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# Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee

Hudson, NH



## December 2021 Report

Accepted and approved by the Hudson School Board December 20, 2021

# Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee Report

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### **Initial Core Committee Members:**

Larry Russell, Superintendent  
Jennifer Burk, Business Administrator  
Terry Wolf, Director Strategic Engagement & Communication  
John Pratte, Facilities Director  
Diana LaMothe, School Board Vice Chair  
Ethan Beals, School Board Member  
Kevin Walsh, Community Member

# Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee Report

## Summary

The Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee was formed in May of 2021 and an overview of its purpose and goals was created. **Refer to Section 1 for the committee overview.** As stated in the overview, coordination with the Strategic Plan is imperative. Creating safe, innovative, and engaging learning environments for all students is a top priority for the District.

The committee's purpose is to prepare a list of high-level capital needs that will serve as a resource for consideration by the School District. **A draft capital project list is in Section 2.** This list is not complete as further discussion is needed regarding the timing and estimated cost of capital projects identified to date.

**It is important to note that the capital project list will be an evolving document as needs and circumstances change.** Enrollment trends, public input, timing of other warrant articles, voting results, state and federal funds, and other funding options will have an impact on this list. The Capital Improvement Committee is also evolving; the process of maintaining an updated list of needs that can be referred to on an ongoing basis needs to be established. This is great information to have, especially when budgetary, special warrant articles, and year-end spending decisions are made.

Initially, a draft Capital Improvement Committee report was planned to be shared for public input at the Strategic Plan Public Forums in October 2021. Forums, or 'Superintendent Chats,' occurred in November and focused on the strategic plan, COVID protocols and long-term capital improvements. Main capital project discussions included Alvirne high School and the Early Learning Center. No questions or comments were noted in the November 8, 2021 in-person gathering. A final Capital Improvement Committee report, with School Board approval, will be made available on the SAU81 website.

In addition to completing a draft project list, many follow-up action items have been noted. **Follow-up action items are listed in Section 3.** It was recommended that the top priorities be addressed by the School Board before the FY23 budget is presented to the School Board. Many items have been initiated and, as to be expected, this list will also continuously evolve. Again, coordination with the Strategic Plan is essential.

The data presented in this report was gathered by the initial committee who met on various dates with School District and Town staff. **Summaries of committee meetings are in Section 4.**

### Resources that were referred to include:

- Hudson School District SAU#81 Facilities Repair/Maintenance Annual Projections: This will be updated annually and posted at [www.sau81.org](http://www.sau81.org)

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- FY 2020 Town Capital Improvement Plan:  
[https://www.hudsonnh.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/6241/fy\\_2020\\_cip\\_web.pdf](https://www.hudsonnh.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/6241/fy_2020_cip_web.pdf)

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Additional information was obtained by School Board tours of all schools in the District. **Annual School Board tours are highly recommended and much appreciated. Additional tours for the Budget Committee should be considered.** The following tours were provided in May and June of 2021:

- Alvirne High School (AHS), Principal Steve Beals
- Hudson Memorial School (HMS), Principal Keith Bowen
- Hills Garrison School (HGS), Interim Principal Sarah Muncey
- Nottingham West Elementary School (NWES), Principal Scott Baker (Pre-Kindergarten is currently at Nottingham West; this portion of the tour was guided by Assistant Principal Gloria Hussey. Pre-Kindergarten has been planned to be a part of the Early Learning Center.)
- Early Learning Center (ELC): Library Street School (LSS), former Principal Sandie Johnstone (additional information was provided by the current Principal Nancy Maguire)
- Early Learning Center: Dr. H.O. Smith School (HOS), Principal Mary-Ellen Labrie
- Tours of the Wilbur H. Palmer Career and Technical Education Center (the “Palmer Center” or CTE) were provided as part of a re-dedication ceremony on May 24, 2021 that celebrated the completion of its renovation and expansion.

# Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee Report

## Section 1 - School Capital Improvement Committee Overview

### Purpose

To prepare a list of high-level capital needs that will serve as a resource for consideration by the School District. **See Important Factors below.**

### Goals

1. Schedule meetings in June and July to obtain input from SAU staff, Town representatives, and any other individuals with the following backgrounds:
  - Educational
  - Financial
  - Community Connections
  - Construction
  - Legal
  - Municipal
  - Legislative
2. Develop a project list that includes:
  - Projects that are imperative; document consequences if a project is not approved.
  - Projects that can be scheduled in future years, considering:
    - Other anticipated warrant articles that have a tax impact; and
    - Other potential sources of funding.
3. Obtain more information as needed. If an architect or other professional consultant is needed, this will be subject to School Board approval.
4. Present a draft Capital Improvement Committee report to the School Board before the budgeting process begins each year (August/September).
5. Incorporate a draft Capital Improvement Committee report into Strategic Plan Public Forums (in-person and Zoom options in October) to inform the public and obtain feedback.
6. Present a final report to the School Board before the annual operating budget is finalized and other warrant articles are voted on (October).
7. Post the final report on the SAU website along with other budget and warrant article information (November).

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## Important Factors

- Coordination with the strategic plan and budget timeline is essential.
- Note that capital improvements <\$50,000 or with a <5-year life may be included in the Annual Budget (Policy DB), which is outside the scope of this committee.
- Other capital improvements that are of a recurring nature, such as ongoing repairs and maintenance, are also beyond the scope of this committee. However, projects >\$50,000 with a >5-year life will be considered as separate warrant articles are strategized.
- Public input on high-level capital needs, which would likely be separate warrant articles, should be obtained early in the budget process.
- Communication with the Town is important.

## Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee Report

### Section 2 - School Capital Improvement Committee Draft Project List

**SUBJECT TO CHANGE – UPDATES TO BE PROVIDED TO THE TOWN PLANNER**

Building	Project Description	Budget for Planning Expenses	Year to Propose on Ballot	Estimated Project Cost
<b>AHS</b> See NOTE 1	<b>Renovation/Expansion Plan</b> The Board requested an updated conceptual design and project cost from Lavallee Brensinger for the project that appeared on the 2020 ballot.	FY22-23 \$21,000	March 2023	\$21-22M
<b>NWES</b>	<b>Roof Replacement – Partial</b>	N/A	March 2022	\$550,000
<b>ELC/HOS</b>	<b>Additional Playground</b>	N/A	March 2022	\$75,000
<b>HGS</b>	<b>Traffic Flow Improvement</b> A traffic study was completed by vhb to seek ways to improve traffic flow.	FY22	TBD	TBD
<b>ELC/SAU</b>	<b>Traffic Flow/Parking Lot Improvement</b> A study recently concluded that the current traffic flow and parking lot surrounding the ELC and SAU buildings are adequate for traffic needs.	FY22	N/A	N/A
<b>ELC</b> See NOTE 2	<b>Space Needs and Proposed Solutions</b> Classroom, art, music, library, office and other physical space needs are urgent.	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>ELC/LSS</b> See NOTE 2	<b>Roof Replacement</b>	N/A	March 2023	\$325,000
<b>ELC/HOS</b> See NOTE 2	<b>Roof Replacement</b>	N/A	March 2024	\$325,000
<b>HMS</b>	<b>Traffic Flow Improvement</b> An overall survey/study at HMS that will look at pedestrian and vehicle traffic, bus loops, sidewalk and biking path needs, and a safe and vibrant recess area should be considered.	TBD	TBD	TBD

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Building	Project Description	Budget for Planning Expenses	Year to Propose on Ballot	Estimated Project Cost
<b>HMS</b>	<b>Temporary Solution</b> Consider implementing a temporary solution to protect HMS students who walk and ride bikes to school until a permanent solution is possible.	TBD	N/A	N/A
<b>HMS</b>	<b>Playing Fields Renovation</b> A Capital Improvement Committee tour should be completed before any survey/study is considered.	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>HMS</b>	<b>Gym Floor and Bleachers</b> Needed in 5-10 years - consider FY27.	TBD	TBD	TBD

**NOTE 1:** The needs for an AHS expansion/renovation plan have not changed. For the last four years, the bond warrant article failed to meet the required 60% voter approval. The proposed project that had the highest approval (59.8%) was on the 2020 ballot and, accordingly, the current School Board unanimously agreed in July 2021 to move forward with that project, updated for any changes that occurred over the last two years. Project costs will also be updated at the appropriate time. As indicated above, the current School Board would like to see a bond warrant article on the 2023 ballot. This will not only alleviate any perceived overburdening of the taxpayers due to multiple warrant articles on the 2022 school and town ballots, including the Police Station expansion, but it will also allow more time to update and convey project details. Lavallee Brensinger created a draft project timeline that will be presented to the Board. It is imperative to establish a timeline to ensure that state aid is effectively applied for, faculty and staff input is obtained, and updated conceptual renderings and estimated costs are prepared in sufficient time to obtain input from and provide informative meetings/materials to the public and Town committees. The School Board at that time will then vote on a final project and, if approved by the Board, detailed cost estimates and a proposed bond warrant article will be prepared.

