

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

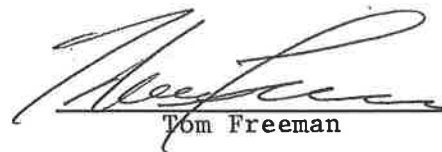
Middlesex, ss. Officer's Return, Reading:

By virtue of this Warrant, I, Tom Freeman on April 10, 2014 notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Reading, qualified to vote on Town affairs, to meet at the place and at the time specified by posting attested copies of this Town Meeting Warrant in the following public places within the Town of Reading:


- Precinct 1 J. Warren Killam School, 333 Charles Street
- Precinct 2 Reading Police Station, 15 Union Street
- Precinct 3 Reading Municipal Light Department, 230 Ash Street
- Precinct 4 Joshua Eaton School, 365 Summer Avenue
- Precinct 5 Reading Library, Local History Room, 64 Middlesex Avenue
- Precinct 6 Barrows School, 16 Edgemont Avenue
- Precinct 7 Birch Meadow School, 27 Arthur B Lord Drive
- Precinct 8 Wood End School, 85 Sunset Rock Lane
- Town Hall, 16 Lowell Street

The date of posting being not less than fourteen (14) days prior to April 28, 2014 the date set for the Town Meeting in this Warrant.

I also caused a posting of this Warrant to be published on the Town of Reading website on April 10, 2014.


Tom Freeman, Constable

A true copy Attest:


Laura Gemme, Town Clerk

TOWN WARRANT



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Middlesex, ss.

To any of the Constables of the Town of Reading, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Reading, qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs, to meet at the Reading Memorial High School **Performing Arts Center**, 62 Oakland Road, in said Reading, on Monday, April 28, 2014, at eight-thirty o'clock in the evening, at which time and place the following articles are to be acted upon and determined exclusively by Town Meeting Members in accordance with the provisions of the Reading Home Rule Charter.

ARTICLE 1 To hear and act on the reports of the Board of Selectmen, Town Accountant, Treasurer-Collector, Board of Assessors, Director of Public Works, Town Clerk, Tree Warden, Board of Health, School Committee, Contributory Retirement Board, Library Trustees, Municipal Light Board, Finance Committee, Cemetery Trustees, Community Planning & Development Commission, Conservation Commission, Town Manager and any other Board or Special Committee.

Board of Selectmen

Background: This article appears on the Warrant for all Town Meetings. At this Special Town Meeting, no report(s) are anticipated.

Finance Committee Report: No report.

Bylaw Committee Report: No report.

ARTICLE 2 To choose all other necessary Town Officers and Special Committees and determine what instructions shall be given Town Officers and Special Committees, and to see what sum the Town will raise by borrowing or transfer from available funds, or otherwise, and appropriate for the purpose of funding Town Officers and Special Committees to carry out the instructions given to them, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Board of Selectmen

Background: This Article appears on the Warrant of all Town Meetings. There are no known Instructional Motions at this time. The Town Moderator requires that all proposed Instructional Motions be submitted to the Town Clerk in advance so that Town Meeting Members may be "warned" as to the subject of an Instructional Motion in advance of the motion being made. Instructional Motions are normally held until the end of all other business at Town Meeting.

Finance Committee Report: No report.

Bylaw Committee Report: No report.

ARTICLE 3 To see if the Town will vote to amend the FY2014 - FY2023 Capital Improvements Program as provided for in Section 7-7 of the Reading Home Rule Charter, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Board of Selectmen

Background: The following amendments are proposed to the FY2014 – FY2023 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) as previously approved at Annual Town Meeting in April 2013 and amended at both Subsequent Town Meeting in November 2013 and Special Town Meeting in February 2014. These amendments need to be included in the CIP in order for Town Meeting to consider funding them under Article 4 later at this Special Town Meeting. The blue pages showing these Capital Improvement Plans are included in this Warrant Report.

