

## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Hanover High School, Sylvester Elementary School, Salmond School, Curtis School

### **Introduction**

Concerns regarding the safety and welfare of the students attending along with overcrowded conditions, known building deficiencies, and space utilization issues affecting the quality of instruction prompted the Hanover Public Schools Building Committee to commission a study of four Hanover public school buildings and sites. The schools included in this study are the Hanover High School, Sylvester Elementary School, Salmond School, and Curtis School in Hanover, Massachusetts. Although the Salmond School was originally one of the first elementary schools in Hanover, it is currently temporarily being used to house the public library until construction of the new public library is complete. The Curtis School, originally constructed in 1897, now houses the School Administrative offices. Thus the primary focus of the study is on the Hanover High School and Sylvester Elementary School, while providing a site and building assessment of the Curtis and Salmond Schools. Our goal is to determine a long-term solution for the district as a whole. Any possible schemes shall support the integration of energy efficiency, renewable energy technology, and environmentally friendly materials.

In June of 2000, the architectural office of Habeeb & Associates Architects completed a capital asset study for the Hanover Schools on the four schools we have outlined here (their study is attached in the appendix). That study outlined a number of issues that we are, in part, reinforcing in this report. While the capital asset study focused on outlining immediate action items and recommendations to address building deficiencies and repairs to be made over a five-year period, it was limited in scope in that not all building systems were evaluated (such as hazardous materials), and it did not consider educational program requirements or provide a study of options.

Dore and Whittier Inc. was subsequently hired to perform a study that would provide a thorough review and assessment of all four of the buildings and sites as well as a review of the educational programs as a whole for a “master plan” approach with conceptual options and estimates. A summary of the findings are enclosed. We commend Habeeb & Associates on their thorough report and the School Building Committee for continuing the ongoing effort to address the concerns of the public.

### **Buildings Reviewed – A Brief History**

#### **Hanover High School**

The Hanover High School serves grades 9 through 12 with a current enrollment of approximately 688 students. The building, designed by J. Williams Beal & Sons Architects, was constructed in 1958 with a classroom wing addition in 1962. The building sits on a building lot that abuts the Junior high school and Cedar Street school sites with a combined land area of approximately 101 acres. While it appears that there is abundant land property, the Drinkwater River flows across the center of the site in close proximity to the school.

#### **Sylvester Elementary School**

The Sylvester Elementary School, originally designed by J. Williams Beal & Sons Architects, as the Town's high school in 1927, now serves grades 3 and 4 with 235 students. Although the building is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is located in the National Historic District of Hanover Center. The site, at one time, had a one-room schoolhouse located here as well. The building stands virtually the same as originally constructed except for an addition in 1960 when the new high school was built. The building was converted to a junior high school, later housed fifth and sixth grades, then fifth grade only, and now houses grades three and four with some classes being held in the Center Elementary School nearby. Although the land, when combined with the adjoining Center Elementary School site, is approximately 33 acres, an aquifer boundary line that cuts through the center of the site is a limiting factor on any future use of the site.

### **Salmond School**

Originally constructed in 1931, the building sits on the site of one of the original schools for the Town of Hanover (1852). In 1931 the original white clapboard schoolhouse was relocated to another town and the new (current) building was constructed along with the original 400 lb bell housed in the belfry as a reminder of the original school. The school housed grades 1 through 6 until 1978 when the school district consolidated due to financial reasons and the students were sent to the Center School. Two years later the building was occupied by a private daycare/preschool center while providing income for the school district. From 1997 to 2001, the building temporarily became home to public pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes until the Cedar and Center Elementary School renovation and addition projects were complete. The building is currently the temporary home of the Hanover Public Library while the new Town library is undergoing construction.

### **Curtis School**

The Curtis School was constructed in 1896 as a two-room schoolhouse. Although the building was used for classroom instruction until 1959 when the new high school was built, it did not have running water until 1932 and running toilets until 1947. School administrative offices and the Police Station shared the building until 1977 when an addition was added to the Town Hall for Police use. Since then, various community groups have used portions of the building and adult education classes have been held there. The Hanover Schools offices currently occupy the building.

## **Overview**

During the past 70 years a number of changes have occurred in education that have had an impact on the learning environment including: the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, Special Education regulations, integration of computers and technology, teaching space requirements, increased student enrollments, and an increased need for community, extra-curricular, and after-school activity space.

Maintenance and upkeep have been good but some systems are exceeding their designed serviceable life, while others are totally obsolete. Replacing some building systems components are becoming costly or difficult to find. Each school is different in their specific building deficiencies and needs but they are similar in that they are affected by the fact that educational requirements, educational standards and educational philosophies have changed over the past 40 to 70 years. These educational changes have

taken place in buildings that have not changed along with them. This has an impact on the quality of instruction. Each school is faced with this similar problem but the way that each school addresses these issues will be different due to site constraints, the existing building configurations and conditions, the differences in educational philosophy and the differences in the prioritizing of needs. While other schools in the district have been recently upgraded, renovated and expanded, these four schools have not had major renovations for 35 to 50 years.

A detailed, on-site review of the existing building and site has been performed by Dore and Whittier, Inc. and their engineering consultants, and coupled with the educational planning assistance from Dr. Frank Locker of PDT Architects is the basis for the findings and recommendations included herein. The objective of this report is to provide an assessment of the existing buildings, site and educational program outlining the existing conditions and issues, and providing possible solutions that meet future needs of the schools, students and community.

This report is based on information gathered by visual observations of the buildings and sites, \*existing building drawings, studies and documents, discussions with school staff, administration, school building committee members, and local officials. Codes used in this review are the current (6<sup>th</sup>) edition of the Massachusetts Building Code, Massachusetts Architectural Access Board Regulations (521 CMR), Federal ADAAG (ADA), Department of Education Regulations, National Electrical Code, Mass. Electrical Code, NFPA Fire and Sprinkler Code, Mass Plumbing and Gas Code, Town Sewer Standards, and the National Mechanical Code.

\*Existing building drawings and documents:

**Hanover High School**

1958 Original building, partial set. Architect: J. Williams Beal & Sons  
1962 Addition, partial set. Architect: Korslund, LeNormand & Quann Inc.  
Cadd plan electronic copy from Signet Electronics created during Fire Alarm System upgrade

**Sylvester Elementary School**

1927 Original building, few sheets. Architect: J. Williams Beal & Sons  
1961 Addition, partial set. Architect: J. Williams Beal Sons, Granger & Dyer

**Salmond School**

Copy of hand drawn plan for fire alarm system. Architect not known.

**Curtis School**

Copy of hand drawn plan for fire alarm system. Architect not known.