



# BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Ways and Means  
Brian Worrell, Chair

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One City Hall Square 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02201 ♦ Phone: (617) 635-3040 ♦ [city.council@boston.gov](mailto:city.council@boston.gov)

## REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

November 18, 2024

Dear Councilors,

The Committee on Ways and Means was referred the following docket for consideration:

***Docket #1619, Message and order for your approval an Order authorizing the City of Boston to appropriate the amount of One Million Five Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$1,515,000.00) for the purpose of paying the costs of a feasibility study through schematic design for the roof, window, and door replacement projects for the following schools: Kenny Elementary School, O'Donnell Elementary School, Adams Elementary School, Chittick Elementary School, Everett Elementary School, Gardner Pilot Academy, Lyndon Elementary School, and Murphy K-8 School.***

This matter was sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu and was referred to the Committee on October 30, 2024.

### ***Summary of Legislation***

***Docket #1619*** requests approval to appropriate the amount of One Million Five Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$1,515,000.00) for the purpose of paying the cost of a feasibility study and schematic design for the windows and doors, and roof replacement projects at the following schools: Kenny Elementary School (roof), O'Donnell Elementary School (roof), Adams Elementary School (doors and windows), Chittick Elementary School (doors and windows), Everett Elementary School (doors and windows), Gardner Pilot Academy (doors and windows), Lyndon Elementary School (doors and windows), and Murphy K-8 School (doors and windows). This appropriation may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). These schools were submitted to the MSBA Accelerated Repair Program (ARP) with a Statement of Interest (SOI) in February of 2024 to repair/replace roofs, windows, doors, and/or boilers in an otherwise structurally sound facility. MSBA reviewed all SOI submissions in Spring and Summer of 2024, visited schools in August, and voted to invite the listed eight schools into the program at their Board meeting on October 30, 2024.

The feasibility appropriation is the second step at which the council is involved in a process to engage in discussion with the MSBA for potential funding, which would reimburse the City for a percentage of the cost of certain repairs.

### ***Information Received at Hearing***

The Committee held a hearing on November 18, 2024 to discuss Docket #1619. Brian McLaughlin, Senior Project Manager, Public Facilities Department, Carleton Jones, Executive Director, Public Facilities Department, and Brian Forde, Director of Operations, Boston Public Schools testified on behalf of the administration.

Mr. McLaughlin gave an overview of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), stating it is a state authority that oversees the funding of public school capital projects in the Commonwealth of



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Massachusetts; it is a reimbursement agency that works with local school communities to create affordable, sustainable, and energy efficient schools and is funded through one penny of the Massachusetts sales tax. He stated MSBA has two programs: the Core Program, which is for large construction projects such as the Boston Arts Academy and the Carter School, and the Accelerated Repair Program (ARP), which focuses on facilities for which the scope of work is just roofs, windows, and boilers. It was noted, however, that the MSBA put a hold on boiler projects for the 2024 Statement of Interest (SOI) process due to a recent shift within MSBA toward creating a new program to bring in an electrical heat pump system to schools, thereby removing the need for boiler repair/replacement. ARP projects are designed to materially extend the useful life of a building that can otherwise provide the desired educational program for the schools. The program has specific eligibility requirements, which are as follows: the roof is greater than 25 years old, the windows are greater than 30 years old, the estimated costs are greater than \$250,000, the school is not overcrowded, and the building is being used for educational purposes. Additionally, all SOI submitted must be accompanied by a vote of the School Committee and City Council.

Chief Forde provided an overview of BPS internal review processes regarding SOI submissions. He stated in 2022, BPS completed a facilities condition assessment that was an industry standard and enabled BPS to evaluate their buildings objectively and know what work is needed for each one. They also checked buildings against MSBA metrics, as MSBA is a frequent partner on BPS Capital Projects. To determine the 2024 SOI submissions, BPS looked at the Facilities Assessment Plan, the racial equity tool, and the opportunity index, and then matched those findings up with the current BPS capital plan to figure out where additional support may be needed.

Mr. McLaughlin provided an overview of next steps for the projects: after approval from City Council, MSBA will assign an owners project manager and architect after the first of the next calendar year, design will begin in Spring of 2025, and the anticipated construction timeline begins in 2026/2027 depending on timelines associated with some materials and how long design will take. BPS will be back before the body to request additional funding for the overall construction costs. He provided an overview of MSBA projects to date; prior to these 8 projects, the City had 35 projects in the ARP program totaling approximately \$110M in construction costs, for which the City received \$61M in reimbursement. With the addition of these 8 schools, there will be 43 City projects in the MSBA ARP program; there have also been 4 projects that have started or completed construction in the MSBA CORE program, with the Shaw/Taylor currently in the eligibility period and the MSBA currently reviewing the application for the Ruth Batson Academy (previously the BCLA-McCormick). In total the City has been approved for \$635M in construction costs for MSBA related projects, with a total reimbursement of just over \$240M.

### ***Summary of Amendments***

The docket is being recommended for passage in a new draft that reflects minor clerical adjustments and corrects the accidental exclusion of the following standard language in the original docket:

*"...which debt issued hereunder may bear interest at variable rates, as the Collector-Treasurer shall select, be redeemable at the option of the holder thereof, at such price or prices and under such conditions as may be fixed by the Collector-Treasurer with the approval of the Mayor prior to the issuance thereof and contain terms that cause the interest thereon to be subject to federal income taxation..."*



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## *Committee Chair Recommended Action*

As Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means I recommend moving the listed docket from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At this time, my recommendation to the full Council will be that this matter **OUGHT TO BE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A NEW DRAFT AND ASSIGNED FOR FURTHER ACTION.**

*Brian Worrell*

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