**NOTE 2:** The long-term plan for the ELC should be discussed as soon as possible by the Strategic Planning Committee. This would need to be factored into all capital improvement decisions at LSS and HOS. It appears that space at LSS and HOS is already inadequate for classroom instruction, specials such as art, music, library and gym, special needs, including OT and PT, office needs, and storage. As indicated in the Current Year Action Item List, moving forward with a capacity assessment/masterplan development is subject to School Board approval. Again, Strategic Planning discussions, including public forums, should commence soon to address urgent needs for pre-K through Grade 1.

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## Section 3 – Follow-up Action Items

The following items need to be addressed by the School Capital Improvement Committee and/or considered for School Board agendas. The first table outlines ongoing action items that should be completed every year. The second table outlines items to be considered in the upcoming budget season, during the targeted dates proposed.

### Ongoing Action Items

Targeted Date	Ongoing Action Items
<b>May-October</b>	Review capital project needs and update the School Capital Improvement Committee Report every year.
<b>May-October</b>	Coordinate with the Strategic Planning Committee when proposing capital projects to be considered.
<b>May-October</b>	Coordinate with the Town; send updates to the Town Administrator and Town Planner.
<b>June</b>	Schedule tours of all buildings for new School Board members.
<b>August</b>	Consider the potential use of impact fees. Impact fees will only apply to capacity-related projects and may only be used if increased enrollment is directly related to the development(s) that paid the fees.
<b>August-September</b>	Ask for an updated schedule of all facilities’ repairs and maintenance needs, including estimated costs. It should be noted that this report will always be subject to change.
<b>August-September</b>	Determine how many warrant articles will be proposed on the upcoming ballot.
<b>August-September</b>	Capital reserve fund balances as of June 30 should be reviewed every year, after the audit is completed. Consider whether to prepare warrant articles to appropriate additional funds or use funds for upcoming capital project needs. Note that appropriating additional funds may be contingent upon the balance of unassigned funds at the end of the current fiscal year.

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Targeted Date	Ongoing Action Items, cont.
<b>September</b>	Present a draft School Capital Improvement Committee Report to the School Board.
<b>October</b>	Obtain input during Strategic Plan public forums.
<b>October</b>	Present a final report to the School Board before the annual operating budget is finalized and other warrant articles are voted on.
<b>November</b>	Post the final report on the SAU website.
<b>November</b>	Consider arranging tours for the Budget Committee (1-2 hours prior to a regularly scheduled Budget Committee meeting; the committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month).
<b>Ongoing</b>	A state School Building Aid application is to be considered when applicable capital project needs are approaching. A Letter of Intent to apply is due by January 1 of the year before the next biennium commences (1/1/22 for the biennium that begins 7/1/23).

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## Current Year Action Items

Targeted Date	Current Year Action Items
<p><b>September-October 2021</b></p>	<p>A decision needs to be made regarding whether the School District will apply for state School Building Aid for security needs at Alvirne. Other District needs to be considered for application include, but are not limited to, any unsafe traffic conditions and inefficient educational spaces. Note the following dates that apply to applications for the next biennium that is July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 1, 2022: The intent to apply must be submitted.</li> <li>• The School District may present a warrant article to be voted on in March 2022, 2023, and/or 2024 to secure local funding.</li> <li>• January 15, 2023: The state will publish its list of ranking decisions.</li> <li>• July 1, 2023: The state budget will be approved for the next biennium, and funding will be offered in the order of the published ranked list of projects.</li> <li>• Construction for phases of projects that are eligible for State Building Aid cannot begin until after state funding is known/accepted.</li> </ul> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> State School Building Aid will be pursued.</p>
<p><b>September-October 2021</b></p>	<p>Lavallee Brensinger was asked to update the project cost for the Alvirne renovation/expansion plan prepared in 2019 for the 2020 ballot. This is the plan that did not meet the 60% voter approval; it failed by 6 votes after a recount. Project updates, projected cost escalation, and costs specific to items eligible for School Building Aid are needed. The School Board unanimously agreed that the project plan presented in 2019-2020 is the project that the Board would like to move forward with. The Board decided to not propose a bond warrant article in 2022. The current Board agreed they would like to see a bond warrant article on the 2023 ballot.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> Architectural services were engaged and Lavallee Brensinger will provide a project timeline. They will also assist with applying for state School Building Aid.</p>

