

Accelerated Repair Program Statement of Interest Process Overview

Introduction

The Massachusetts School Building Authority's (the "MSBA") grant program is a non-entitlement, competitive program, and its grants are distributed by the MSBA Board of Directors, based on need and urgency, as expressed by the district and validated by the MSBA. The MSBA completes a review of available information regarding all districts that submit a Statement of Interest ("SOI") for the Accelerated Repair Program (the "ARP") each year. The MSBA encourages all interested districts to submit an SOI to the MSBA, but the ARP is not appropriate for all potential projects. The ARP is for the partial or full replacement of roofs, windows/doors, and/or boilers.

The following information provides an overview of the SOI process from initial opening of the SOI period each January until the Board of Directors votes to authorize invitations at a subsequent late spring/summer Board meeting.

The SOI Filing Period

The MSBA opens its SOI system annually for districts to file one or more SOIs for either the Core Program or the ARP. The SOI is the tool districts use to identify the deficiencies and/or programmatic issues that exist in their facilities. Districts should submit one SOI per school for each school that they believe requires a project. An SOI should only be filed for a facility where a district has the ability to fund a schematic design within two months of invitation and a total project budget within 12 months of invitation. Over the last several years, the SOI system has opened in early January. SOIs are typically due for the ARP in early February and for the Core Program in early April. Staff have completed recommendations for invitations at the Board of Directors meeting in June. The MSBA reviews these dates annually and may adjust opening and closing dates as may be needed from time to time. Each year, the SOI opening information is published on the MSBA's website in addition to each superintendent receiving email communications in advance, on the day of and throughout the filing period until the closure of the Accelerated Repair Program and the Core Program.

Based on the qualifications for the ARP, a district should not file an SOI if:

- the age of the system is less than the advertised age criteria;
 - the roof is less than twenty-five years old (installed in or after 1997);
 - the boiler is less than twenty-five years old (installed in or after 1997);
 - the windows/doors are less than thirty years (installed in or after 1992);
- the proposed project cost is projected as less than \$250,000;
- the school is judged by the district to be over-crowded;
- the district is considering the facility for potential consolidation;
- the primary use of the building is for non-educational purposes;
- the school provides for pre-kindergarten students only;
- the SOI itself seeks construction beyond roofs, windows/doors, or boilers;
- the SOI itself seeks boiler construction, excluding heating fuel storage and/or delivery, beyond the physical limits of the existing boiler room(s);
- a facility condition not identified in the SOI remains unresolved from a previous MSBA SOI review;
- the district plans a future construction project for MSBA participation going beyond roofs, windows/doors, and boilers for the school;
- or the district is reviewing facility deficiencies to further identify its needs and priorities.

Historically, the MSBA has invited approximately 25 to 50 SOIs for the ARP annually. The number of invitations that the Board authorizes each year varies. Among the factors the MSBA may consider should the MSBA be required to limit the number of invitations due to its annual statutory funding cap are the degree of the disrepair of the systems to be replaced and the frequency with which issues associated with that disrepair arise.

In 2017, due to the volume of SOIs submitted, the MSBA for the first time increased the qualifying ages of systems after SOIs were received. After the 2017 SOI opening advertised 20 years as the qualifying age for all three systems, only systems of 30 years or more were invited. In 2018, in anticipation of continued high volume of SOIs, the MSBA advertised a budget of approximately \$50 million for grants. The MSBA reviews these advertised qualifying ages for systems as well as the grant budget annually and may adjust one or both as may be needed. Similar to the dates for the SOI filing period, the SOI opening information is published on the MSBA's website each year along with notice provided to all districts via the superintendent.

Tables below illustrate a summary of qualifying and invited SOIs beginning in 2017. A table illustrating the number of SOIs which have resulted in Project Funding Agreements for the ARP can be found [here](#).

Repair Program	SOIs Received	Advertised Systems Ages			SOIs Qualified
		Roof Age	Windows/Doors Age	Boiler Age	

2017 Program	73	20	20	20	69
2018 Program	60	20	30	20	51
2019 Program	83	20	30	20	79
2020 Program	90	25	30	25	74
2021 Program	TBD	25	30	25	TBD

		Invited Systems Ages			
Repair Program	SOIs Received	Roof Age	Windows/Doors Age	Boiler Age	SOIs Qualified
2017 Program	73	30	30	30	36
2018 Program	60	25	30	25	34
2019 Program	83	27	N/A	20	42
2020 Program	90	30	35	35	25

The Funding Cap

The Commonwealth irrevocably dedicated a 1% statewide sales tax, known as the School Modernization Trust fund ("SMART Fund"), to the MSBA's capital program. The sales tax collection informs the amount of the annual funding cap to which the MSBA can obligate funds for projects. The enabling legislation limits increases or decreases annually thereafter by the lesser of four and one half percent (4.5%) of the limit for the prior fiscal year or the percentage increase or decrease of the dedicated sales tax revenue amount over the prior fiscal year.

