

Town of Millis

Elementary School Building Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Important Dates:

Town Election: Monday, May 1, 2017

Town Meeting: Monday, June 5, 2017 * NEW DATE *****

Fast Facts:

- New Elementary School Proposed by the Elementary School Building Committee
- Estimated Cost to Millis of \$30.3 - \$31 million (net of estimated MSBA funding)
- Vote Required at the Spring Town Election AND Town Meeting
- New School Construction to Begin in November 2017 and Open Fall 2019

Frequently Asked Questions (Released: April 3, 2017)

1. **Question:** Under the question regarding the cost to run the new school – the only information given was in regard to custodial needs and no information was given on the additional cost of heating and cooling the new school. I know that Newton is running into issues with this with their new school and the extremely high ceilings in the design. Has this cost been figured and what is the impact it will have on the cost of running the school?

Answer: As the size of the new school will increase close to 33%, we are expecting an increase in utilities of approximately \$100,000 per year. The main driver for the increase is tied to the enhanced air quality control system, as well as increases in the amount of technology, building controls, power distribution, and security systems in the new building. While the utility costs will increase, the new building will be much more efficient than the existing facility.

2. **Question:** Looking at the cost per square foot chart, I see that Millis is listed under the second highest projected enrollment – being a town of only 8,000 how is it we are at one of the highest enrollment rates? Is this just a partial chart? I understand that the state certified the numbers but I would like further explanation.

Answer: The chart provided was a partial chart. The complete chart is provided below and includes the full range of elementary school enrollment numbers. As a small town, it is beneficial both educationally and fiscally for all students to be housed in a single elementary school. As a single elementary facility, our total enrollment numbers are closer to the top of the range. Larger cities and towns have multiple elementary schools spreading the population across multiple facilities.

Gross Square Feet per Student – Elementary Schools

Projected Enrollment	GSF per Student	Projected Enrollment	GSF per Student
Less than 300	180	Between 450 and 459	163
Between 300 and 309	180	Between 460 and 469	161
Between 310 and 319	179	Between 470 and 479	160
Between 320 and 329	178	Between 480 and 489	159
Between 330 and 339	177	Between 490 and 499	158
Between 340 and 349	175	Between 500 and 509	157
Between 350 and 359	174	Between 510 and 519	156

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Between 360 and 369	173		Between 520 and 529	154
Between 370 and 379	172		Between 530 and 539	153
Between 380 and 389	171		Between 540 and 549	152
Between 390 and 399	170		Between 550 and 559	151
Between 400 and 409	168		Between 560 and 569	150
Between 410 and 419	167		Between 570 and 579	149
Between 420 and 429	166		Between 580 and 589	147
Between 430 and 439	165		Between 590 and 599	146
Between 440 and 449	164		600 and greater	145

3. **Question:** In showing the cost per square foot comparison we were only provided with the cost and the town. Seeing that the towns we were compared to are so much larger than Millis why was the number of students and the actual square footage of the project shown? In reviewing Hopkington’s plans they had the chart broken out by town, square feet, student population and cost.

Answer: The chart below provides the additional details of the Clyde Brown project compared to those of other towns. Based on the design enrollment and the size of the building, Millis is positioned in the mid-range of the cost per square foot compared to other projects.

District	\$ Per Student	SF Per Student	Design Enrollment	Project Cost	Square Footage	MSBA Board Meeting Dates
Needham Hillside ES	\$726	211	430	\$65,907,414	90,702	July 2016
Lynn Pickering MS	\$637	201	652	\$83,661,513	131,295	February 2017
Quincy MS	\$609	222	430	\$58,314,910	95,732	July 2016
Millis CFB ES	\$587	152	589*	\$52,765,857	89,852	May 2017
Newton Cabot ES (Addn/Reno)	\$582	175	480	\$48,999,776	84,262	November 2016
Amherst ES	\$550	163	750	\$67,207,225	122,272	September 2016
Bourne ES	\$550	158	460	\$39,919,041	72,680	November 2016

*Birth enrollment and space includes pre-K.

4. **Question:** With all of this learning being done in the hallways and furniture being added to the hallways along with these new classrooms that allow for large open doors – where is the security? If an intruder where to make it into the school would children not be sitting targets? How quickly would they be able to move through the furniture to their classrooms and how quickly would these classrooms be able to be locked down?

