



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Ways and Means
Benjamin J. Weber, Chair

One City Hall Square 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02201 ♦ Phone: (617) 635-3040 ♦ city.council@boston.gov

REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

April 1, 2026

Dear Councilors,

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

Docket #0571, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to appropriate the amount of One Million One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,100,000.00) for the purpose of paying costs for the window and door replacement projects at the following schools: Margarita Muniz Academy, Mildred Avenue K-8 School, Orchard Gardens School. This includes the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto, and for which the City of Boston may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended under the direction of the Public Facilities Department on behalf of the Boston Public Schools.

This matter was sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu, and was referred to the Committee on March 18, 2026.

Summary of Legislation

Docket #0571 requests approval to appropriate the amount of One Million One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,100,000.00) for heat pump conversion and roof replacement projects at Margarita Muñoz Academy, Mildred Avenue K-8 School, and Orchard Gardens School. This appropriation may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts State Building Authority (MSBA).

These schools were submitted alongside five other schools—Boston Adult Technical Academy, Joseph J. Hurley School, Mendell Elementary School, Joyce Kilmer K-8 School, and Mary Lyon Upper School—as part of the 2025 ARP submissions. The schools were submitted to the MSBA in March of 2025, after the City Council voted to approve submissions earlier that month. Due to the large number of ARP projects submitted this year, the MSBA staggered start times for projects; therefore, the three schools listed in Docket #0571 were approved to begin in March of 2026. The remaining five schools will be approved in July of 2026 and will be before the Council sometime in the summer. Docket #0571 is for a loan appropriation for design costs; after the Council votes to approve said appropriation, the MSBA will assign an Owners Project Manager (OPM) and architect. Design should begin in spring/summer of 2026 with anticipated 2028 construction, and design cost reimbursement is expected to be 60% of total design costs.

This is the second part of the MSBA project; the City Council will have to take a vote on the total appropriation for said projects after the results of the feasibility study and schematic design are approved by the MSBA Board.

Information Received at Hearing

The Committee held a hearing on Thursday, March 26, 2026 to discuss Dockets #0570-0571. Carleton Jones, Executive Director, Public Facilities Department (PFD), Brian McLaughlin, Senior Project



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Manager (SPM), Public Facilities Department, and Brian Forde, Director of Operations, Boston Public Schools (BPS) testified on behalf of the Administration.

SPM McLaughlin provided an overview of the MSBA, stating it is a state authority that oversees the funding of public school capital projects within the Commonwealth. It is a reimbursement agency that works with local communities to create affordable, sustainable, and energy efficient schools across the Commonwealth, and is funded through one penny of the 6.25% sales tax. The MSBA has two programs: the CORE program and the Accelerated Repair Program (ARP). The CORE program is for large renovation and new school construction projects such as the Dearborn School, the Boston Arts Academy, the Josiah Quincy Upper School, and the Carter School. The ARP focuses on the repair or replacement of windows, doors, roofs, and boiler (now heat pump) systems in otherwise structurally sound buildings.

SPM McLaughlin provided an update on MSBA projects. He stated there are 7 Core projects of which 4 are complete (Dearborn School, Boston Arts Academy, Josiah Quincy Upper School, and the Carter School), one is in pre-design (Shaw-Taylor Elementary), one is finishing the eligibility period (Ruth Batson Academy), and one is beginning its eligibility period (Madison Park Technical Vocational High School). He stated there are 50 ARP projects, of which 34 are complete, 1 is in construction, 7 are in design for 2027 construction, and 8 are in pre-design for 2028 construction. In total, these MSBA projects reflect \$696M in construction costs, with \$263M coming back in reimbursements from the MSBA to the City.

Representatives stated windows vary in shape and size depending on the school, but the City is working to replace windows with more uniform shapes and sizes, that are also more energy efficient. Representatives stated the Orchard Gardens project includes a new roof and the replacing of the HVAC system with a heat pump system, which is a type of project the MSBA is doing for the first time this year.

Summary of Amendments

I recommend amending the language in the transmittal letter of Docket #0571 as follows:

- amend the language in line three from “window and door replacement” to “heat pump conversion and roof replacement”
- amend the language in row 1, column 2 of the school table (under Scope for the Margarita Muñiz Academy) from “Heat Pump and Roof” to “Heat Pump”

These will correct clerical mistakes in the originally submitted Docket.

I recommend amending the language in the loan order as follows:

- amend the language in row 1, column 2 of the school table (under Scope for the Margarita Muñiz Academy) from “Heat Pump and Roof” to “Heat Pump.”

This will correct a clerical mistake in the originally submitted Docket.



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Committee Chair Recommended Action

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

Benjamin J. Weber, Chair
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