General Fund

FY14: +\$485,000

- ◆ \$485,000 School schematic design (Early Childhood Center project)

FY15:

- ◆ No changes made

FY16 to FY23:

- ◆ No changes made

Finance Committee Report: The Finance Committee recommends all of the proposed amendments to the FY 2014 - 2023 Capital Improvements Program by a vote of 6-0-0 at their meeting on April 9, 2014. Placing items in the Capital Improvement Program is a prerequisite but in itself does not authorize spending funds towards these items.

Bylaw Committee Report: No report.

ARTICLE 4 To see what additional sum the Town will raise by borrowing or transfer from available funds, or otherwise, and appropriate for the purpose of School schematic design for an Early Education Center Building Project, including the costs of consulting services, audits, plans, documents, cost estimates, bidding services and all related expenses incidental thereto and necessary in connection therewith, said sum to be expended by and under the direction of the School Committee and the Town Manager; and to see if the Town will authorize the School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, or any other agency of the Town, to apply for a grant or grants to be used to defray the cost of all, or any part of, said improvements; and to authorize the School Committee and/or the Town Manager to enter into any and all contracts and agreements as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Article.

or take any other action with respect thereto.

Board of Selectmen

Background: Over the last two and ½ years, the Reading Public Schools has been researching and identifying potential space options to address the programmatic changes that have occurred at the Pre-Kindergarten-5 level since 2005. The programmatic changes include an increase in the number of students who participate in tuition-based full day kindergarten, an increase in the number of special education programs in the district, and an increase in the RISE Preschool enrollment. These programmatic changes have resulted in a deficit of classroom space at each elementary school.

In September, 2012, the Reading School Committee voted to support publicly funded full day kindergarten for all students once additional classroom space became available. The support for full day kindergarten is based on solid research that students who participate in full day kindergarten programs show an increase in mathematics and literacy skills, a decrease in social and emotional issues, and a decrease in achievement gaps and special education referrals from their peers. In addition, there is growing support for publicly funded full day kindergarten for all students, locally, at the state level, and at the national level. Currently, 242 communities in Massachusetts support publicly funded full day kindergarten.

During the last two and half years, several different options have been reviewed by both the Reading School Committee and a nineteen member Early Childhood Working Group, consisting of parents, educators, town officials, and community members. These options have included, but are not limited to: renting additional space, purchasing and renovating an existing building, building additions to the five elementary schools, adding modular classrooms to the five elementary schools, adding space to the two middle schools and moving Grade 5 to the middle schools, and building either one larger early childhood center or two smaller early childhood centers. Several sites were examined by the working group as possible locations for building an early childhood center including Parker, Coolidge, Killam, Woburn Street (St. Agnes School), RMLD property (Ash Street), different recreational parks, two locations on Haverhill Street, town owned property on Oakland Road, the old Water Treatment Plant site, and the Fine and Performing Arts Center side parking lot at Reading Memorial High School. After a thorough analysis of each of the options, the Early Childhood Working Group recommended two to the Reading School Committee: building a pre-k and kindergarten early childhood center or building a pre-K and kindergarten early childhood center with the Reading Public Schools Administration Offices. Both options were recommended by the working group to be built on the Fine and Performing Arts parking lot at Reading Memorial High School.

On March 24, the Reading School Committee voted to request \$485,000 for a design study for an early childhood center option for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students on the Fine and Performing Arts parking lot at Reading Memorial High School. On April 9, the Board of Selectmen voted to request a Special Town Meeting on April 28th for the purpose of funding the design study through the issuance of debt, rather than the use of cash reserves.

Need for Space

Since 2005, when the fifth elementary school was built, there have been several programmatic changes at the preschool and elementary school level which have resulted in a classroom space deficit at each of our schools. They are as follows:

- 1. Increased parent demand for full day kindergarten-**Since the 2005-06 school year the percentage of students who are in tuition-based full day kindergarten has increased from 32% to 72% (currently projected for 2014-15 school year). This change has resulted in an increase in the use of classrooms for full day kindergarten from five in 2005-06 to twelve for the 2014-15 school year.