Answer: The security of the children is a top priority for the project. Millis public safety officials have reviewed the proposed new building as well as consultants who specialize in building security. We have incorporated all of their feedback into the building plan.

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The hallway learning spaces will not pose any delay in a child being able to access a classroom in emergency situations. The ability for students to seek shelter in a classroom will be similar to that of students moving through the hallway in between classes. Once the students are secure in the classrooms they can be locked down within seconds.

In relation to overall building security, the building will have only one access point during school hours (excluding drop-off and pick-up in which there will be three total, all staffed by school personnel), which will include a vestibule where visitors will be buzzed in from the exterior, sign-in with the school staff and once authorized, will be allowed entry, via a second set of doors, to the building. In addition, cameras are planned in the hallway areas as well as externally to insure the administration has visibility to the facility.

5. **Question:** Was the plan put together to get the most money from the state as possible or to build a school that is adequate for our students and not over our tax payer's means? Are we spending \$30 million to get \$20 million when we could be spending \$20 million and getting \$10 million? I see this happening to many towns and many projects.

Answer: No, the ESBC is not recommending the town spend \$30 million just to ensure it receives higher state reimbursement. The size and price of the proposed school is dictated by the MSBA requirements – the MSBA funding program is designed to ensure that new school buildings are correctly sized and scoped. To access state funds, projects must follow a multi-phased, prescriptive process, outlined by the state. The proposed project followed the guidelines of the MSBA funding program. Those guidelines dictate the size of the school based on enrollment.

In every instance, the project looked to be fiscally responsible while at the same time meeting the needs of the School District's educational plan by maximizing reimbursement opportunities. The MSBA has reviewed multiple submissions related to the project and continues to strongly support the proposed plan.

6. **Question:** Where can I find access to the educational plan submitted to the MSBA?

Answer: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3WYWWo7P24AV1pVS0pXSDI3aUU/view>

Frequently Asked Questions (Released: March 20, 2017)

1. **Question:** Can you give further explanation on why the estimated MSBA reimbursement is about 40% of the project cost? I thought that conversations earlier on suggested a higher rate of reimbursement.

Answer: Compass, our project management team, currently estimates that the MSBA will reimburse approximately 57% of eligible costs which calculates to about 41% of the overall project cost.

2. **Question:** The need for middle school/high school renovation may be delayed by the new elementary school - can you provide the cost estimates for that renovation project?

Answer: As you can imagine, this is a difficult question to answer with specifics. Given the shift of the 5th grade to the elementary school, the School Committee would like to reassess the needs of the middle/high school for 1-2 years after the new elementary school is open, and then reevaluate its facility and space needs. We believe that any spending at

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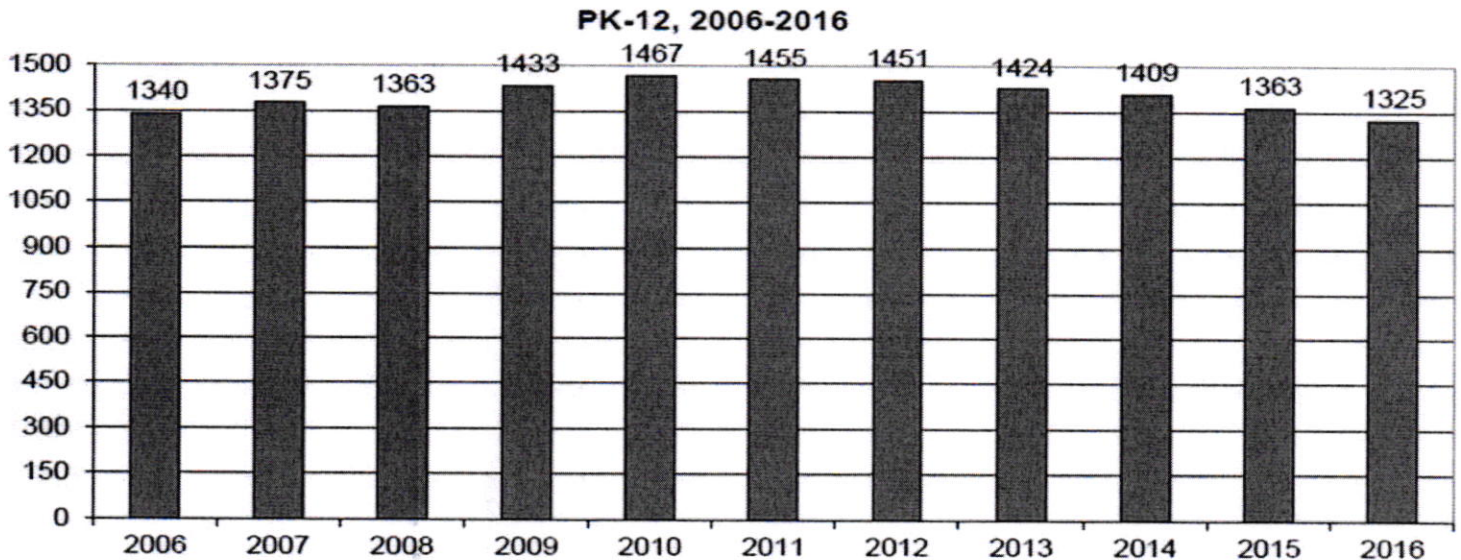
those schools would be in the form of either a renovation or addition sometime 7 to 12 years from now. The current School Committee recommends that a future School Committee only pursue an addition/renovation with MSBA funding support.

