



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education

350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-5023

Telephone: (781) 338-3000

October 1, 2001

Harry Harutunian, Superintendent
Reading Public Schools
82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867

Dear Superintendent Harutunian:

I am writing as a follow-up to our site visit and meeting to discuss renovation plans for Reading High School. During our visit you provided copies of feasibility studies documenting structural issues with the existing school building and identified programmatic issues relating to growing enrollments and Title IX issues. A number of options were presented to remediate the structural and/or programmatic inefficiencies. Based on the information presented and our site visit, we recognized the need for structural and programmatic improvements. However, we also expressed reservation and the need for additional documentation in the following areas.

- *Relocation of "non instructional" activities, e.g. administrative office, REEP program, town maintenance, etc.* It is noted that in the options reviewed most if not all of these spaces that currently are housed in the high school would be relocated. Although, in general programs of this type could be planned or maintained in a school building paid entirely with local funds, we could not justify approving an addition to a school building until all existing space had been analyzed for potential reconfiguration to needed instructional space
- *Expansion of Library*— We would be interested in any accreditation or access issues that would justify a library expansion.
- *Expansion of Cafeteria* — Since most districts in the state maintain three lunch seatings, we could not justify state support to expand the cafeteria in order to maintain two seatings.
- *Relocation of girls lockers* — Although we understand that there is a Title IX issue with this space, we would be interested in evaluating options for reconfigurations of existing space to satisfy the Title IX issue before we could support new space.
- *Reconfiguration of "old gym" into small auditorium* — Since you currently have an auditorium that seats approximately 1100 students, we could not justify state support for an additional auditorium at this time. We would be interesting in reviewing options to utilize this space for other academic programs.
- *Additions to field house* — We would be interested in other reconfigurations to accommodate the desired athletic program within existing space, before we could support new space.

Parking — Although we have not seen a site plan for the planned project, we recognized the limitations to the parking and traffic access on the site and would require additional information to show how these issues might be alleviated.

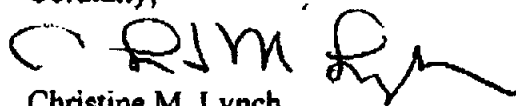
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- *Security Issues* – We would be interested in what measures will be taken to secure the buildings while maintaining access between the separate field house and the rest of the high school services.
- *Additional Information Needed:* In order to properly evaluate the need for renovations and/or additions to Reading High school, we would need the following information
 - Rationale for Capital Construction (645-3)
 - Inventories of all existing school space (645-4)
 - 10 year enrollment projections
 - Vote to appoint school building committee

Based on the planned enrollment, the existing high school exceeds the square footage maximums allowed in the School Building Assistance Regulations. In general state assistance could be provided to support structural and programmatic renovation of a building that exceeded the state allowance. However, based on the issues noted above, state assistance could not be provided to support additions to a building designed to enlarge spaces such as a cafeteria, field house and auditorium that already exceed the state allowance.

We would like to continue our discussions with you on your plan to renovate the high school in order to ensure that the project plan will be in keeping with the state school building assistance law and regulation and will meet the needs of Reading High School students for years to come. Please contact us at anytime to discuss your project.

Cordially,



Christine M. Lynch
Administrator
School Building Assistance

c: Project File