

Overview and Background

Since 2005, Brookline has experienced historic enrollment growth in its public schools. The K-8 elementary schools have grown by 40% going from 3,904 students in 2006 to 5,482 students in 2017, which is equivalent to adding three schools into our existing schools in just over 10 years. For a decade now, the Town and School Department have been addressing the expanding student population by studying potential sites for a new elementary school and by adding classrooms to existing schools by dividing classrooms; converting offices, locker rooms, and hallways into classrooms; renting private buildings; and building new classrooms or adding modular classes. Despite adding nearly 60 classrooms to our existing schools through this “Expand-in-Place” strategy, the schools continue to be severely overcrowded.

On June 13th, the Town completed its third study since 2013 on selecting a site for a new school. The Select Board and School Committee approved moving forward with expanding the Baldwin School, expanding and renovating the Driscoll School, and renovating and possibly expanding the Pierce School.

Expanding and renovating Baldwin, Driscoll, and Pierce over time allows the town to address the enrollment increases in North Brookline and South Brookline while not overbuilding in either part of town. The Baldwin School will directly address the ongoing and expected student enrollment growth that is projected to add 375 more students within three years. Driscoll and Pierce have both grown by more than 57% since 2006, and neither school has received significant upgrades since the 1970s. The Baldwin and Driscoll projects will now begin what is known as the *Design Feasibility Phase*. The Town submitted an application earlier in the spring to partner with the Massachusetts School Building Authority to help ease the burden on the town of three significant capital projects.

What happens during the Design Feasibility Phase?

- The goal of the Design Feasibility Phase is to identify a preliminary design for the expansion of the Baldwin School that can be feasibly built.
- Jonathan Levi Architects will develop design options and the Building Committee will recommend a preferred design option to the School Committee, Building Commission, and Select Board.
- The preferred design will include basic drawings of the exterior, interior, and grounds and allow for an “order of magnitude” project cost estimate that is more refined than the project cost estimate generated during the recently completed Alternative Site Study.
- The Design Feasibility Phase also includes reports on traffic and transportation impact, geotechnical engineering, environmental assessment, engineering, a tree and environmental assessment, and a site survey. Much of this work was completed during the 2017 Design Feasibility Study of a 9th School at Baldwin and will be updated as necessary during this phase.

How many students will new Baldwin School have?

- When built the school is expected to have approximately 450 students.
- The new Baldwin School will have two classrooms per grade, a district-wide special education program serving 45 students, a English Learners program also serving 45 students, and three pre-kindergarten classrooms.

Didn't the Town already try to design a new school on the Baldwin site?

Yes, in 2017 the 9th School Building Committee approved a design for a larger school that included significant upgrades and renovation to the Soule Recreation Center. Because of federal land conservation regulations and restrictions, the Town decided not to pursue that design and is now

planning to expand and renovate the existing Baldwin School and build a smaller school on land that is owned and controlled by the School Department.

There is a lot of concern about the recent and ongoing growth of traffic in this area. What will be done to mitigate the traffic impact of the expanded school?

By planning a smaller school, the number of cars and buses that would come to the school has already been reduced 33%. The 2017 traffic study that analyzed traffic in the morning and afternoon on surrounding streets and intersections will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated, and will provide specific recommendations that will mitigate the school's impact on traffic. Typically school traffic only impacts adjoining streets for 15 minutes during the morning drop off and even less in the afternoon. During the Feasibility Design, phase alternative start times may also be considered to reduce traffic impact.

How will abutters, neighbors and community members in Brookline participate in this process?

It is essential to continue the open and transparent process the Town engaged in during site selection so residents are informed of, included in, and engaged with the process to identify a feasible design for the expansion of the Baldwin School. All Building Committee meetings are public. Additionally, the Select Board, School Committee, and Building Committee will hold public meetings on the Design Feasibility Phase. Members of the Building Committee and the Jonathan Levi Architects will meet with abutters during the process and hold public meetings in South Brookline during this phase.

What school programs are at the Baldwin School now?

There has been a school on the Baldwin site since 1927. Currently the school includes Winthrop House which is a Brookline High School program supporting 32 students, and the Brookline School Employees Child Care program.

Preliminary Timeline for the Expansion and Renovation of the Baldwin School:

August 2018 - December 2018

Design Feasibility Launch: August - September:

- Meetings with Abutters
- Select Board appoints members to the Baldwin School Building Committee
- Initial Meeting of Baldwin School Building Committee

Development of Design Options: October:

- Design options presented to and reviewed by Baldwin School Building Committee
- 2017 Traffic Study reviewed and updated as necessary
- Additional studies updated as necessary and reviewed by the Baldwin School Building Committee
- Public meetings on Design Options

Selection of Preferred Design: November - December

- Revised design options considered by Baldwin School Building Committee
- Building Committee identifies Preferred Design and recommends it to the Town Boards
- School Committee, Select Board and Building Commission consider and vote on Preferred Design

When is the earliest the school will be rebuilt?

School construction projects have four phases.

- Design Feasibility Phase: August 2018 - December 2018
- Schematic Design Phase: January 2019 - April 2019
- Design Development and Construction Documents: July 2019 - June 2020
- Construction: July 2020 - August 2022
- Occupancy: Fall 2022