



## CENTRAL SERVICES

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Members of the Billerica Community:

Earlier this morning, the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) voted unanimously to approve the Billerica Memorial High School Project and to authorize the MSBA's Executive Director to execute a Project Funding Agreement with the Town of Billerica. This unanimous approval indicates that the MSBA agrees that the new building solution proposed by the Billerica Memorial High School Building Committee is the most educationally appropriate and cost-effective solution to the challenges of the existing BMHS site.

"The MSBA has continued to be an excellent partner throughout the project, and we are incredibly thankful that they have chosen to invest in the Town of Billerica and our high school," said Superintendent Tim Piwowar. "We now look forward to working with the community to ensure that we are able to obtain local funding and support for a first-rate high school for our Billerica students."

Today's vote also enters the MSBA into an agreement with Billerica to reimburse 56.99% of eligible costs for the new BMHS project, contingent upon the project receiving local funding approval from the town. This local funding requires two steps: a two-thirds vote of Billerica Town Meeting and a majority vote in a special town-wide election. The Billerica Board of Selectmen is scheduled to meet tomorrow evening to vote on supporting the project and setting the dates for the Special Town Meeting and town-wide election, tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, February 23 and Saturday, March 5, respectively.

"I expect unanimous support from the Board tomorrow evening," stated Board of Selectman Chairman John Piscatelli. "The expected contribution from the state, coupled with the town's long-term financial plan, allows us to construct a state of the art high school for an additional \$200 per year for the average household."

School Committee Chairman Mark Efstratiou added, "This affords us the opportunity to build a new BMHS building that allows us our physical plant to match the quality of the education within the school. Our children and our community deserve it."

The project will add Grade 8 students to the existing high school, resulting in a building designed for 1,610 students in Grades 8-12. In addition, the building will also house the district's integrated preschool, early intervention program, and district offices for special education and information technology. The total project budget, including demolition of the existing high school, is \$176.0 million, with an estimated cost to the town of \$100.3 million after MSBA reimbursement.

"This is not a done deal," commented Building Committee Chairman Kevin Heffernan. "We've come a long way, but this is not the finish line yet. Everybody in the town needs to come out to vote on March 5 to support this project, because this is not only for all of our children but the entire community."