



# **SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT COMMUNITY FORUM #2**

# TODAY'S AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- Organization / Project Team
- Process / Schedule
- **Community Discussion**
- Community Forum #1 Themes
- Site Alternatives Overview
- Grade Reconfiguration Update
- **Community Discussion**
- Next Steps





# ORGANIZATION / PROJECT TEAM

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
COMMUNITY FORUM #2

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

JCJ ARCHITECTURE  
SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2015

# ORGANIZATION / PROJECT TEAM

## Massachusetts School Building Authority

## Wildwood School Building Committee

## Owner's Project Manager: Joslin, Lesser + Associates, Inc.

Jeffery Luxenburg, AICP, MCPPO - Project Executive

Thomas P. Murphy, RA, LEED AP, MCPPO - Project Manager

## Designer: JCJ Architecture

James E. LaPosta, Jr., FAIA, LEED AP - Principal-in-Charge + Design Principal

Douglas K. Roberts, AIA, LEED AP - Project Manager

James W. Hoagland, AIA, LEED AP - Project Architect

Emily E. Czarnecki, NCIDQ, LEED AP - Interior Designer

## Designer: Consultant Team

**Educational Programming** - New Vista Designs for Learning

**Geotechnical Engineering** - Lahlaf Geotechnical Consulting, Inc.

**Environment / Hazardous Materials** - Universal Environmental Consultants

**Site, Civil, MEP/FP and Technology** - Garcia Galuska & Desousa

**Landscape Architecture** - Copley Wolff Design Group

**Structural** - Engineers Design Group

**Acoustics** - Acentech, Inc.

**Food Service** - Crabtree & McGrath

**LEED/Sustainability** - VvS Architects & Consultants

**Traffic** - Bryant Associates

### Massachusetts School Building Authority:

State agency with the mission to partner with local communities to support the design and construction of public school facilities that are:

- Educationally- appropriate
- Flexible / Sustainable
- Cost effective.
- MSBA to fund up to 68% of eligible costs.

### Wildwood School Building Committee:

Local committee recognized by the MSBA to oversee the design and construction of public school facilities.

### Joslin, Lesser + Associates, Inc.:

Owner's Project Manager responsible for managing the project from design through construction.

### JCJ Architecture:

**Jim LaPosta** : Principal-in-Charge + Design Principal

Responsible for direction of the entire process

- Practice Director/Education Practice Group
- Design Principal for numerous award-winning projects
- Member of AIA's national advisory board: Committee on Architecture in Education

**Doug Roberts** : Project Manager

Day-to-day point of contact

- Thorough knowledge of project process

**David Stephen**: Educational Programming

New Vista Designs for Learning, consultant to JCJ, will lead the development of the educational program for the new school building project.



# WILDWOOD SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

- Michael Morris, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, ARPS - Chair
- Katherine Appy, Amherst School Committee, Chair
- Anna Bartolini, Teacher, Crocker Farm Elementary School
- Ron Bohonowicz, Director of Facilities, ARPS & Town of Amherst
- Holly Bowser, MCPPO, Assistant Comptroller, Town of Amherst
- Sasha Figueroa, Administrative Assistant / Recorder, ARPS
- Maria Geryk, Superintendent of Schools, ARPS
- Monica Hall, Director of Diversity & Professional Development, ARPS
- Laura Kent, Wildwood and Preschool Parent
- Sean Mangano, Director of Finance, Amherst Public Schools
- Guilford Mooring, MCPPO, Director of Public Works, Town of Amherst
- Sandy Pooler, Director of Finance, Town of Amherst
- Ludmilla Pavlova, Community Member and former Wildwood parent
- Irv Rhodes, Community Member
- Narayan Sampath, Crocker Farm Parent
- Timothy Sheehan, Teacher, Fort River Elementary School
- Nancy Stewart, Fort River Parent
- Sherril Willis, Teacher, Wildwood Elementary School
- Nick Yaffe, Principal, Wildwood Elementary School
- David Ziomek, Interim Town Manager