- 2. Increased need for special education programs at the elementary level and the corresponding need for additional special education space**-Since the 2005-06 school year, the number of classrooms dedicated to special education programs at our elementary schools has increased from one to six. Having strong special education programs in our schools is important so that our students who have learning disabilities can attend the Reading Public Schools with their peers. In addition, this decreases the number of students who are in out of district placements which affects the annual operating budget.

In addition to the increase in program need, we also are in need of additional special education learning center space. Recently, the Reading Public Schools had its Coordinated Program Review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and were cited for the lack of space for special education students. Each school should have two classrooms dedicated for learning centers and two classrooms dedicated to program space (K-2 and 3-5). In our elementary schools, on average, there are two spaces dedicated for learning centers and programs, instead of four.

- 3. Increased demand for Preschool**-The RISE Preschool is an integrated preschool experience for general education and special education students who are three and four years old. School districts are required by statute to provide special education services to any student who qualifies, beginning at age 3. In addition, schools with integrated programs must maintain **at least** a minimum of 51% general education students and 49% special education students in every classroom. Ideally, it would be a benefit to both general education and special education students to have a much higher percentage of general education students in every classroom so that all students can benefit from a strong inclusionary experience.

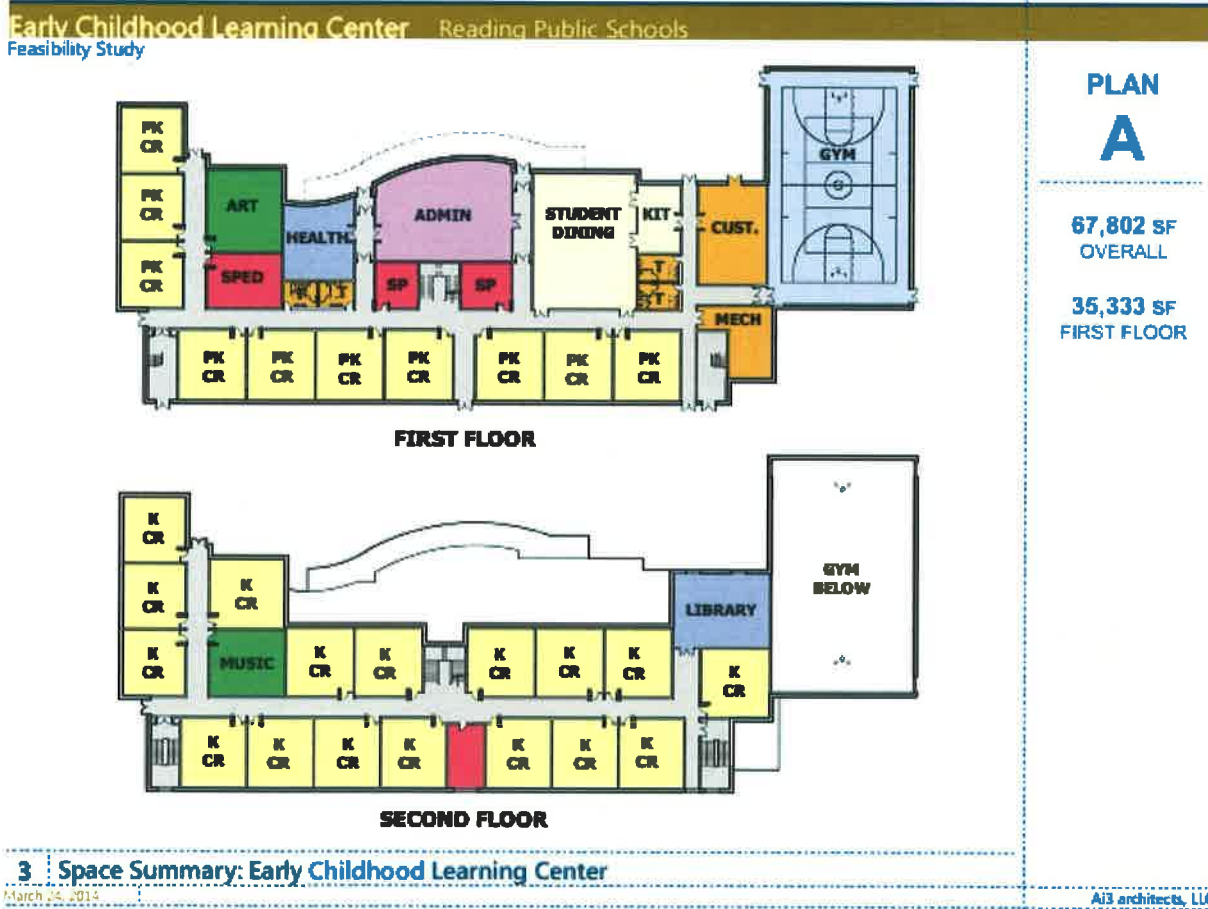
In 2005-06, the RISE Preschool consisted of four classrooms with 82 students (46 general education and 36 special education). Currently, RISE requires seven classrooms for its 112 students (66 general education and 46 special education). In 2011-12, an additional classroom was created by taking a therapy room and converting it into classroom space. In 2012-13, an additional two preschool classrooms were added using available space at Wood End. For the 2014-15 school year, we have a waiting list of 25 students because there is not sufficient classroom space. This has both an educational impact and a financial impact for the Reading Public Schools. Educationally, it is ideal that students attend the RISE Program because they begin their public schooling earlier with an aligned curriculum and dual certified teachers with Master's Degrees. From a financial standpoint, since the students on the waiting list are general education students, and would be paying tuition, the lost revenue due to the lack of preschool space is \$144,000.