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Targeted Date	Current Year Action Items, cont.
<b>September-October 2021</b>	<p>An overall study at HMS that will look at pedestrian and vehicle traffic, bus loops, sidewalk and biking path needs, and a safe and vibrant recess area should be considered. Also consider implementing a temporary solution to protect HMS students who walk and ride bikes to school until a permanent solution is possible.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> This will be deferred for future consideration.</p>
<b>September-October 2021</b>	<p>The Capital Improvement Committee will ask for an updated status of an additional playground for HOS; Project Aware is working on this and grant funds may be possible. LSS Kindergarten students have recess on pavement most days of the week. An additional playground for the ELC is an urgent need.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> Grant funding is not available. A warrant article for the additional playground at HOS will be on the 2022 ballot.</p>
<b>September-October 2021</b>	<p>Consider a capacity assessment for the ELC and School District overall. It appears that space at LSS and HOS is already inadequate for classroom instruction, specials such as art, music, library and gym, special needs, including OT and PT, office needs, and storage. The estimated cost and timing of an assessment are yet to be determined; moving forward with an assessment is subject to School Board approval.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> Proposals were obtained from Lavallee Brensinger Architects and MGT Consulting; both estimated \$85,000 in fees. This is to be discussed at a future Board meeting. This should first be discussed at a Strategic Planning Committee meeting.</p>
<b>November 2021</b>	<p>A tour of the ELC shall be organized for the Budget Committee one or two hours before a regularly scheduled meeting.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> An offer of tours was mentioned in a Budget Committee meeting. Arrangements will be made upon request.</p>

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Targeted Date	Current Year Action Items, cont.
<b>2021-2022</b>	<p>The long-term plan for the ELC should be discussed as soon as possible by the Strategic Planning Committee. Enrollment projections are to be completed. It is anticipated that enrollment will likely increase with 75 new single-family homes being built (the Eagles Nest development).</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> To be determined; an update of the Strategic Plan is expected soon.</p>
<b>2021-2022</b>	<p>The Capital Improvement Committee would like a tour of the HMS fields to gain a better perspective of what safety concerns exist and what renovations may be needed.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> This will be deferred for future consideration.</p>

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## Section 4 - Summaries of School Capital Improvement Committee Meetings in 2021

### Initial Core Committee Members:

Larry Russell, Superintendent  
Jennifer Burk, Business Administrator  
Terry Wolf, Director Strategic Engagement & Communication  
John Pratte, Facilities Director  
Diana LaMothe, School Board Vice Chair  
Ethan Beals, School Board Member  
Kevin Walsh, Community Member

### June 10, 2021 – Initial Meeting

The core committee met to discuss the overview of the School Capital Committee's purpose and goals, including important factors (drafted 5/7/21). Goal #1 was discussed for the remainder of the meeting. Priorities and a timeline for future meetings were determined. An ambitious goal was set to develop a project list by August so that needs/wants can be considered during the budget process. Going forward, a capital project plan should be flexible with updates every year. "Warrant Article Management" will also be necessary; it will be helpful to determine warrant articles earlier each year. Coordination with the town is important as both town and school projects are investments in the community. While the District strives to mitigate the tax rate impact of capital projects, the overarching goal is to create a safe and ideal learning environment for the children of Hudson. As stated in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, the Hudson School District's mission is: "Innovative learning practices and empowered educators facilitate and inspire learners to achieve personal academic excellence in a safe and dynamic environment that elevates their engagement as valued active community members".

### July 1, 2021 – Communication with the Town

**The School Capital Committee met with Steve Malizia, Town Administrator, and Brian Groth, Town Planner to discuss the following:**

1. Planned Town projects:

Near-term major projects include the police station and infrastructure improvements. The need to improve the bridge to Nasua ("Taylor Falls Bridge") is increasing in urgency. The 2020 Capital Improvements Plan will need some updates as changes do occur each year.

