

About Us

Working With Us

Building With Us

Policies, Forms & Guidelines

Our Programs & Initiatives

Your School

News & Events

Public Records Requests

Employment Opportunities

 MSBA APPLICATIONS

Enrollment Projection

Maintenance and Capital Planning

OPM Report

Pro-Pay Reimbursements

 YOUR STATEMENT OF INTEREST

 like us on Facebook

 follow us on twitter

# Statement of Interest Frequently Asked Questions: 2023

## ***Q: What is a Statement of Interest (SOI)?***

A: An SOI is a form that can be completed by cities, towns, and regional school districts ("districts") that are seeking funding from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (the "MSBA"). Submitting an SOI is the critical first step in the MSBA program for school building construction, addition/renovation, and extensive repair grants. The SOI asks the district to state what it believes are the deficiencies in a school building and how those deficiencies fit within one or more of the statutory priorities established in MGL c.70B.

## ***Q: Who files an SOI?***

A: The Superintendent of Schools files an SOI after having been authorized to do so by the city, town, or regional school district school committee and, except in the case of a regional school district, by the local governing body (e.g., City Council/Aldermen/Board of Selectmen). The Superintendent of Schools is the official responsible for submitting the SOI; however, the Superintendent may authorize another district user to assist with the SOI process.

## ***Q: How does a District file an SOI?***

A: The Superintendent needs to obtain access to the MSBA's online SOI System and then can begin preparing the SOI. There are detailed instructions in the SOI, in the SOI User Guide, and in the opening email communication, sent to Superintendents on January 13, 2023.

## ***Q: If I am someone from the District other than the Superintendent seeking to gain access to the system, do I have to wait for my Superintendent's approval in order to gain access?***

A: Yes, if you are clicking on this link [Submit a Statement of Interest - District User Access](#) for access, you will need to coordinate with your Superintendent for approval to gain access. The Superintendent will have to access the system by clicking on [Submit a Statement of Interest - Superintendent Access](#) where they can review and approve the district user request for access.

## ***Q: How does the pre-population option work?***

A: To assist districts that are filing an SOI for a school facility that was the subject of an SOI submitted in the previous year, the district can opt to recall the data that was previously submitted and pre-populate the current year's SOI with that data. The district can then edit and update the information to reflect current conditions prior to submitting the current year's SOI for consideration. The Superintendent and those assigned to complete the SOI will be able to self-select the "pre-population" option when entering the "New SOI". Further instruction is provided in the [SOI User Guide](#).

## ***Q: How many SOIs can a District submit?***

A: The MSBA does not limit the number of SOIs that the district can submit; however, an SOI should only be filed for a facility where the district has the financial ability to proceed with a construction project at the time of submission. The district is only allowed to submit one SOI per school facility and should detail all of the facility's deficiencies in that one SOI. If the district submits an SOI for more than one facility under the Core Program, it will be required to select one SOI as the "District's Priority SOI" for consideration and due diligence efforts by the MSBA. With each 2023 SOI online submission, the district will need to designate its "District Priority SOI" in the online SOI System. If the district already has an active Core Program SOI in our Capital Pipeline, then that SOI is the district's Priority for 2023 and will continue to be considered the district's Priority SOI until the time of project completion.

## ***Q: Should the SOI propose a solution to the deficiencies cited?***

A: The purpose of the SOI is for the district to identify perceived deficiencies within a school facility. The MSBA and the district would then work in partnership to identify possible solutions if/when the district is invited by the MSBA Board of Directors into the Capital Pipeline for the Core Program. After selecting Core Program project from the "Program Type" drop down menu, the district should then indicate using the Potential Project Scope drop-down menu its perceived solution; these options include: potential new school, addition/renovation, or repair project (major repair to a facility). The district then must indicate if a Potential Consolidation is being considered; if the district selects "yes" to the consolidation question listed on the first page of the SOI, the district should specify which facility(ies) the district is interested in consolidating and file an SOI for that/those facility(ies).

In the SOI section titled "District Goal for School," the district should also provide information about what the district feels is a potential solution to the issues that have

been identified in the SOI; past facility master plans can be referenced in this section and throughout the SOI to best explain perceived deficiencies and potential solutions.

***Q: Does the District need to use the MSBA tool to submit student enrollment information along with its SOI?***

A: No. In the past, districts were required to provide limited enrollment-related information when submitting an SOI based on enrollment factors (statutory priorities 2, 4, and 6). Due to the MSBA's redesigned Enrollment Projection System, districts are no longer required to submit enrollment information at the time of filing an SOI. However, districts will engage in enrollment discussions with the MSBA upon invitation to the Capital Pipeline for the MSBA's Core Program. Specifically, the enrollment projection collaboration now occurs when the district is invited into the Eligibility Period.

***Q: If the district is interested in a consolidation with one or more facilities in the district, should this information be included in the Priority SOI?***

A: Yes, if the district is submitting an SOI for the Core Program, the district should select "yes" when answering the consolidation question on page 1 of the SOI and describe the proposed consolidation and/or grade reconfiguration where prompted. The district should also submit an SOI(s) for the facility(ies) the district is interested in consolidating with the Priority SOI.