- 4. Decrease in the number of dedicated art and music classrooms**-Because of the increased need for classroom space for full day kindergarten, preschool and special education programs, other educational programs have suffered. When the fifth elementary school was completed, there was a commitment at the time to have one dedicated art classroom and one dedicated music classroom at each elementary school. Unfortunately, there has been a decrease in art and music classrooms at the elementary level from ten in 2005-06 to seven currently.
- 5. No additional classroom space for enrollment "bubbles"**-Because we have a deficit of classroom space at our elementary schools, we do not have any additional classroom space to accommodate short-term enrollment increases. At times, there is an incoming grade that requires more classroom space than is available. If classroom space is not available, the result is in an increase in class size for that grade level.

Early Childhood Center

The conceptual proposal for the early childhood center includes the necessary educational space to provide publicly funded full day kindergarten for every student (approximately 323 students) and an integrated RISE Preschool program for up to 150 students. The current conceptual drawings (see below) include 17 kindergarten classrooms, 10 preschool classrooms, 1 cafeteria, 1 library, 1 art room, 1 music room, special education space, and a full size gymnasium, which will serve as community space during non-school hours. During the schematic design phase, these plans will be further developed into schematic drawings to give the community a more detailed picture and more developed cost estimate of the project.

If the early childhood center is built, the classroom space that will become available at each elementary school will be used for separate art and music classrooms, additional special education space to address learning center and program needs, additional capacity to address enrollment “bubbles”, and future programmatic needs that do not currently exist.



The Fine and Performing Arts parking lot at RMHS (see below) was chosen over several other sites using a matrix developed by the architect, AI3, and the Early Childhood Working Group. The matrix included 26 different evaluation criteria including:

- Education
 - Adequate Program and Classroom Space
 - Optimize educational resources (staffing and materials)
 - Allows for Innovative 21st Century Environment
 - Outdoor Play Space and educational opportunities
 - Increase educational opportunities for all Pre-Kindergarten-Kindergarten Age children
 - Relieve program space at other levels (i.e. elementary and high school)
 - Avoids disruption to current educational settings
 - Can be executed in a timely fashion

- Parents
 - Improvement to current or future learning environments
 - More convenient
 - Improves early childhood education

- Community
 - Provides additional indoor recreational space
 - Provides outdoor space
 - Provides other community benefits
 - Represents sustainable design options
 - Represents good community wide planning

- Site
 - Convenient for parents, teachers, and students
 - Capable of supporting adequate parking
 - Located in an area where abutters will be supported
 - Convenient for walkers
 - Capable of adequate bus and car circulation
 - Acceptable to local Town Departments
 - Minimize traffic impacts

The option below, also known as “Option 2”, had the highest score based on the categories above.