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### 2. Birth rate and housing projections that will impact enrollment:

Projections from the NRPC (requested by Brian and not yet received) are not always accurate. Long-term trends for enrollment will be important to determine. Affordable single-family homes and the age-restricted ordinance have an impact on this. The new apartments on Lowell Road will have minimal impact.

### 3. Revenue projections:

Estimated revenue for the town that could have a significant impact on taxes mainly involves the proposed distribution center. Revenue could be approximately \$5M/year when full build-out is achieved (possibly within 5 years). This could provide a good opportunity to implement capital projects without increasing the tax rate. However, some offset to the tax rate will be expected by taxpayers. Once a Certificate of Occupancy is granted, the school may receive funds for STEM Education; \$300K/year for ten years.

Impact fees are still being collected but are not being used. If not used within 6 years, fees must be returned. The current balance is approximately \$162K. Use of impact fees must be capacity-related and may only be used if the residential increase is due to the developments that paid the fees. The need for further follow-up regarding the use of impact fees has been noted.

## July 13, 2021 – Alvirne High School

### **The School Capital Committee met with Alvirne High School Administrators and Faculty:**

Steve Beals, Alvirne High School Principal  
Robert Scagnelli, District Music Director and AHS Band Director  
Michael Gallagan, AHS Music Teacher and Choral Director  
Lauren Dennis, AHS English and Theatre/Media Arts Teacher  
Jennifer LaFrance, AHS English/Theatre Arts

The Alvirne renovation-addition that was designed in 2019 for the 2020 ballot remains an urgent need. A new main entrance, a safe cafeteria, parking lot adjustments, and a performing arts addition are all needs. They are not considered frivolous. Safety and ADA compliance improvements are needed. Educational needs have changed and Alvirne is working with a '1949 footprint'. Additional space is needed for educational purposes, including expanded space to meet special needs. There is a functional need for a performing arts auditorium. Social emotional needs and community connections are addressed by an auditorium. Dedicated storage for music equipment would help prevent other classroom disruptions when equipment is needed. Additional space would also enable storage of

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backgrounds and props that are created with fundraising funds.

Communication outreach efforts to the community were discussed. Students, TED talks, Facebook Live meetings and posts, CTE tours, and a grass roots effort are some ideas to consider.

Funding options to minimize the tax impact were considered:

1. A capital campaign: The School Board and school employees may not fundraise; a 501(c)(3) organization may offer a donation that the School Board would have to accept. It was noted that capital campaigns take years to complete, and pledges are made over 3 to 5 years. A policy on naming rights should be considered by the Policy Committee.
2. State School Building Aid: A letter of intent to apply for building aid must be submitted by January 1, 2022 for the next biennium that begins July 1, 2023. Safety needs at Alvirne could be considered (among other District needs) for this application. The project cannot be on the 2022 ballot if state School Building Aid will be applied for.

Other needs that were discussed include:

1. Additional field space is needed.
2. HVAC in the main school will be needed in 5 years; the cost would be \$100K-200K.
3. Projector and audio/visual equipment is needed for the gym, for events, classes and assemblies.

## **July 21, 2021 – (for ref. only) School Board Retreat**

During a retreat that was open to the public, the School Board unanimously agreed that the Alvirne renovation/expansion project that was developed in 2019 for the 2020 ballot is the plan that the District should move forward with. A motion passed 5-0 to approve this project design (to be updated for any changes). Timing of a bond warrant article for the project is yet to be determined.

## **July 28, 2021 – Development of Project List**

The core committee met to review a draft list of capital needs based on the 5-1-19 Facilities Capital Needs Overview prepared by John Pratte, the 2019 CIP Worksheet provided by Brian Groth, and a Principals Priorities 21-22 list that was shared with the School Board at the July 21 retreat. A final version of a project list will be presented to the School Board in August-September, before the budget is presented to the Board.

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## **August 2, 2021 – (for ref. only) School Board motion to request an updated project cost**

The School Board approved a motion to request an updated project cost from Lavallee Brensinger for the Alvirne renovation/expansion plan prepared in 2019 for the 2020 ballot. The update will factor in changes that occurred since the 2019 design was drafted and include a projected cost escalation if construction is delayed one year. Project costs related to safety improvements will need to be specified if School Building Aid is going to be applied for in the next biennium.