# PROCESS / SCHEDULE

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
COMMUNITY FORUM #2

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

JCJ ARCHITECTURE  
SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2015



# PROCESS OVERVIEW

## MSBA Building Process

*Steps primarily for:*



# PROCESS OVERVIEW

- ✓ MSBA Statement of Interest (SOI) submitted March 19, 2013
- ✓ MSBA invites SOI into Eligibility Period November 20, 2013
- ✓ Town Meeting approves Feasibility Study funding May 17, 2014
- ✓ MSBA approves Owner's Project Manager April 10, 2015
- ✓ Wildwood School Building Committee formed May 15, 2015
- ✓ MSBA Designer Selection Panel approves Designer July 7, 2015
- ✓ Wildwood School Building Committee hires Designer July 22, 2015
- **MSBA Preliminary Design Program to be submitted December 2015**
- MSBA Preferred Schematic Report to be submitted February 2016
- MSBA Approves PSR in March 2016
- MSBA Authorizes Project Scope and Budget Agreement Sept 2016
- Town Meeting Votes on Project Scope and Budget Fall 2016
- Debt Exclusion Vote Fall 2016
- MSBA Authorizes Project Funding Agreement December 2016
- Complete Design and Construction on or about August 2019



# SCHEDULE

- ✓ Community Forum #1, Tuesday, September 29, 2015
- ✓ School Building Committee Meeting, Tuesday, October 15, 2015  
Review Site Alternatives
- ✓ School Committee Meeting, Tuesday, October 20, 2015  
Review Grade Reconfiguration
- ✓ **Community Forum #2, Monday, October 26, 2015**
- School Committee Meeting, Tuesday, November 3, 2015  
Approve Educational Program
- Community Forum #3, Week of November 30, 2015 (to be confirmed)  
Space Template / Site Alternatives / Existing Conditions Update
- School Building Committee Meeting, early December 2015  
Authorize PDP submission to MSBA
- PDP Submission to MSBA, Thursday, December 10, 2015
- School Building Committee Meeting, Tuesday, December 22, 2015  
Review Preliminary Design Alternatives
- Community Forum #4, Week of January 4, 2016 (to be confirmed)
- School Building Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 19, 2016  
Approve PSR submission to MSBA
- PSR Submission to MSBA, Thursday, February 11, 2016
- MSBA Board Approval, Wednesday, March 30, 2016



# PROCESS / SCHEDULE QUESTIONS

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
COMMUNITY FORUM #2

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

JCJ ARCHITECTURE  
SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2015





# COMMUNITY FORUM #1 THEMES

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
COMMUNITY FORUM #2

# COMMUNITY FORUM #1 THEMES

- Multiple initiatives under consideration for the District ... how do they relate to one another?
- Grade configuration is the biggest decision ... is sufficient time being given to understand and communicate all of the issues?
- School communities are important ... what are the impacts?
- One large school may not be appropriate for elementary school students ... consider two schools within one school.
- Maintain the same level of community resources.
- Achieve student equity with the recommended solution.
- New solution to provide economical, efficient and flexible spaces to accommodate future educational approaches.
- Sustainability is important.

Visit <http://wildwood.projects.joslinlessner.com> to review all of the **Community Forum #1** comments.





# SITE ALTERNATIVES UPDATE

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
COMMUNITY FORUM #2

# SITE CRITERIA

## **MSBA SITE STANDARDS**

- Town/District must own and control the site for the anticipated useful life of the project.
- Site must meet the educational need, maximize the use of any available community resources and minimize adverse impact to the community (ie: costly infrastructure improvements).
- To the extent possible, the site shall be proximate to other facilities (libraries, museums, parks, natural resources, businesses) which would enhance the proposed educational program.
- The site shall be free of noxious pollution/contamination and avoid flood plains, wetlands, environmentally sensitive areas and not be located within 1,000 feet of an active landfill.
- The site shall be located to efficiently and safely serve the intended school population and be appropriately sized for the proposed program and future additions.

## **SITE SIZE RECOMMENDATION**

- Elementary schools @ 4 acres (base) plus 1 acre for each 100 students.
- Minimum acreage for 360 student school @ 8 acres +/-
- Minimum acreage for 750 student school @ 12 acres +/-

# ALTERNATE SITES

## PROCESS

- Designers met with Town officials to review Amherst GIS to identify sites that met the criteria.
- Identified sites reviewed by School Building Committee Site Evaluation Working Group prior to presentation to School Building Committee.
- Site Evaluation Working Group to develop a Site Evaluation Matrix to identified the recommended site for the School Building Committee .