The SOI Due Diligence Process

The SOI process involves the district filing an electronic version of an SOI with the MSBA. MSBA staff is readily available to address concerns, questions, and issues during the filing period. Once the filing period has closed, MSBA staff commences the due diligence process for all SOIs.

This four-phase process includes:

- Review SOI submissions for completeness;
- Review SOI submissions and accompanying documents for content;
- Conduct staff study visits, if required; and,
- Recommend SOIs for invitation into the ARP.

During this process, the MSBA may seek to obtain additional or clarifying information from districts. As the MSBA reviews the entire cohort of SOIs received, it will determine the appropriate level of due diligence that will be required for each SOI and will notify districts of next steps accordingly.

1. Review SOI submission for completeness:

Once the SOI system has closed, MSBA staff review each submission to check that all of the required materials have been received. The MSBA works with districts throughout the filing period to ensure that the SOI is complete.

For all SOI submissions, the district must provide:

- An electronic version of the SOI with the required electronic signatures; there are two separate certifications in each SOI where district officials need to sign;
- An electronic version of the Closed Schools Certification with the required electronic signatures;
- Hard copies of the required local vote documentation that is detailed in the SOI; and
- Any supporting materials required to be submitted with the SOI.

Districts are expected to submit materials and have them post-marked on or before the due date of the ARP submission deadline. The district and the MSBA should discuss in advance of the filing date any extenuating circumstances or requests for exceptions to receipt of the hard copy material.

2. Review each SOI submission and accompanying documents for content:

Once an SOI is determined to be complete, MSBA staff review the information and any additional documents submitted by the district. MSBA staff then compile the data necessary to assess which SOIs filed in that calendar year may qualify for the ARP. Evaluating the qualifying factors relies on many different data sources. MSBA staff use the SOI, the MSBA project management system, the MSBA's 2016 School Survey, as well as information from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ("DESE") website. Many factors can impact the assessment of an SOI, such as overcrowding, building condition, general environment and program deficiencies. As such, it is important to assemble as much data as possible so that staff may gain a thorough understanding of the issues identified in the SOI. An analysis of the qualifying factors produces a group of SOIs for further consideration. Depending on the volume of qualifying SOIs, the MSBA may have to introduce additional or more limiting factors to maintain the annual ARP budget. Further review of SOIs may or may not require a staff study visit.

3. Conduct Staff Study Visits, if required:

If MSBA staff determine that a staff study visit is needed to complete the due diligence process, MSBA staff will visit the facility identified in the SOI. The MSBA may conduct facility visits either virtually, in-person or a combination of virtual and in-person. The MSBA may request the use of alternative technology to complete the visits such as virtual meetings, drones, district-supplied recordings or other means to conduct the visit. Dependent upon the method used, the staff study visit may be conducted in two parts, holding the meeting and the facility tour, at different times and days.

The staff study visit starts with a meeting to review the SOI and the MSBA process, and then to hear district concerns. The discussion is followed by a tour of the main areas of the school, as well as typical general classrooms and specialty spaces. If the district's SOI includes the replacement of the roof, then access to the roof should be provided to MSBA staff.

Dependent upon the number of staff study visits that are required, this phase can take approximately 4 to 6 weeks, with visits typically scheduled from March through April, but this may vary depending upon the opening and closing dates.

4. Recommend SOIs for Invitation into the Accelerated Repair Program:

Once the content review and staff study visits have been completed, MSBA staff once again review the factors, noted above, that can impact the assessment of the SOIs. As stated above, due to the statutory cap, the MSBA may be constrained to limit the number of ARP projects in a given year. Among the factors that MSBA may consider should it be required to limit the number of ARP projects, are the degree of the disrepair of the systems to be replaced and the frequency with which issues associated with the disrepair arise.

MSBA staff next provide their findings to the Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director, and the MSBA's Facilities Assessment Subcommittee. Then, MSBA staff present the recommended SOIs to the Board of Directors for a vote to receive an invitation into the ARP.