



## Lincoln Public Schools

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**Rebecca E. McFall, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

To: Audrey Kalmus, Chairperson Capital Planning Committee  
Jim Hutchinson, Chairperson Finance Committee  
From: Becky McFall, Superintendent  
RE: Request for Use of Operational Funds for Purchase of Radios  
Date: May 18, 2018

The Superintendent of Schools and the School Committee request that the Capital Committee and the Finance Committee consider a request to use funds remaining in the FY18 school operational budget to fund the portion of the District-wide Safety / Security Radio System Capital Request that was not approved by the Capital Committee for FY19.

The FY19 Capital request totaled \$55,978 and included the purchase of 62 radios along with repeater and antenna. In response to a request to identify the number of radios that were critical to be purchased and reduce our total request, we identified 37 radios for immediate purchase and reduced the amount requested to \$39,104, which was approved at the March Town Meeting.

As we begin to close out our FY18 purchasing and assess funds remaining in the FY18 Operational Budget, we believe that we have funds available to cover the remaining \$16,874 that was not funded by CapCom and Town Meeting. We would like approval to use funds available in the FY18 Operational Budget to purchase the 25 radios that were not approved in the FY19 Capital Request. This would allow us to fully implement a communication system on the Lincoln campus. With training, this equipment will greatly improve our emergency response efforts. Given the Parkland, Fl. incident and others, the anxiety and uncertainty of our employees, students, and families regarding safety about how we will respond in an emergency situation has risen. We would like to take a complete step forward by implementing a more reliable communications system in our schools.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.



## Town of Lincoln FY19 Capital Funding Request Form

Date: 9/29/2017

Department: Lincoln Public Schools

Submitting Official: Lincoln School Committee with Rec Dept

Capital Item/Project Requested: District-wide Safety/Security Radio System

Ranking Among Department Requests: Second

Projected Useful Life: 10 years

Capital Item/Project Cost: \$55,978

Have CPA Funds Been Requested? No

Capital Item/Project Description (describe in detail what you want to purchase, why and what alternatives were explored):

The Lincoln Public Schools Safety and Security Committee, consisting of school, public safety, recreation department, and community representatives, has studied the issue of communication in emergency and crisis situations for several years. A number of different systems and approaches have been investigated, including enhancing cellular communication, app-based systems, and repurposing existing systems. Due to poor cellular coverage in the area of the school, the prohibitive cost of installing a cellular distribution system, and the importance of having a reliable, resilient system in the case of an emergency, the committee has determined that the best option available is a two-way radio system. This project would include control-stations in the Smith Office, Brooks Office, and the Police Station, 62 hand-held radios, and start-up costs for the repeater, an antenna system, installation and programming.

Purpose and/or Benefit (Does expenditure address a mandatory or discretionary requirement? If discretionary, does the acquisition relate to an existing or new service? Please provide quantitative measures of the expected benefit when possible.)

This project addresses both the practical need for communication in the case of an emergency and the regulatory requirements under Massachusetts General Law. Currently, the Lincoln Campus (Lincoln School, Preschool, and Recreation Department) are lacking the type and number of radios necessary to support a mass evacuation or other emergency situation. The current phone system and deteriorating public address system are inadequate for evacuation/emergency situations that require two-way communication both within and outside the building, and we do not have a

communication system that could support off-site evacuations or post-incident reunification. In addition, in crisis situations there are no systems in place that support a coordinated and immediate response with police and other public safety officials. Another factor impacting communication on the Lincoln Campus is poor or nonexistent cell phone coverage, and improving cell phone coverage would be cost prohibitive. Even an improved cellular system would be vulnerable to overloading and could become unreliable in a crisis.

In addition, the M.G.L *ch. 71, § 37R* states: "Every school shall, subject to appropriation, possess and have access to a two-way communication device with police and fire departments of the city or town where the school is located during an emergency situation. For the purposes of this section, a "two-way communication device" shall mean a device capable of transmitting, conveying, or routing real-time, two-way voice communications through radio frequency. Public employers are immune from liability for acts/omissions of public employees acting in the scope of employment and arising out of implementation of this act." We currently do not have such a system in place.

The proposed Motorola radio system, provides expanded capacity and coverage across the Lincoln Campus. The system would install a repeater and antenna system that would ensure strong signal coverage and extend the range to reach public safety. Control stations would be installed in the Smith and Brooks offices, as well as at public safety. The portable radios themselves are durable, reliable, and secure and would be compatible with similar Motorola systems already used by other town departments and at the Hanscom schools. All of this equipment would be transferrable to any future building.

A total of 62 radios are recommended to address the current needs. Radios would be assigned to key individuals and all crisis team members including principals, nurses, social workers, team leaders, facilities staff, technology staff, recreation department, and central office administrators. Identified staff and administration would either carry the radio or would have the radio on their desk. Identified channels, including a dedicated emergency channel, would be used within the building to communicate with different groups. Training and protocols would be put in place for using the radios in the course of normal operations, so staff are confident and facile in their use when a crisis situation occurs.

If this project occurs, other users of the campus, including Magic Garden and LEAP, will have the opportunity to purchase radios that would connect to the emergency channel, thus further supporting community response.

The estimated cost of the repeater, cabling and based stations, including equipment, installation, and programming, is \$14,129 and the estimated cost of the 61 portable radios, including equipment, enhanced security encryption features, engraving, and programming, is \$41,849. The total project cost is estimated at \$55,978.

**Is there an operating cost impact? If so, please explain: There will be an on-going cost to maintain the system and replace radio batteries as they fail.**