## ALTERNATIVE SITES

| GIS ID#            | Owner  | Address                            | Other ID                              | Acres            | Priv/Public       | School District         | Sewer             | Water             | Zoning             | Comments   |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--|
| <del>2D-2</del>    | <del>Town of Amherst Recreation</del>        | <del>303 Montague Road</del>       | <del>Cherry Hill Golf Course</del>    | <del>66.23</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>Wildwood</del>     | <del>None</del>   | <del>Public</del> | <del>C/A</del>     |  |
| 5B-33              | Town of Amherst                              | 531 Pulpit Road                    | Ruxton Gravel Pit                     | 39.00            | Public            | Wildwood                | None              | None              | RO                 | Unimproved road and adjacent to railroad                     |
| 11B-54             | Town of Amherst                              | 235-237 East Pleasant Street       | Wildwood School                       | 0.97             | Public            | Wildwood                | Public            | Public            | RN                 | Acquire ROW easement to access Parcel 11B-188                |
| 11B-76             | Town of Amherst School Department            | 71 Strong Street                   | Wildwood School                       | 14.34            | Public            | Wildwood                | Public            | Public            | RN                 |  |
| 11B-124            | Amherst Pelham Regional School District      | 170 Chestnut Street                | Wildwood School                       | 22.53            | Public            | Wildwood                | Public            | Public            | RN                 |  |
| 11B-146            | Town of Amherst                              | 61 Strong Street                   | Wildwood Daycare Center               | 1.26             | Public            | Wildwood                | Public            | Public            | RN                 | Federal funds  |
| 11B-188            | Town of Amherst                              | East Pleasant Street               | Hawthorne Property                    | 5.68             | Public            | Wildwood                | Public            | Public            |                    | Town purchased for recreation use                            |
| <del>11D-269</del> | <del>Town of Amherst Recreation</del>        | <del>205 Triangle Street</del>     | <del>Ziomek Park</del>                | <del>8.05</del>  | <del>Public</del> | <del>Wildwood</del>     | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>RG</del>      | <del>Community field (HS baseball and football fields)</del> |
| <del>12A-26</del>  | <del>Town of Amherst</del>                   | <del>Strong Street</del>           | <del>-</del>                          | <del>9.81</del>  | <del>Public</del> | <del>Wildwood</del>     | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>RN</del>      | <del>Adjacent to Railroad</del>                              |
| <del>15A-20</del>  | <del>Town of Amherst School Department</del> | <del>31 South East Street</del>    | <del>Fort River School Annex</del>    | <del>2.34</del>  | <del>Public</del> | <del>Fort River</del>   | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>RVC</del>     | <del>-</del>   |
| 15A-47             | Town of Amherst School Department            | 70 South Street                    | Fort River School                     | 11.46            | Public            | Fort River              | Public            | Public            | FPC                | 100 year flood plain, possible endangered species            |
| <del>15C-22</del>  | <del>Town of Amherst</del>                   | <del>Belchertown Road</del>        | <del>-</del>                          | <del>19.7</del>  | <del>Public</del> | <del>Fort River</del>   | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>FPC</del>     | <del>Town purchased as conservation land</del>               |
| <del>17C-13</del>  | <del>Town of Amherst Recreation</del>        | <del>Mill Lane</del>               | <del>Groff Park</del>                 | <del>10</del>    | <del>Public</del> | <del>Crocker Farm</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>RN</del>      |  |
| <del>18D-23</del>  | <del>Town of Amherst</del>                   | <del>740 Belchertown Road</del>    | <del>Landfill</del>                   | <del>56.16</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>Fort River</del>   | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>RLD</del>     | <del>Landfill capped and lined</del>                         |
| <del>21A-30</del>  | <del>Town of Amherst Water Department</del>  | <del>Old Farm Road</del>           | <del>Old Well Head Property</del>     | <del>7.9</del>   | <del>Public</del> | <del>Fort River</del>   | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>RN/PURD</del> | <del>Adjacent to Railroad</del>                              |
| <del>21B-8</del>   | <del>Town of Amherst</del>                   | <del>95 Old Belchertown Road</del> | <del>Old Landfill</del>               | <del>51.83</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>Fort River</del>   | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>PRP</del>     | <del>Landfill capped in 1985; unlined</del>                  |
| <del>23A-9</del>   | <del>Town of Amherst Recreation</del>        | <del>Potwine Lane</del>            | <del>Plum Brook Athletic Fields</del> | <del>12.21</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>Crocker Farm</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>Public</del> | <del>RLD/FC</del>  | <del>-</del>   |





# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND GRADE CONFIGURATION RECOMMENDATION