***Q: Why is it necessary to have votes authorizing submission of an SOI?***

A: In order to show the support of the district's local officials for the submission of an SOI, the MSBA requires current votes from the local school committee and, except in the case of a regional school district, the local governing body (e.g., City Council/Aldermen/Board of Selectmen) authorizing the Superintendent of Schools or the district user authorized by the Superintendent to submit an SOI.

**The deadline for submitting an SOI for the Core Program for consideration in 2023 is Friday, April 14, 2023.**

***Q: Is there a required text for the votes authorizing an SOI?***

A: Yes. The votes of the local governing body and the school committee must use substantially the same wording that is set forth in the [Form of Vote](#) that is detailed in the SOI. The text of the motions voted must reference the school name and the deficiencies that have been identified in the SOI. The deficiencies can be listed in the text of the vote as the numerical statutory priorities and the descriptions that were selected on the second page of the SOI by the district. For the vote of the City Council/Aldermen/Board of Selectmen, a copy of the text of the vote must be submitted on letterhead with a certification of the City/Town Clerk that the vote was duly taken and recorded. The date of the vote must be provided. For the vote of the School Committee, a copy of the text of the vote must be submitted on letterhead with the signature of the Committee Chairperson. All votes must be uploaded within the Vote Tab of the MSBA's SOI system prior to submitting an SOI for consideration.

***Q: If my district is ready to take the required local votes to submit an SOI and we do not yet know the SOI date (the date the SOI will be submitted online) to use in the vote language, what should I do?***

A: If the district does not know the date the SOI will be submitted online (the SOI date) but is ready to take the required local votes to submit the SOI, the district should reference the month and year in which the SOI will be submitted. The district must have [current votes](#) to submit an SOI for consideration in 2023 and should not re-submit a vote taken to submit an SOI from a previous year.

***Q: Who signs off on the SOI submittal?***

A: The Superintendent, the Local Chief Executive Officer, and the School Committee Chairperson will need to sign the SOI before it is submitted. The MSBA online SOI System allows the Superintendent or the district user authorized by the Superintendent to electronically send the SOI to the required signatories for their electronic signature. There are detailed instructions in the SOI "Signature" tab and in the SOI User Guide regarding this process. In some instances, the same local official may be a signatory for multiple roles. For example, a Mayor may also be a School Committee Chairperson.

***Q: Who is the Local Chief Executive Officer?***

A: In a City or Town with a manager form of government, the manager of the municipality is the Local Chief Executive Officer. In other cities, the Mayor is the Local Chief Executive Officer, and in other towns, the Board of Selectmen is the Local Chief Executive Officer unless, in a city or town, some other municipal office is designated as the Chief Executive office under the provisions of a local charter. The district should determine who fills this role at the local level and should consult with local counsel if necessary.

***Q: Should a District seek professional assistance to complete an SOI?***

A: No. Districts should not seek professional assistance to complete an SOI. The SOI affords the district the opportunity to articulate its thoughts about deficiencies that may exist in a local school facility. The MSBA expects that the SOI can be completed at no

cost to the district. Districts will **NOT** be reimbursed for any expenses that may be incurred in connection with the completion and submission of an SOI. The process of completing and submitting an SOI will require dedicated time from the district. The MSBA recommends that the district plan ahead and allocate sufficient time to answer the questions posed in the SOI, secure the appropriate signatures, and take the required local votes.

***Q: What happens after the MSBA receives the SOI?***

A: The information provided in the SOI will play an important role in helping the MSBA understand the needs at a particular school facility and to decide whether to move forward with the district for further assessment of a facility. Once an SOI has been submitted and reviewed, the MSBA will work with districts to validate the deficiencies identified in the SOI and, if appropriate, collaborate on potential solutions. The MSBA will notify districts of any actions necessary during the due diligence period; after all SOIs are on file and the filing period has closed.

***Q: How long will the process take once in the MSBA grant process?***

A: The length of time depends on several factors, including but not limited to: the extent and urgency of the problems described in the SOI; the extent and urgency of the problems relative to other SOIs that have been filed; the number of potential solutions that may need to be explored with the district; the amount of time required for the MSBA and the district to agree upon an educationally appropriate and financially sound solution; the ability of the district to fund its portion of the agreed-upon solution.

The MSBA remains committed to working as diligently as possible to review all SOI submissions and to collaborating with districts that are invited to move forward in the process through all phases of project approval, design, and construction.

***Q: Does the MSBA work with Districts on a "first come, first served" basis?***

A: No. Our grant program is based on comprehensive due diligence that considers the urgency and need of all SOIs, consistent with the statutory funding criteria set forth in the MSBA's statute, and not according to the time of the SOI submission. Please consult this link [Core Program SOI Overview](#) for more detailed information about the selection process.

***Q: Where can I find out more about filing an SOI?***

A: If you have any questions about the 2023 SOI process, please [click here](#) or call [617-720-4466](tel:617-720-4466).