PARKING SUMMARY
 265 new parking
 141 replaced
 124 New School Parking

OPTION 2

Construction Cost:
 \$26,239,037

- North Parking (44) \$309,301*
- West Parking (66) \$367,709*
- Oakland Rd. Parking (103) \$1,489,600*
- Play Area & Play Surface \$75,665*
- Play Area Site work \$258,857*
- *Includes Mark-Ups



Parking Analysis:
 141 Displaced
 265 New
 124 New School Spaces
 A13 architects, LLC

4 Option 2 Site Plan Rendering

March 24, 2014

In the conceptual drawing above, additional parking has been added to offset the spaces lost due to the new building's location as well as the number of spots that would likely be required for staff and parents. This additional parking is created by adding to existing parking on site and the development of a new parking lot off of Oakland Road. At the request of town officials, additional parking does not include the use of the 96 available spaces on Oakland Road. These spaces will be used for overflow parking for community events and temporary parking for drop off/pickup.

Design Study

The estimated total cost of developing option 2 is 26.2 million dollars. This includes the development of additional parking sites and the renovation of the current RISE classroom space into classroom space for Reading Memorial High School. The amount of funding requested at Town Meeting will be \$485,000 for the schematic design phase that will result in design that is 15% complete. This \$485,000 is broken down in the following manner:

Item	Cost
Design Fee-Schematic Design	\$315,000*
OPM	\$50,000
OPM-(1) Independent Cost Estimate, if required	\$25,000
Geo-technical Investigations	\$30,000
Site Survey	\$30,000
Traffic Study	\$15,000
Environmental and Agency Approvals	\$20,000
Total Budget for Schematic Design Funding	\$485,000

In this proposal, schematic design documentation would provide a scope for the project with advancement of conceptual floor plans and site plans. However, because it is only a 15% completion of plans, the development of a project budget would require inclusion of design and construction contingencies to produce a conservative estimate for Town Meeting 2014 that accounts for ever changing economic and bid environments, as well as potential

Unknown factors associated with the project development approvals or site conditions. If the project were to continue to move forward beyond the design study, this project would require a vote of Town Meeting (likely in November, 2014) to approve a debt exclusion override election that would likely occur in early winter, 2015, with a potential Summer, 2015 bidding period, construction starting in the Fall, 2015, and building occupancy for September, 2017.

In our conversations with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) funding is not currently available for the construction of early childhood centers. In addition, MSBA ranks construction projects based upon need and because this project is caused primarily by programmatic changes and not enrollment changes or deteriorating building conditions; it is not likely to meet the priority threshold when compared to other projects in the Commonwealth.

Operational Costs of Early Childhood Center

One of the incentives that Massachusetts provides to encourage school districts to offer publicly funded full day kindergarten is the Chapter 70 funding formula. Currently, all of our students (except for a few students who attend full day kindergarten because it is required as part of their individualized education program) are counted as ½ day students in the Chapter 70 funding formula. If we are able to move to publicly funded full day kindergarten, each student would be counted as a full day student. In Reading, if we had 320 full day kindergarten students per year, the additional Chapter 70 funding per year would be approximately 1.1 million dollars. This amount would significantly offset the staff costs associated with full day kindergarten.

There will be additional operating costs associated with a new facility. Most staffing for RISE and full day Kindergarten already exist, however, we will need some additional full day kindergarten teachers

and paraeducators, a school nurse, custodial services, food service employees, and some incremental increases in specialists (art, music, Physical Education, OT, PT, speech and language services). Since a Preschool Director position already exists, an additional administrator position will not be needed. Because the proposed Early Childhood Center is geographically located near the center of Reading, increased bussing costs will be at a minimum. Additional non-personnel costs would include utilities (natural gas, electric, water and sewer). Because all Preschool and Kindergarten classes would be in the same location, there would be an economy of scale with materials and supplies and some personnel costs, which will result in savings.