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
COMMUNITY FORUM #2

SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

JCJ ARCHITECTURE  
SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2015



# Educational Program & Grade Configuration Recommendation

Community Forum

October 26, 2015

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# Educational Plan Contents

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- Amherst Public Schools District Mission
- Guiding Principles
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Goals
- Grade & School Configuration Policies
- Class Size Policies
- School Scheduling Method
- Teaching Methodology and Structure
- Technology Infrastructure, Policies & Requirements
- Teacher Planning and Room Assignment Policies
- Special Education Programs
- ELL Program
- Transportation Policies
- Lunch Programs
- Functional Relationships & Key Adjacencies
- Security & Visual Access Requirements
- Acknowledgments





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# ARPS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Goals

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- Empathy, Citizenship, and Ethics
  - Flexibility and community; Social and self-awareness



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# ARPS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Goals

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- Curiosity, Creativity, and Risk-Taking
  - Self-directed learning; imagination

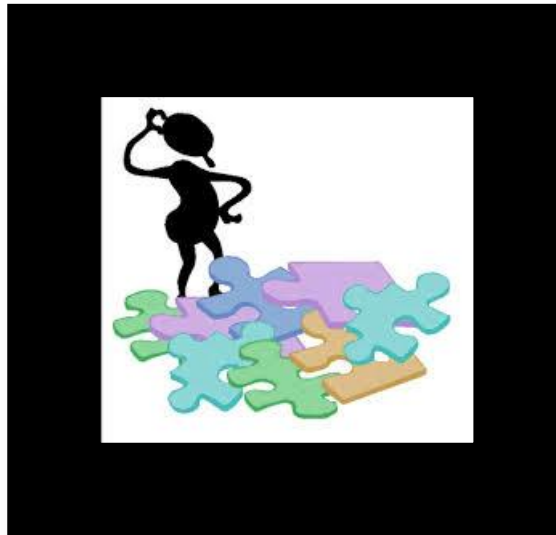


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# ARPS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Goals

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- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving





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# ARPS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Goals

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- Cultural Awareness and Expression
  - Multi-cultural literacy and Global Awareness



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# ARPS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Goals

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- Collaboration



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# ARPS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Goals

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- Effective Oral and Written Communication





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# Guiding Principles for New Building

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## Excitement and Engagement

- Students are engaged and excited about their learning
- The learning is authentic, meaningful, and relevant
- All students' needs are met through differentiated approaches
- Students are provided with opportunities to grapple and struggle with new ideas and concepts in effort to foster a growth mindset
- Student voices are heard and learning is visible throughout the school
- Students engage in continual self-assessment



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# Guiding Principles for New Building

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## Building Community

- Community-building is a priority within the classroom, across grade levels, within the school, and across the Amherst community
- Students will have a “small school” experience and feel connected and known by peers and adults in the school



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# Guiding Principles for New Building

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## **Adaptability and Flexibility**

- The infrastructure will be flexible and built for the future
- The spaces in the building will support *all* learners to engage in deep thinking and learning
- The building will be green with an eye toward climate justice





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# Guiding Principles for New Building

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## **Collaboration and Sharing Expertise**

- The physical building will support teacher collaboration (i.e., collaborative work spaces and accessible storage of shared materials and resources)
- Teachers will have ample opportunities to share best practices
- Students will learn how to collaborate and there will be ample opportunities to practice teaming skills



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# Communication & Engagement

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- **School Committee Meetings** (3/12/13, 2/4/14, 4/29/14, 10/21/14, 11/25/14, 12/16/14, 1/20/15, 2/10/15, 3/17/15, 4/28/15, 5/17/15, 8/27/15, 9/21/15, 10/20/15)
- **School Building Committee Meetings** (10/21/14, 1/26/15, 2/23/15, 3/26/15, 4/8/15, 7/22/15, 9/15/15, 10/15/15)
- **Meetings at Wildwood**
  - PGO (5/26/15, 10/15/15)
  - School Council (4/15/15)
  - Staff Meeting (5/13/15, 10/14/15), **Paraeducators (10/26/15)**
- **Meetings at Crocker Farm**
  - PGO (10/9/15)
  - School Council (4/28/15)
  - Staff Meeting (4/29/15, 9/30/15), **Paraeducators (10/21/15)**
- **Meetings at Fort River**
  - PGO (5/8/15, 10/16/15)
  - School Council (4/30/15)
  - Staff Meeting (6/2/15, 9/30/15), **Paraeducators (10/21/15)**
- **Town Meeting** (5/7/14)
- **Meeting for Families with Preschoolers/Young Children** (10/13/15)
- **SEPAC Meetings, 10/29/15 & 11/2/15**
- **Family Center Advisory Board, TBD**



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# Communication & Engagement