Also, note that if the proposed elementary school project does not pass, the School Committee will need to not only spend to update the existing CFB but it will also need to accelerate its review of facility needs at the middle school and high school.

3. Question: Please provide student enrollment projections, for both elementary and middle/high school?

Answer: The following data is provided to the Millis Public Schools periodically by the New England School District Development Council (NESDEC). In Chart 1 below, a snapshot of Millis' enrollment over the past 10 years is provided. Peak enrollment was in 2011 but there has been district-wide decline since that time, specifically at the elementary school. The primary driver behind the decline is tied to lower birth rates following the recession. This was a national trend and not unique to Millis.

Chart 1

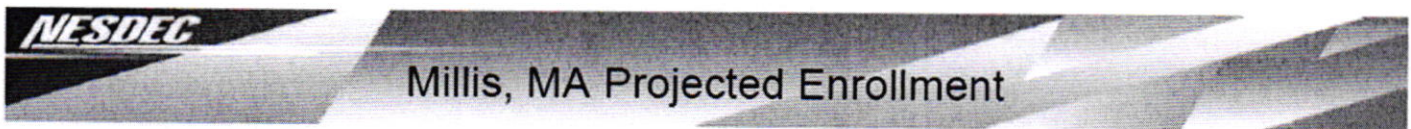


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Chart 2: The NESDEC projects an overall decline in enrollment (through 2021). Keep in mind the grouping of grades below is K-4 and the proposed elementary school project would include grades preschool thru 5th grade. The MSBA certified enrollment for the proposed elementary school was based on its own study, so the numbers may vary slightly but the trends were the same. Please also note that the proposed elementary school is designed to accommodate a 20% swing up or down in population within the classrooms. The space has also been designed with flexibility in mind with walls and furnishings that can adapt to the needs of the student population and/or to changes in the School District's education plan. If there is a population bubble in a given year, we expect this flexibility would allow for the School District to still meet the needs of that larger elementary population.



School District: **Millis, MA**

11/28/2016

Enrollment Projections By Grade*																			
Birth Year	Births	School Year	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	UNGR	K-12	PK-12
2011	91	2016-17	73	85	77	105	74	50	105	108	105	112	100	53	105	85	0	1252	1325
2012	64	2017-18	73	67	87	77	105	74	87	106	105	107	98	100	92	107	0	1212	1285
2013	51	2018-19	73	53	68	87	77	105	72	88	103	107	94	98	99	91	0	1142	1215
2014	71	2019-20	73	74	54	68	87	77	102	72	85	105	94	94	97	97	0	1106	1179
2015	76	(prov.) 2020-21	73	79	75	54	68	87	75	103	70	87	92	94	93	95	0	1072	1145
2016	71	(est.) 2021-22	73	74	80	75	54	68	85	75	100	72	76	92	93	92	0	1036	1109
2017	67	(est.) 2022-23	73	70	75	80	75	54	66	86	73	102	83	76	91	92	0	1003	1076
2018	67	(est.) 2023-24	73	70	71	75	80	75	52	66	83	75	85	63	75	90	0	964	1037
2019	70	(est.) 2024-25	73	73	71	71	75	80	73	52	64	85	66	89	62	74	0	935	1008
2020	70	(est.) 2025-26	73	73	74	71	71	75	78	73	50	65	74	66	88	61	0	919	992
2021	69	(est.) 2026-27	73	72	74	74	71	71	79	78	71	51	57	74	65	87	0	918	991