Next Steps

If funding for the design study is approved at Town Meeting, a School Building Committee will be developed for the sole purpose of overseeing design and construction of this project. The Reading School Committee voted at their March 24, 2014 School Committee Meeting to develop a School Building Committee with the following requirements:

A. Purpose

The ECECBC is charged with carrying out all phases of early childhood center building project including the Design Phases, Construction Phases for renovations, additions and/or construction of the new Early Childhood Education Center.

B. Powers and Duties of Committee

- Oversee and supervise the design and construction of the Early Childhood Education Center, including the designer selection process for the solicitation, evaluation and recommendation of a project designer, schematic design, design development, production of construction documents, public construction bidding, contract award recommendation and construction administration in compliance with the General Laws. All solicitations for designer services and invitations for bids for construction shall be coordinated with the designated procurement officer for the project to assure compliance with the applicable provisions of the General Laws. The Superintendent of Schools shall award and execute all designer services contracts and construction contracts.
- Review and report the financial requirements of all projects within its jurisdiction, or for which it may become responsible, and oversee the expenditure of funds in the course of execution of such projects.

C. Membership

- Superintendent of Schools
- One School Committee member
- School administrator responsible for procurement (MCPPO certified)
- School administrator responsible for building maintenance
- School principal
- One (1) teacher Associated with Early Childhood Education
- Three (3) community members with architecture, engineering and/or construction experience
- One "at-large" community member
- Town manager or designee
- Local budget official or member of local finance committee
- One (1) early childhood (Pre-kindergarten or Kindergarten) parent and One (1) RMHS Parent

D. Appointments

- School committee member to be appointed by the Chair of the School Committee
- School administrators, principal, teacher, and parents to be appointed by the Superintendent
- One community member appointed by the Board of Selectman
- One community member appointed by the School Committee
- One community member appointed by the Superintendent of Schools
- At large community member appointed by the School Committee
- Local budget official or member of local finance committee appointed by the Chair of the Finance Committee

E. Length of Term: Three (3) years

Once a School Building Committee is chosen, a procurement process will be put in place to hire an Owner's Project Manager and Architect.

Conclusion

There are several reasons to continue to move forward with this project. If this project is supported by the community it will do the following:

- Provide a comprehensive full day Kindergarten experience for all students
- Provide a solid educational foundation for all students in their early childhood years
- Provide the space necessary for a strong preschool program
- Create much needed instructional space at elementary schools and high school
- Continue to attract families to Reading
- Maintain strong property values for community

If approved at Town Meeting, the design funding will provide a set of schematic drawings and tighter cost estimates to inform Town Meeting and the Reading Community in the fall. Without this next step, enough information will not be available to make an informed decision on the full project.

Finance Committee Report: The Finance Committee recommends the subject matter of Article 4 by a vote of 6-0-0 at their meeting on April 9, 2014. This debt financing will preserve the ability to roll the \$485,000 into a larger scope building project as a future exclusion or override.

Bylaw Committee Report: No report

and you are directed to serve this Warrant by posting an attested copy thereof in at least one (1) public place in each precinct of the Town not less than fourteen (14) days prior to April 28, 2014, or providing in a manner such as electronic submission, holding for pickup or mailing, an attested copy of said Warrant to each Town Meeting Member.

Hereof fail not and make due return of this Warrant with your doings thereon to the Town Clerk at or before the time appointed for said meeting.

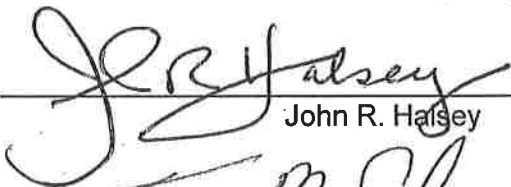
Given under our hands this 9th day of April, 2014.



John Arena



Dan Ensminger



John R. Halsey



Kevin M. Sexton



Marsie West

SELECTMEN OF READING



Tom Freeman, Constable