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- **Community Forums**
  - September 29, 3:30 & 7:00
  - October 26, 3:30 & 7:00
- **Online**
  - Website (started 5/18/15)
  - Facebook site (started 8/5/15)
- **Amherst Media segments**
  - June 8, 2015: with John Musante, Ron Bohonowicz, Kimberly Stender, Katherine Appy, and Michael Morris
  - September 22, 2015 Joan Temkin with Maria Geryk, Kathryn Mazur, and Michael Morris
- **Daily Hampshire Gazette Articles**
  - 11/26/13, 9/24/14, 9/16/15, 9/21/15
- **Email Correspondence**
  - 6/9/15: All Parent email on Building Project (included private Preschools)
  - Supt weekly emails: 9/4/15, 9/11/15, 9/18/15 (w/FAQ), 9/25/15, 10/2/15, 10/9/15, 10/23/15
  - Crocker Farm School Newsletter, 9/18/15
  - Fort River School Newsletter, 10/2/15
- **Visioning Group** of staff, central office administrators, town officials, principals, parents/guardians, School Committee members, community members, and Select Board members
  - 8/24/15, 9/10/15, 9/25/15, 10/14/15





# WWSBP UPDATE

May 19, 2015

Recorded by: Sasha Figueroa



The Massachusetts School Building Authority has approved the feasibility study of three options for the Wildwood School Building Project.

- Option 1: Addition/Renovation of current Wildwood School
- Option 2: Build New K-6 School
- Option 3: Grade Reconfiguration

These options will be carefully considered and this flyer will help to clarify what each option entails.

## OPTIONS FOR THE WILDWOOD SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT

Crocker Farm example

Newly constructed part of the building



Renovated part of the building

### Option 1: ADDITION/RENOVATION

This "add/reno" option is a renovation of the current Wildwood school building. Parts of the existing building would be renovated while others would be added via new construction. This is the option that was chosen for Crocker Farm's project completed in 2002.

### Option 2: BUILD NEW K-6



The "build new" option is the building of a new K-6 school. A new building would be constructed, followed by the demolition of the current building.

### Option 3: GRADE RECONFIGURATION



Grades 2 - 6 within the new Wildwood

Preschool - grade 1 within Crocker Farm



The grade reconfiguration option would conclude with two district-wide elementary schools. All Preschool through grade 1 students would attend Crocker Farm School, and all grade 2 through 6 students would attend the new Wildwood building. The current Wildwood and Fort River buildings would be closed.

Stay Informed

by scanning the code or visit [www.arsps.org](http://www.arsps.org)



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# Communication with other Districts with Early Childhood Models

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(70 MA districts use this model)

- South Hadley
- Holliston
- Weston
- Ludlow
- East Longmeadow
- **Auburn**
- Springfield, VT