*Projections should be updated on an annual basis in order to reflect changes in births, real estate sales, in-out-migration of families, and housing construction.

Based on an estimate of births

Based on children already born

Based on students already enrolled

Projected Enrollment in Grade Combinations*									
Year	K-4	PK-4	K-6	K-8	5-8	6-8	7-8	7-12	9-12
2016-17	431	504	644	861	430	325	217	608	391
2017-18	410	483	603	815	405	318	212	609	397
2018-19	390	463	550	760	370	298	210	592	382
2019-20	360	433	534	724	364	262	190	572	382
2020-21	363	436	541	698	335	260	157	531	374
2021-22	351	424	511	683	332	247	172	525	353
2022-23	354	427	506	681	327	261	175	497	322
2023-24	371	444	489	647	276	224	158	475	317
2024-25	370	443	495	644	274	201	149	440	291
2025-26	364	437	515	630	266	188	115	404	289
2026-27	362	435	513	635	273	200	122	405	283

Projected Percentage Changes			
Year	K-12	Diff.	%
2016-17	1252	0	0.0%
2017-18	1212	-40	-3.2%
2018-19	1142	-70	-5.8%
2019-20	1106	-36	-3.2%
2020-21	1072	-34	-3.1%
2021-22	1036	-36	-3.4%
2022-23	1003	-33	-3.2%
2023-24	964	-39	-3.9%
2024-25	935	-29	-3.0%
2025-26	919	-16	-1.7%
2026-27	918	-1	-0.1%
Change		-334	-26.7%

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Chart 3 provides the Millis Public Schools' actual enrollment reviewed at the March 7, 2017 meeting of the School Committee. This information is reviewed monthly in open session. The data supports the trends reported by the NESDC, with the largest grades currently in the middle and high school and smaller grades currently in the elementary school.

MILLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																													
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G12	92	4	88	5	87	5	107	7	95	5	95	7	93	7	90	10	89	9	89	9	88	10	88	10	88	10																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
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4. Question: Do we have an estimate of the cost of operating the new elementary school after construction? How will these costs compare with operating costs for the current CFB building?

Answer: The School District Superintendent estimates that 1 FTE custodian will be needed to support the larger school, although a future School Committee would need to approve this addition. Custodial needs within the district are already tightly staffed. Given this, and the fact that the proposed new school is 30% larger than the existing CFB, the addition of up to one FTE seems prudent. Otherwise, the cost of new furniture, fixtures and equipment has already been factored into the current estimates for the project.

Town of Millis Elementary School Building Project Frequently Asked Questions

5. Question: How much of the site work and road work is included in the final cost?

Answer: All the site work for the construction of the new school (e.g. excavation, demolition etc.) is included in the proposed project budget. The proposed budget also includes the work at the 109 entrance as well as the replacement of the tennis courts, basketball court and the relocation of the playgrounds.

6. Question: Is the state going to allow for a fully working light at the 109 exit to the school as that was a big part of the final site development?

Answer: At this time, we believe the state is going to allow for a fully working light at the 109 entrance to the school. A fully functional light is assumed as part of the project and associated costs are included in the proposed project budget. The project team will work with the state on the approval process for the conversion to a fully functional light.

7. Question: What are the requirements for getting reimbursement? This will help determine the implications of scaling back on the features/size/quality of the project.