## **August 9, 2021 – Hudson Memorial School and the Early Learning Center**

### **The School Capital Committee met with the following Principals:**

Keith Bowen, Hudson Memorial School Principal  
Mary-Ellen Labrie, HO Smith Principal  
Nancy Maguire, Library Street School Principal

### **Projected capital needs at Hudson Memorial School (grades 6-8) were presented by Keith Bowen.**

Keith provided a list of projects in the categories of major (\$50K or more), intermediate (\$10K-50K), and minor (\$10K or less). This list may be incorporated into budget discussions. A question was asked about priorities.

Pedestrian safety on Memorial Drive is a #1 priority. There are no sidewalks or biking paths along the primary route that is used by students. Also needed is an improved recess yard area, in the parking lot overflow, that would provide a welcoming multi-use recreation area for students and have a natural barrier to the main roadways. An overall study appears to be in order that will look at pedestrian and vehicle traffic, bus loops, sidewalk and biking path needs, and a safe and vibrant recess area. A temporary solution to protect students who walk and ride bikes to school could be the use of blockage signs like what the Early Learning Center uses to close off School Street during drop off and pick up times.

The fields are considered a 2<sup>nd</sup> priority with safety in mind. The Capital Committee would like a tour of the HMS fields to gain a better perspective of what safety concerns exist and what renovations may be needed.

### **Note Regarding the Early Learning Center (ELC):**

The ELC was established so that Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and First Grade would be at one location. Currently, only Kindergarten is at Library Street School (LSS). Pre-Kindergarten classes are currently held at Nottingham West Elementary School because there is not enough space at LSS. Dr. H.O. Smith (HOS) accommodates First Grade only. HOS does not have space for Pre-K and Kindergarten

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students in addition to First Grade because the “Means of Egress for Pre-School, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 students are restricted to the level of exit discharge”. [National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101 Ch. 15.2.1.2]

### **LSS (Kindergarten) capital needs were presented by Nancy Maguire.**

An overview of the current state of LSS was provided. LSS has 183 kindergarten students enrolled, and that number is rising. Last year was the first year full-day kindergarten was implemented. The pandemic likely caused a lower enrollment, resulting in 10 in-person classes and 2 remote classes last year. For the upcoming 2021-22 school year, 11 in-person classrooms have been created at LSS. Overall, this school is ‘bursting at the seams.’ There is no question that more space is needed at LSS, but a larger solution that would better serve the ELC over the long term is needed. ELC capital needs are further discussed below.

On another note, a School Board tour of LSS by the former Principal Sandie Johnstone, on June 10, 2021, indicated that the outdoor recess area for kindergarten students is on pavement most days. They may use the playground between LSS and HOS on some days, depending on First Grade schedules. The pavement is not in good condition and is not considered safe. Of course, teachers are doing everything they can to ensure that children play safe during recess. However, an additional playground appears to be an urgent need.

### **HOS (First Grade) capital needs were presented by Mary-Ellen Labrie.**

Current enrollment for First Grade is at 225 (prior year was 167). A new classroom was added, so 13 classrooms now exist, which results in a class size of 17-18 students. The maximum class size is 18. The number of desks that fit in a classroom today is much less than in the past. Current classrooms must have space to meet technology education requirements, areas for group educational activities, and storage space for manipulatives and other educational materials. Similar to LSS needs, more space is needed at HOS. For further discussion, see ELC Needs below.

A playground is needed by HOS. Project Aware is working on a plan for an additional playground, and this may be funded through a grant. This could ease the scheduling of playground use by HOS and LSS students. It is important to keep in mind that playgrounds are built for children 2-5 years old or 5-12 years old. This committee will ask for an update regarding the status of an additional playground.

### **ELC Needs**

It was suggested that portables be considered for staff rooms and storage space needed by LSS and HOS. Portables would be placed on the tennis courts that are in poor condition and, therefore, not used. Portables on the tennis courts were mentioned when FDK was first proposed, but they were proposed to be used for classrooms. One concern raised with regard to having students in the portables is that they would not have direct access to nurses, the cafeteria/kitchen, the library, areas

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for music and art, and special needs. Another concern is that students in portables would not be integrated with other ELC students.