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## Infrastructure: Wildwood

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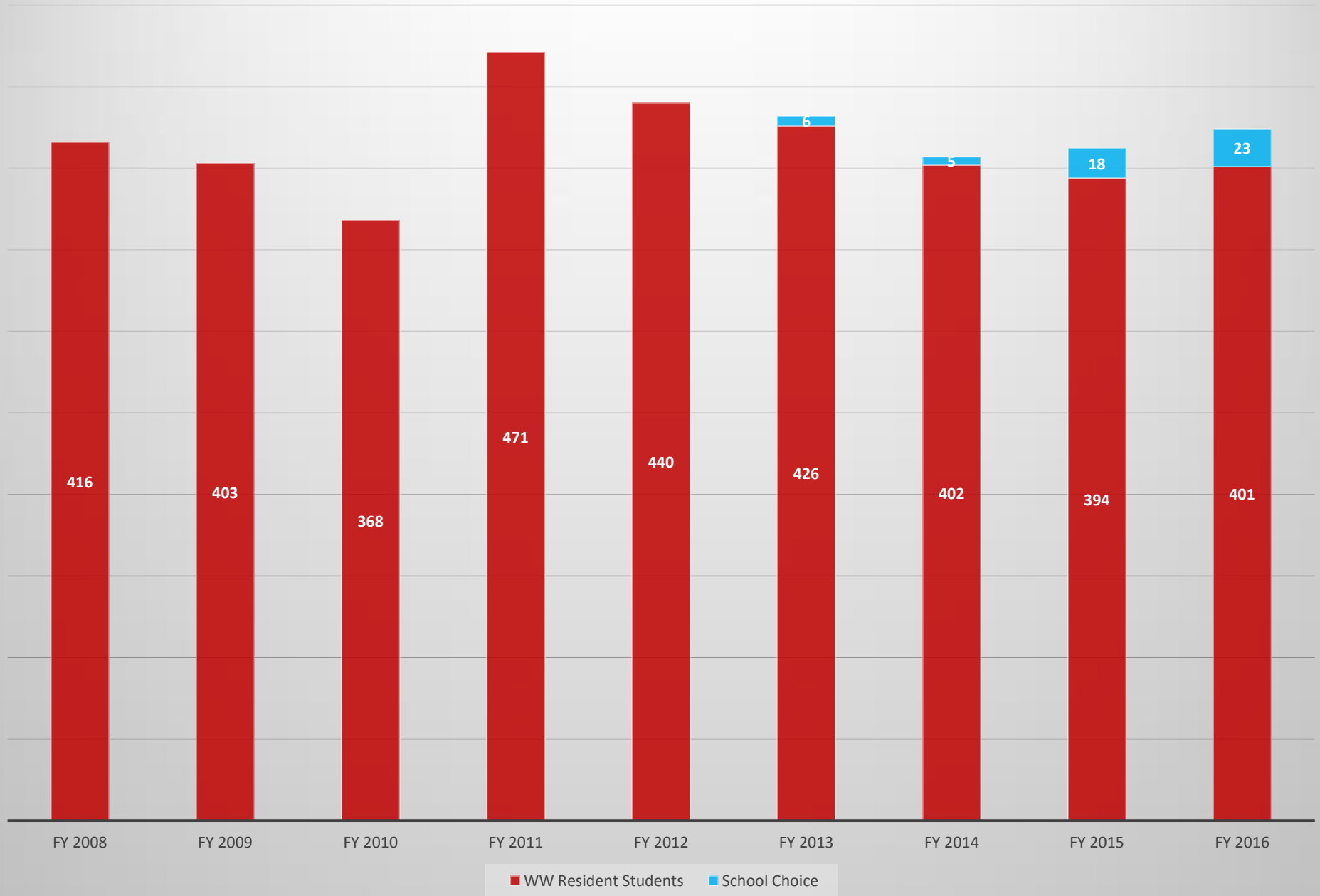
- Built in 1970; Open classroom concept (outdated)
- Issues with HVAC and moisture
- Accessibility issues throughout the building
- Qualified for MSBA process
- 24% of Wildwood teachers agreed with the statement, “The physical environment of classrooms in this school supports teaching and learning” (compared to 83% state average for elementary schools)\*
- 25% of Wildwood teachers agreed with the statement, “Teachers and staff work in a school that is environmentally healthy” (compared to 72% statewide)\*
- Relatively stable enrollment, somewhat due to school choice (see next slide)

\*TELL Survey Results 2014





# Wildwood Enrollment K-6



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# Wildwood School Pics

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# Infrastructure: Fort River