Answer: The MSBA requires all districts participating in its funding program to adhere to a very prescriptive process to determine size and scope of school building projects. The size of the building is regulated by the MSBA. A school's size is driven by student enrollment figures which are determined by evaluating past, and forecasting future, enrollment. To receive funding the MSBA requires projects to adhere to the square footage per student guidelines provided below. The enrollment number that the MSBA certified for the Clyde Brown Elementary School project was 515 students for K – 5 which equates to 156 sq. ft. per student, totaling a school size of 80,340 sq. ft. As the Clyde Brown School also offers Pre – K and early education programming the MSBA allowed an additional 9,660 sq. ft. to accommodate those programs within the school. Allocating anything under the MSBA requirements for square footage by student would not be approved by the MSBA. In addition, the foundation of any MSBA school building project is the educational plan it supports. The MSBA approves a district's educational plan which then drives the school's design. The MSBA has thoroughly reviewed and approved the educational plan as well as the proposed solution and agrees that the design meets the needs of the educational plan, which is a requirement for reimbursement.

Table 1: Gross Square Feet per Student – Elementary Schools

Projected Enrollment	GSF per Student	Projected Enrollment	GSF per Student
Less than 300	180	Between 450 and 459	163
Between 300 and 309	180	Between 460 and 469	161
Between 310 and 319	179	Between 470 and 479	160
Between 320 and 329	178	Between 480 and 489	159
Between 330 and 339	177	Between 490 and 499	158
Between 340 and 349	175	Between 500 and 509	157
Between 350 and 359	174	Between 510 and 519	156
Between 360 and 369	173	Between 520 and 529	154

Town of Millis Elementary School Building Project Frequently Asked Questions

8. Question: What is the cost of doing nothing?

Answer: If the town does not approve funding for a new elementary school, the structural and mechanical needs do not go away. The “cost of doing nothing” (not approving a new elementary school) is roughly \$33 million - \$35 million, essentially the same amount as the town’s share of building a new school.

Please also remember that under Millis’ current MSBA invitation, we don’t expect MSBA reimbursement for just a code upgrade option, specifically because it does not support the education plan of the school district. To pursue a new MSBA invitation would require a new application process, new feasibility study, and the ESBC is uncertain how many years it would take to start-over the process. In addition, costs for construction and debt are only expected to rise over the coming years. **The CFB code upgrade option also does nothing to address the capacity constraints currently being experienced at the MS/HS, which would need to be addressed if the Millis does not approve funding for the proposed elementary school.**

Estimated cost for renovation of the existing CFB:

\$1.7M	Modular classrooms
\$23.8M	Renovation construction (replacement of HVAC, walls, windows, roof, interior reconstruction)
\$1.0M	Furnishings, fixtures, equipment and technology
\$3.3M	Design (architectural and engineering)
\$1.4M	Administrative costs (construction contract administration)
\$1.0M	Feasibility (requires a new feasibility study)
\$1.9M	Contingencies (beyond contingencies imbedded in other line items)
\$0.5M	Other project costs
Total = \$34.6	

There is well-established research on the impact of quality buildings on educational performance and the reverse. The current elementary school replacement option proposes a building which enhances teaching based on 21st century educational standards. The project proposed is not an experimental design, it is flexible enough to adjust to changes in teaching methods that will inevitably occur over the next decades.

For Millis residents without school age children, a new school, designed following a highly regarded education plan, will make Millis attractive to young home buyers. The current design also allows for community access to the gym, art and cafeteria areas while locking the classroom wings of the building.

Town of Millis
Elementary School Building Project
Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions (Released: March 14, 2017)

1. Question: Why is the project needed?

Answer:

The existing Clyde F. Brown (CFB) Elementary School does not support 21st century learning

- Classroom sizes are significantly under Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) requirements
- Closets and hallways are currently used as classrooms and therapy spaces
- Lack of storage space has forced the need for storage within classrooms, thus limiting educational space
- Facility does not support technology based learning
- Due to capacity constraints, 40% of the library has been repurposed for classroom space
- The current cafeteria is too small, at times requiring lunch to start as early as 10:30am
- Lack of collaboration and maker spaces

Structure and systems well beyond useful life

- Roof requires immediate replacement
- Mechanical systems well beyond useful life
- Fire/Life Safety not per current standards (no sprinklers)
- Not ADA Compliant
- Windows & exterior walls need replacement

2. Question: What will be the educational impact of a new school?

Answer:

