

Follow Up Questions from Board Members in Response to Ad Hoc Exploratory Committee's Survey

1. What will the enrollment of the lower school be once the 5th grades are moved to the upper school? Will we have open classrooms in the lower school? Do we have any plans to fill the lower school back to "full" capacity of that building, to increase the overall enrollment?

192 is the minimum we need in the lower school building

Probably will actually have 200-205 students in lower school building

Will have two extra classrooms in the lower school building. Would likely use the extra classrooms differently - for offices, art / music, and give kindergarten larger rooms.

We wouldn't want to have "bubble" classes again, so wouldn't increase enrollment by having 3 classes of particular grades.

2. If committee recommendation passes, how will the present 5-7 graders be accommodated during transition to new permanent upper school location? /

If the plan is approved, what potential plans would be potentially considered to assure that continuing grades 5-7 MACS students will have at least a temporary facility to house them for the next school year?

If a new location to house the full Upper School (grades 5-8) is not ready for the start of the 2022-2023 school year, potential plans could include a modular classroom or other temporary space. 591 West Hollis Street can accommodate the 5th grade classes next year (if full transition to Upper School is not ready), so temporary space may only need to be for 2-3 classes of students.

If new location to house the full Upper School (grades 5-8) is ready for the start of the 2022-2023 school year, then the full Upper School grades could move there to start Sept. 2022.

3. How will the board measure the success of the middle school program in the future?

Enrollment rates and attrition rates

Test scores

Parent and student surveys/feedback

4. Per DOE what's the latest we can notify if we are not able to find a location for 2022-2023 school year?

There's no specific DOE deadline on identifying a particular second location. The DOE deadline for whether or not MACS will start using the grant money was in November and they're waiting for our answer. If MACS is not going to start using the grant money, then DOE will require that MACS relinquish the grant.

We will need either a permanent new second location (with buildout completed) or a temporary location for the 2022-2023 school year if we commit to families that MACS will continue to serve middle school grades next year.

5. How does the staff feel about changing the middle school program? Do we have staff who are willing/excited to take this on?

Current middle school staff would be excited about moving to a new upper school. Current elementary school staff would like to remain in lower school. Shared staff (specialists) would likely be happy to work in both schools.

New staff will need to be hired for the upper school program.

6. If the board approves the Exploratory Committee's recommendation, how will marketing be ramped up over the next two years to fill seats. Will it include reaching out to families who have not yet heard about MACS, as a tuition-free public school option, for their middle school child?

Marketing efforts for upper school grades will include reaching out to the broader Greater Nashua community. Could also make a stronger effort to enlist current MACS families to help spread the word about MACS.

Grant money includes substantial marketing funds, so we would have marketing options that we have never considered before (e.g. mailers, physical advertisements (i.e. on City buses), paid online/social media advertising).

7. Have you identified the goals for MACS over the next 3 years?

Setting goals for the next 3 years is broader than the scope of the Ad Hoc Exploratory Committee's task.

Goal setting is part of the strategic plan. Expansion of the school is included in MACS' current strategic plan as part of the strategic goal to reach enrollment of 430, as has already been approved by the Board of Ed.

8. How will MACS identify and connect with businesses to support the middle school Micro apprenticeship?

MACS community liaison (Jewel Hurt) seeks community partners every year. Covid has made this harder, but we're hopeful this will improve again. In the past we've had representatives from bank, police, fire, escape room, library, etc. come in and work with students in particular ventures.

Also could seek help from this topic from the Board's marketing and development committee and Board and MACS families who may have contacts with businesses in the community.

9. # of additional staff needed to be hired?

Will need to hire a new "head of school" for upper school, shared administrator, admin assistant(s) (possibly part-time), paraprofessional staff (offset from district funds), 2 existing specialist staff would move from part-time to full-time, 2 new teacher(s) (one returning from maternity leave who would likely take this spot), nurse (possibly part time), guidance (possibly part time)

10. Without identifying a second location, you cannot give a pro forma business plan and hence the decision becomes obvious even if I would like it to be otherwise.

The financial model for the second location has been presented to the Board. The Committee has the parameters for what finances for building operations need to be to support the two locations. A prospective location for the upper school has been identified, but in depth negotiations have not occurred.

11. Do we have a site picked out which is both affordable and satisfactory for a middle school?

The Committee has considered several sites and the search remains ongoing. Committee members have identified and toured a particular site that they believe would be satisfactory for an upper school, subject to negotiations with the current owner.

The Committee has the parameters/financial assumptions that are the basis for the upper/lower school model, which will be used as a basis for the negotiations.

From a timing perspective, the Committee would not (and given its limited scope of authority could not) negotiate and finalize a specific location without full Board approval.