One idea that was briefly discussed is the construction of a new building between LSS and HOS. More discussion and analysis are warranted regarding the effectiveness of ELC in the current buildings, and how to provide adequate space for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and First Grade to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. An architectural study may be in order, but some initial steps to be considered are as follows:

1. Conduct tours of LSS and HOS. A Budget Committee tour should be scheduled one or two hours before a regularly scheduled meeting in 2021.
2. Have ongoing roundtable discussions regarding the ELC as it is today and how it could be improved to better address the needs of all students for years to come. Timing appears to be of the essence. If a new building is going to be proposed, the project will take several years to complete.
3. A current capacity assessment of ELC (and possibly other schools) should be considered. This will be on a follow up action item list in the Capital Committee's draft report.

### September 17, 2021 – Update regarding State School Building Aid

**Jennifer Burk, Kevin Walsh and Diana LaMothe had a virtual meeting with Amy Clark, Administrator of the School Safety and Facility Management Bureau (DOE) - Building Aid.**

The School District may present a warrant article to secure local funding in March 2022. Ranking by the DOE (that is verified by the School Building Authority and submitted to the State Board of Education) does not need to precede the District vote. A passing District vote that secures local funding must precede the acceptance of Building Aid. This 'acceptance' will not occur until the state funding is known, which is when the state budget is approved for the next biennium by July 1, 2023.

Construction for the phases of the project that relate to those items that are eligible for Building Aid cannot begin until after this 'acceptance' date. Planning, design, and legal services are not considered construction work, so this work can begin immediately upon a passing vote. The process of purchasing materials may also begin immediately, as this does take time to complete. It must be understood, however, that Building Aid may not come through. Therefore, purchasing commitments made prior to July 1, 2023 should only be those that will move forward regardless of Building Aid.

If the District vote does not pass in March 2022, the project will remain eligible for Building Aid, as applied for in January 2022, and the warrant article may be presented on the March 2023 and/or 2024 ballot.

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As an example, consider a multi-phased project that may pertain to the Alvirne expansion:

Phases	Project Description
<b>Phase 0 – not eligible for Building Aid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of Community Performing Arts Center</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 1-2 – eligible for Building Aid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure main entrance with Principal, Assistant Principals, and SRO offices near the main entrance</li> <li>• Cafeteria/hallway reconfiguration for safety and security</li> <li>• Parking lot and traffic flow safety</li> </ul>

If the warrant article passes, Phase 0 construction may begin immediately, after the bond is issued. Planning, design, and some purchasing processes may begin relative to Phase 1-2 prior to July 1, 2023. Assuming the Alvirne project is ranked near the top of the list, it would be prudent to wait to begin construction for Phase 1-2 until the state budget is passed and the District will know if enough funding is available to cover the Alvirne project. Again, this would not occur until after July 1, 2023, so construction would most likely not begin until the Spring of 2024. It is possible that there will not be enough funding to cover the Alvirne project, even if ranked near the top of the list.

Ms. Clark pointed out that there is not a lot of Building Aid available, and there are many districts that will likely apply for Building Aid. In the current biennium, \$30M was available and only 14 applications were completed (50 were expected but many applications were put on hold due to the pandemic). Two of the 14 projects were approved; one project was fully funded, and one project was partially funded.

It was also noted that eligibility is capped as follows, using the July 2021 update:

1. Construction costs are limited to \$220 per sq.ft. Again, construction costs do not include planning, design, legal, furniture, etc.
2. Sq. ft. per pupil, in schools with more than 250 pupils, is limited to 160. The square footage at Alvirne excludes the CTE center.
3. Pre-K is not eligible for Building Aid; only K-12 is. In the case of ELC, an entire project can be developed for Pre-K through Grade 1, but the eligible portion would be prorated. Square footage for space exclusively used for Pre-K, mainly Pre-K classroom space, would factor into the pro rata calculation.

# Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee Report

## November 5, 2021 – Building Capacity Study/District Masterplan, AHS and ELC Updates

### In Attendance:

Jennifer Burk, Business Administrator

Terry Wolf, Director Strategic Engagement & Communication

John Pratte, Facilities Director

Diana LaMothe, School Board Vice Chair

Ethan Beals, School Board Member

Kevin Walsh, Community Member

**Updates since September were discussed with the goal to complete the Capital Improvement Committee report for presentation to the School Board by December 6, 2021, and a target date for acceptance/approval by the School Board of December 20, 2021. Once approved by the Board, the report will be posted on the SAU 81 website.**

### Building Capacity Study

Some Capital Improvement Committee building-related concerns that were noted include:

