

# Middle Schools Project Committee

## FAQs - Updated 5/18/18

### 1. What does it mean to be on the State’s list for funding?

The Maine Department of Education maintains a school construction funding list and periodically takes applications for school construction. Mahoney and Memorial started working on applications in 2006 when the funding cycle was scheduled to open, however, due to a lack of funding it was not opened until 2010. When the applications were opened and scored Mahoney received a score that placed them at #14 while Memorial received a score that placed them at #55.

### 2. Where are we in the State’s timeline?

A consolidated 5-8 Middle School has been recommended. Need to determine location and then develop and approve a building design. Straw poll votes on location and design plan are scheduled for June and October 2018. Once construction begins, the project is expected to take approximately 24 months to complete. More information may be found on the timeline on the Middle Schools Project website.

### 3. How did we end up with the recommendation for a 5-8 Consolidated Middle School?

The State required us to conduct a “New versus Renovation” analysis of Mahoney. They also required us to look at the needs of the pre K-Grade 8 students districtwide and not limit our analysis to only Mahoney (see details at end of document).

Based on the “New versus Renovation” analysis and the input received from the community, the staff of Mahoney and Memorial, the administrators, and the Middle School Building Committee recommended that the district move forward with a plan for a Grades 5-8 Consolidated Middle School. The committee believes that this is best for all of the students in South Portland. We are confident and committed to a design that preserves the feeling of a smaller school, which may include separate Grade 5-6 and Grade 7-8 schools within the overall design.

### 4. How do the costs for the different options that were proposed compare?

State Funded (only ONE option from below)	Locally Funded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mahoney - renovated \$26m plus abatement costs</li> <li>● Mahoney - new \$23m (on a new site)</li> <li>● Consolidated 6-8 middle school \$44m</li> <li>● Consolidated 5-8 middle school \$50m</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Memorial new - \$30m</li> <li>● Add-ons to State funded project - cost TBD               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Larger gym</li> <li>○ Larger cafeteria</li> <li>○ Auditorium to seat all students</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Pre K-5 expansion - cost TBD</li> </ul>

### 5. Where could the 5-8 Consolidated Middle School be built?

Only viable option after a thorough review of the entire City is the current Memorial School location. Wainwright was on the list for quite some time but we were not granted rights to develop that property. This location will be presented at the community straw poll event on June 13.

## 6. What are the benefits of the proposed location?

- Provides more than enough space for a preK-8 campus
- Expected to allow renovation of all fields on site for maximum utility
- Provides an opportunity to rework traffic flow for the entire site, solving major problems for current middle schools and possibly improving for Skillin
- While there are staging issues near the end of the project, We do not need to relocate students from existing schools prior to opening new school
- Allows for design of “purpose built” smaller, separate learners communities for grades 5 & 6 and Grades 7 & 8 with some shared services in one campus
- With new development on the West End driven by the new master city plan, the location is expected to be closer to the demographic center of South Portland in the future

## 7. How can I be more involved?

The first community “straw poll” will be on June 13 on acceptance of a site for the project . These findings will be presented to the State Board of Education. After the straw poll on the location, we will be looking for community wide input on the building design. This is a great time to get involved! Please contact Kathy Germani for more information ([germanka@spsd.org](mailto:germanka@spsd.org) or 871-0555).

In October, there will be another community “straw poll” for approval of the concept design.

The final input from the community would be in the form of a vote to approve the city floating a bond for the project. If the taxpayers approve, the project would move forward and the State would reimburse the city for the cost of the approved bond.

## 8. What happens if voters reject the bond for a new 5-8 middle school?

If voters reject the bond then South Portland will lose the opportunity for State funding and the Maine Department of Education will go to the next school on the list. We will not be permitted to retain our place on the list and will need to re-apply for funding when the State re-opens the application process.

**For more information on the Middle Schools Project, visit the website:  
<https://www.spsd.org/district/middle-school-project>**

### Analysis of Pre K-8 buildings

<b>Mahoney</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 28 classrooms are below the State guideline of 800 Sf</li><li>● Room shapes and/or heating units limit flexibility</li><li>● Construction prohibits reconfiguration of classroom spaces to address flexibility needs</li><li>● Restroom capacity and accessibility is limited and poorly located</li><li>● The building lacks appropriate/adequate storage in certain program areas</li><li>● Gym does not meet space requirements</li><li>● Gym space is poorly configured and has inadequate seating</li><li>● Electrical capacity is outdated and inadequate</li><li>● Cafeteria is well below the recommended size for the number of students</li><li>● Office space for specialists is not sufficient</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The building does not meet the ADA requirements</li> <li>● There is no ventilation/air exchange system</li> <li>● The building lacks insulation causing heating issues</li> <li>● The bottom floor is below grade and has experienced water infiltration</li> <li>● The playing field experiences sinkholes and is at times not useable</li> <li>● The current site size limits expansion opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Memorial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The building is near/at the end of its life and renovation is not a viable option</li> </ul>
<b>Elementary Pre K-5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demographics of our elementary schools have changed</li> <li>● Additional specialized spaces are contributing to space needs</li> <li>● Spaces not designed for instruction are being used to accommodate needs</li> <li>● There is no space to expand pre K</li> </ul>