Educational benefits:

- Provides flexible learning spaces for personalized, project-based 21st century learning
- Fifth grade more appropriate at the Elementary School
- Reduces crowding issues at Middle/High School
- Supports Science, Technology, Education, Arts & Math curriculum with a dedicated STEAM lab
- Integrates special education classrooms throughout the school
- Supports art and music programming
- Integrates Extended Day program into early childhood wing
- Includes age appropriate outdoor classroom and play spaces

3. Answer: Where will the new elementary school be located and how big is it?

Answer: The new school will be located on the knoll between the existing CFB and Millis Middle/High School (MS/HS), which will allow for Millis to maintain a unified campus and shared services across its school facilities. The building will be approximately 90,000 sq. feet, with a footprint that has the capacity to flex existing space if there is a sudden increase in the student population. The size of the building was determined by following the MSBA guidelines for new buildings based on square footage per student. The MSBA adheres to a strict approval policy on school size. Millis received approval on the school size when the proposed solution was approved by the MSBA in September 2016.

Town of Millis
Elementary School Building Project
Frequently Asked Questions

4. Question: When will the new elementary school open and what grades will attend?

Answer: The committee is working toward a project schedule that would target opening the school in fall 2019, which would include preschool through fifth grade students. The extended day program would also be accommodated within the new facility.

5. Question: How does the new school address community needs beyond the school population it primarily serves?

Answer: While the new elementary school will directly serve the enrolled students, it was also designed with the community in mind. The school is configured to allow for year-round secure community access to common areas, such as the gym, art room and cafeteria that could serve many purposes for various community groups.

6. Question: What is the expected cost of the new elementary school?

Answer: The projected budget for the new school is \$51.2 million. The MSBA'S projected reimbursement is expected within the range of \$21 million to \$21.3 million of all eligible costs, leaving the projected town share after reimbursement of approximately \$30.3 million to \$31 million. The final terms of the reimbursement will be known in April well before either Town Meeting or the ballot vote.

7. Question: What is the per household tax impact?

Answer: With a potential MSBA commitment of up to \$21 million to \$21.3 million of eligible project costs, the town's share is estimated at \$30.3 million to \$31 million. Assuming the most conservative borrowing terms, the average tax impact on the assessed value of the average home (\$359,864) would be about \$622 (see the next page for detail). The range of the yearly increase to tax bills for the average home would be at a high \$865 and a low of \$377 (higher in the early years). The actual tax impact will be determined at the time of borrowing and the terms will be approved by the Board of Selectmen from recommendations made by the Town Administrator and Treasurer. Please note that these figures are conservative because they do not account for any new growth to the town's revenues which would disperse the tax impact over a greater base. For example, the figures do not account for the 55 and over housing proposed for The Glenn site, or the new developments at Hickory Farms.

Town of Millis Elementary School Building Project Frequently Asked Questions

The following table was prepared by the Millis Treasurer. Based on information known today, it is expected Millis would utilize a low-interest rate Bond Anticipation Note for two years and then pursue long-term bond financing for 28 years (30 year overall debt amortization).