1. More space is needed at LSS. Kindergarten is expanding. There are 11 classes now; how will a 12<sup>th</sup> class be added? The gym must be used as a cafeteria, space for specials such as art, music, and library, and for janitorial storage. Conference rooms have been repurposed for special education needs. Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy areas are separated by partitions only. Office spaces are being shared, with 5 adults in one room.
2. A mini library may be moved to a portable for LSS and HOS. A portable for classrooms has repeatedly been mentioned but this is not an option that the current School Board would approve.
3. Pre-K is at NWES, which converted 2 computer lab rooms to accommodate Pre-K. NWES is full as a result and Pre-K may expand based on potential legislative action.
4. HG has 2 computer labs that may be converted to meet other needs.
5. If Grade 1 (in HOS) moves back to NWES and HG, where will Pre-K go? Kindergarten and Pre-K cannot go to HOS based on National Fire Protection Association requirements.
6. HOS may be a potential location for Alternative School, which is currently in development and will enter a pilot phase in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the 21-22 academic year.
7. If the original intent of the ELC, to combine Pre-K, Kindergarten and Grade 1, is to be carried out, expanding LSS or constructing a new building is needed. Currently, with the space and buildings available, there are several transitions for these grades. Pre-K moves from NWES to Kindergarten at LSS, and then to Grade 1 at HOS. This was not the intent of the ELC plan and is not conducive to the best learning environment for these grades.

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Based on the above, a professional study is warranted to ascertain capacity needs and space availability at all schools, and to consider the best approach to meet the School District's goals, now and in the future. This would, of course, need to be coordinated with the Strategic Planning Committee.

Two proposals were received, both of which projected a cost of \$85,000. Discussion regarding the timing of engaging a consultant/architect considered the following funding options:

1. Include in the proposed FY23 budget – It was indicated that it cannot be added by the School Board now that the budget has passed along to the Budget Committee. It may be added at the Deliberative Session.
2. Separate warrant article – one that will have a tax impact or one to use the Capital Reserve Fund, if allowed, which would have no tax impact.
3. Use unassigned funds at the end of FY22 (or FY23).
4. Include in the proposed FY24 budget.

In some committee members' opinions, timing is of the essence and the best option is to use unexpended funds at the end of FY22. This would be subject to the next School Board's approval.

With growing enrollment, the study should be conducted as soon as possible. The study would lead to productive discussions with the Strategic Planning Committee, School Board, Town Planner, and Budget Committee. This would also create more opportunities for public input. If an application for state School Building Aid was to be filed for the next biennium, the intent to file is due January 2022. Most likely, an intent to file for the biennium after that, July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027, could be submitted by January 2024. Having a completed capital project plan is critical and takes considerable time. If applying for School Building Aid in 25-27, a bond warrant article for the project could be on the March 2024, 2025, or 2026 ballot. It was noted that the bond warrant article for the AHS Renovation/Expansion plan is expected to be on the March 2023 ballot. This would also be subject to the next School Board's approval.

### **AHS Renovation/Expansion Plan**

Lavallee Brensinger was engaged to update the AHS Renovation/Expansion Plan. The current School Board unanimously agreed in July 2021 that they would like to move forward with the plan that was presented in a bond warrant article on the 2020 ballot. This capital plan, which addresses safety needs and adds an auditorium that will serve academic, extra-curricular, and community needs, will have some changes due to projects completed since that warrant article failed (the bond warrant article did not meet the 60% voter approval required to pass; it was short by 6 votes after a recount). Costs have also increased over the last two years, and projected cost escalations will be provided given that the School Board decided not to propose a bond warrant article in March of 2022; they would like to see this on the March 2023 ballot.

## Hudson School District Capital Improvement Committee Report

Lavallee Brensinger will also assist with the state School Building Aid application. Segments of the AHS project that will be eligible for state School Building Aid will be provided. A planning calendar will also be developed by Lavallee Brensinger. This should be presented to the current School Board in the upcoming months.

### **ELC Traffic Study**

A study was recently completed and concluded that the current layout of the traffic flow and parking lot surrounding the ELC, including the SAU building, was adequate for traffic needs.

### **Conclusion/Action Items**

An updated Facilities Repairs/Maintenance schedule is near completion and will be added to the next draft Capital Improvement Committee report to be presented to the School Board.

School tours, especially a tour of LSS and HOS, for the Budget Committee should be considered in the next few months.