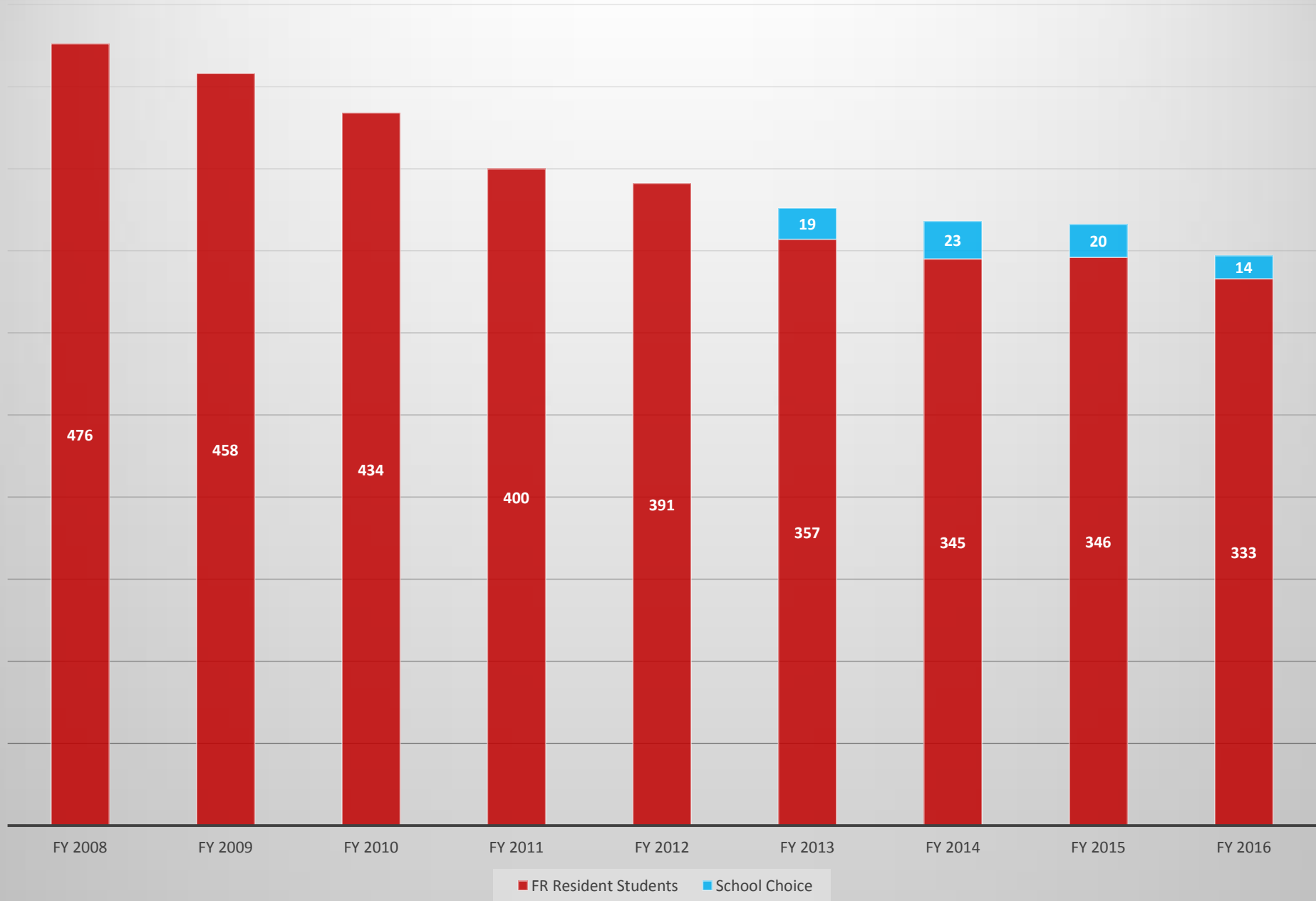
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- Built in 1973
- Open classroom concept (outdated)
- Issues with HVAC and moisture
- Accessibility issues throughout the building
- 9% of Fort River teachers agreed with the statement, “The physical environment of classrooms in this school supports teaching and learning” (compared to 83% state average for elementary schools)\*
  - *This ranks 990<sup>th</sup> out of the 992 Massachusetts schools who completed the survey*
- 18% of Fort River teachers agreed with the statement, “Teachers and staff work in a school that is environmentally healthy” (compared to 72% statewide)\*
  - *This ranks 968<sup>th</sup> out of the 992 Massachusetts schools who completed the survey*
- Significant reduction in student population in past 8 years (see next slide)

\*TELL Survey Results 2014



# Fort River Enrollment K-6





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# Fort River School Pics

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BOYS





- 1) Swing
- 2) bean bag
- 3) hop ball

- 1. red rocker
- 2. ball bag
- 3. deep pressure





















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# Infrastructure at Crocker Farm

