-6500, ext. 7360

ssharek@minuteman.org

Minuteman School Committee Approves Schematic Design for New School Building

LEXINGTON – The Minuteman High School building project has moved another step forward. The Minuteman School Committee last night voted 12-1 to approve a schematic design for the new building and authorize its project manager to submit the design to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) by December 1. The previous day, the School Building Committee had voted 13-0 to recommend that action.

The new building will house two Career Academies consisting of 16 career and technical education programs, plus a Shared House of robust academic offerings and an array of student support services. The new two-story building will be located on school-owned land in Lincoln, immediately adjacent to the existing building.

“We are making good, steady progress,” said Ford Spalding, chairman of the School Building Committee. “We worked hard to stay within budget, help local taxpayers, and still offer the type of high-quality educational programs our communities expect. To do that, we had to shrink the building a bit.”

According to Mr. Spalding, the school’s design team held several day-long “value engineering” sessions over the past three weeks. The team was able to keep the project within its \$144.9 million budget making dozens of design changes. Among other things, the team cut more than 25,000 square feet from the floor area, selected less expensive exterior materials, streamlined circulation patterns, reduced ceiling height in sections of the building, and eliminated many skylights.

The MSBA will now review the schematic design.

The MSBA is expected to pay at least 40% of eligible project costs. The District is working to increase the reimbursement rate to 44% or more.

Members of the School Building Committee expressed concern that MSBA's reimbursement guidelines for equipment were inadequate for a 628-student vocational-technical high school that needs to meet latest industry standards in its training programs. The MSBA allows schools up to \$2,400 per student for furniture, fixtures, and equipment, the same amount it allows for traditional, academic high schools.

Minuteman has been working on an MSBA Feasibility Study since 2009. The School Building Committee and School Committee decided to pursue construction of a new building after exploring a series of options, including repair, renovation, and new construction.

School officials say a new school building provides greater educational benefits, is the cheapest option for local taxpayers, and will safeguard the school's accreditation with the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC).

Minuteman is an award-winning regional high school that gives students a competitive advantage by delivering robust academics and powerful career and technical skills. This combination gives students a competitive edge in the new economy.

Minuteman prepares students for college and career success, with more than 60% of the school's graduates typically pursuing a post-secondary education.

###