TOWN OF MILLIS - PROPOSED SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT (PAYMENT SCHEDULE UNDER 70B)						
ESTIMATED TOWN'S SHARE - \$30,500,000						
2 YEARS TEMPORARY BORROWING; 28 YEARS PERMANENT BOND						
EQUAL PRINCIPAL PAYMENTS						
						AVERAGE
						ANNUAL
						IMPACT ON AVG
						\$359,864
YEAR	TYPE OF FINANCING	AMOUNT	RATE	INTEREST B.A.N.'s	ON AVG RATE (1)	IMPACT ON HOME (2)
1	B.A.N.	20,000,000	2.00%	400,000	0.368	132.34
2	B.A.N.	30,000,000	2.00%	600,000	0.552	198.51
OUTSTANDING PRINCIPAL			INTEREST 5.00%	NET DEBT SERVICE		
1	30,500,000	1,090,000	1,525,000	2,615,000	2.404	865.17
2	29,410,000	1,090,000	1,470,500	2,560,500	2.354	847.14
3	28,320,000	1,090,000	1,416,000	2,506,000	2.304	829.11
4	27,230,000	1,090,000	1,361,500	2,451,500	2.254	811.08
5	26,140,000	1,090,000	1,307,000	2,397,000	2.204	793.05
6	25,050,000	1,090,000	1,252,500	2,342,500	2.154	775.01
7	23,960,000	1,090,000	1,198,000	2,288,000	2.104	756.98
8	22,870,000	1,090,000	1,143,500	2,233,500	2.053	738.95
9	21,780,000	1,090,000	1,089,000	2,179,000	2.003	720.92
10	20,690,000	1,090,000	1,034,500	2,124,500	1.953	702.89
11	19,600,000	1,090,000	980,000	2,070,000	1.903	684.86
12	18,510,000	1,090,000	925,500	2,015,500	1.853	666.83
13	17,420,000	1,090,000	871,000	1,961,000	1.803	648.80
14	16,330,000	1,090,000	816,500	1,906,500	1.753	630.76
15	15,240,000	1,090,000	762,000	1,852,000	1.703	612.73
16	14,150,000	1,090,000	707,500	1,797,500	1.653	594.70
17	13,060,000	1,090,000	653,000	1,743,000	1.602	576.67
18	11,970,000	1,090,000	598,500	1,688,500	1.552	558.64
19	10,880,000	1,090,000	544,000	1,634,000	1.502	540.61
20	9,790,000	1,090,000	489,500	1,579,500	1.452	522.58
21	8,700,000	1,090,000	435,000	1,525,000	1.402	504.54
22	7,610,000	1,090,000	380,500	1,470,500	1.352	486.51
23	6,520,000	1,090,000	326,000	1,416,000	1.302	468.48
24	5,430,000	1,090,000	271,500	1,361,500	1.252	450.45
25	4,340,000	1,085,000	217,000	1,302,000	1.197	430.77
26	3,255,000	1,085,000	162,750	1,247,750	1.147	412.82
27	2,170,000	1,085,000	108,500	1,193,500	1.097	394.87
28	1,085,000	1,085,000	54,250	1,139,250	1.047	376.92
		30,500,000	22,100,500	52,600,500		

28 Year Average	621.53
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(1) Based on 2017 assessed valuation of \$1,087,698,300.

(2) Based on 2017 average single family tax bill of \$359,864 taken from the DOR's At-A-Glance Report.

To calculate the average tax impact on any individual home, multiply the assessed value by .00165.

Town of Millis Elementary School Building Project Frequently Asked Questions

8. Question: How was the solution developed?

Answer: At Town Meeting in March 2015, the Millis community overwhelmingly approved funding for the Elementary School Building Committee (ESBC) to conduct a feasibility study to find a solution to the operational and educational constraints of CFB, to be funded by the voters of Millis as well as the MSBA.

In addition to frequent public meetings (close to 50) and continuous community outreach via print, social media, and list serve messages, the ESBC held three community-wide workshops where the people of Millis helped craft the site evaluation criteria, choose a location for the school, review the educational program, and inspect early drafts of the schematic design. The ESBC worked closely with school administrators and teachers via three visioning sessions. Lastly, the ESBC met with other boards, committees, and town hall staff to understand concerns, gather input, and share progress.

In the fall of 2016, the community overwhelmingly approved a land swap between school and park designation to allow for the school to have full control over land proposed for the project - this was a requirement of the MSBA for Millis to proceed. Throughout the feasibility study phase of this initiative, the ESBC has worked closely and frequently with its external project management team, architects, the MSBA, and the Millis community to develop the schematic design for the new facility.

9. Question: The town has invested significantly in its facilities in recent years. Why didn't we address the needs of the elementary school first?

Answer: Unfortunately, despite best efforts to maintain CFB through repairs and renovations, over the years several municipal buildings effectively came to the end of their useful life at the same time. The library, the police and fire station, as well as CFB were all originally built in the 1950s (more than 60 years ago). Buildings are designed to last 50 years. All of those buildings exceeded their useful life and needed to be replaced. Due to funding availability, including funding from state agencies, there was no way to put them in any order. All buildings were in dire straits and needed to be addressed. The School Committee applied to the MSBA for funding of its facilities over a span of four years, but was rejected every year. In fact, Millis is working with the MSBA now because another town failed to pass a vote to access reimbursement from the MSBA.

Not funding the CFB will not make the issue go away, it will just defer the problem of the elementary school (and the MS/HS) out for a longer period of time without any reimbursement from the MSBA. In addition, by moving the fifth grade to the elementary school, Millis postpones the need to perform any major work on the MS/HS. If the fifth grade isn't moved to the elementary school, not only will ongoing major repairs and renovations be needed at CFB itself but Millis will likely need an addition/renovation at the MS/HS in a quicker time table.

The cost of just renovating CFB will cost Millis essentially the same as building new, but a new school provides longer term sustainability across the entire school district while allowing for Millis to optimize the use of its space to foster twenty-first century learning.

Town of Millis Elementary School Building Project Frequently Asked Questions

10. Question: What other school district projects are coming due?

Answer: There are currently overcrowding issues at the MS/HS facilities, however, the infrastructure and support systems remain healthy with the most recent renovation investment made there in 2001. In addition, the shift of the fifth grade from the middle school facility to the elementary school would open up the use of five classrooms at the middle school itself and help alleviate some of the capacity constraints of that facility. After 1-2 years under this new format, the Millis School Committee intends to reevaluate the needs at both the MS and HS. It anticipates that any updates to the MS/HS facilities would be in the form of an addition/renovation, within the next 7-12 years. To help defray the cost, the current School Committee recommends the pursuit of MSBA funds to support this type of investment. Experience has proven that the MSBA application process could take several years for approval of the funds.

11. Question: Why do we need to vote at both an election and at Town Meeting?

Answer: To secure funding from the MSBA, voters must approve the full project appropriation of funds for the project via a debt exclusion ballot by a simple majority vote at the Spring Town Election to be held on Monday, May 1, 2017; and then at the Spring Town Meeting on May 8, 2017 where a two-thirds majority vote will be required.

12. Question: What does the MSBA not reimburse and what are the mechanics of the reimbursement?

Answer:

Costs not typically reimbursed by the MSBA:

After the Town of Millis commits to funding its share of the project, the MSBA and the town enter into a Project Funding Agreement, which formally defines the project scope, budget and schedule for the proposed project. The two largest components that the MSBA will not reimburse (making up 90% of the ineligible costs) relate to costs that exceed their caps, including site work and building construction. For site work, the MSBA limits what can be reimbursed for site development in order to level the playing field between urban and suburban districts. They allow for a minimal cost for site development. Millis, like most suburban schools, has more land to develop than a typical city school.

Mechanics of MSBA reimbursement:

The MSBA reimburses projects in real time on a monthly basis – in fact, they do not want town's borrowing more than their town share (wasting interest). Once Millis' reimbursable costs are approved by the MSBA, and Millis' funding share is approved by Town Meeting, the MSBA funds are guaranteed and set aside. They do reserve the right to audit costs so that only eligible costs are reimbursed. Based on information provided by our consultants, who have worked on many MSBA funded school building projects, the final reimbursement is very close to the projected figures agreed to by the MSBA.

Note: After the MSBA's approval of the reimbursement maximum, the MSBA may adjust Millis' approved funding level once – at the time of bid or Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) confirmation. If the GMP received is less than the project's budgeted amount, the MSBA and town will share the savings. If the GMP is more, the MSBA's funding amount will not increase.

Town of Millis
Elementary School Building Project
Frequently Asked Questions

13. Question: How does this project compare in scale, scope and total cost to other school projects underway across the region, factoring in the population and residential tax base?

Answer: The list below provides the cost per square footage for cities and towns recently working with the MSBA. The average cost across all of these projects (per square foot) is about \$606, which is slightly more than the cost per square foot projected for Millis.

District	\$/SF	Board Meeting
Needham Hillside Elementary	\$726	July 2016
Lynn Pickering Middle School	\$637	February 2017
Quincy Middle School	\$609	July 2016
<i>Millis CFB Elementary</i>	<i>\$586</i>	<i>May 2017</i>
Newton Cabot Elementary (addition/renovation)	\$582	November 2016
Amherst Elementary	\$550	September 2016
Wareham Elementary	\$550	November 2016

More information: www.millisschoolproject.org

Further questions: schoolproject@millis.net