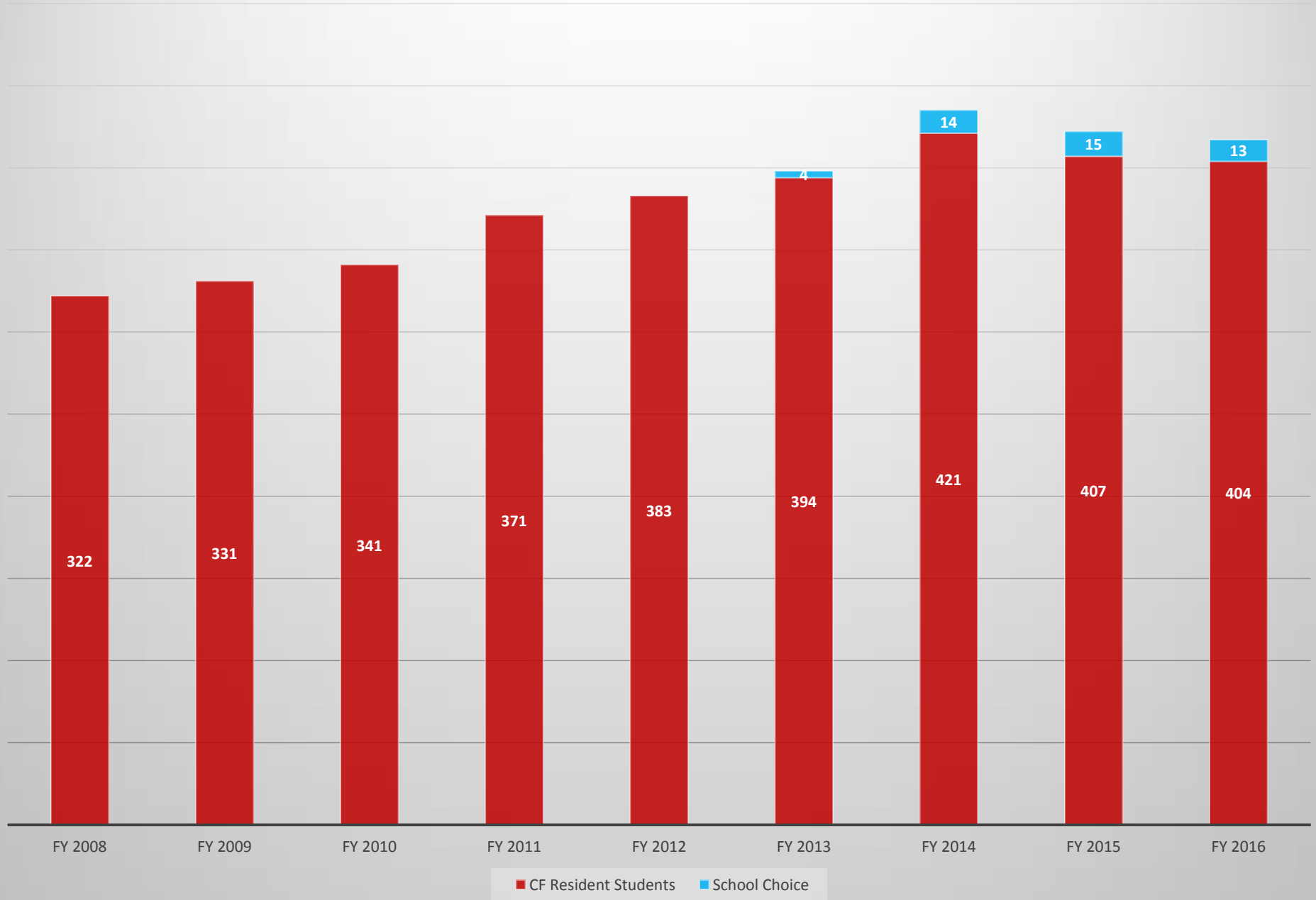
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- Renovated in 2002; Award-winning building
  - 96% of CF teachers agreed with the statement, “The physical environment of classrooms in this school supports teaching and learning” (compared to 83% state average for elementary schools)\*
  - 87% of CF teachers agreed with the statement, “Teachers and staff work in a school that is environmentally healthy (compared to 72% statewide)\*
- Significant issue with overcrowding due to increasing student population in past 8 years (see next slide)
  - Due to overcrowding, spaces have been repurposed (Community Room is now an instructional space, shared instructional spaces for ELL/SE/Title I, etc.)
  - The overcrowding may need to be addressed as soon as next year if 3 Kindergarten classes are needed based on enrollment; redrawing boundaries will need to be explored

\*TELL Survey Results 2014



# Crocker Farm Enrollment PreK-6



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# Crocker Farm School Pics

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Open House

WELCOME TO  
CROCKER FARM

CAUTION  
WET  
FLOOR









## BIRTHDAYS

### October Birthdays

- 1. Christopher A. Becky D.
- 2. David G. Torgal K.
- 3. Dominic L.
- 4. Joshua (Ariel) J. My Bradbury
- 5. David C. Jordan D. Eric D. Jordan
- 6. David M. Mary Jane A.
- 7. Nicole L. Lucia L. Juliana S. My Aaron
- 8. Sydney B. Lindsay R. My Duane Gault
- 9. Anthony R.
- 10. Angel G. Jonathan S. Messiah T.
- 11. Michael S.
- 12. Maria R. Peter S.
- 13. Ali A. Mrs. Newcomb
- 14. Graham H.
- 15. Arpana S. Eliza T.
- 16. Ethan R.
- 17. Keira T.
- 18. Alex Underhill Jack & Mila J.
- 19. Ms. Green Jack G.
- 20. Jefferson C. A. Lisa B.
- 21. Anthony K.
- 22. Douglas D. Calvin L.
- 23. Willey L. Vanda L.
- 24. Daniel R.K.
- 25. Slava S.

AMHERST ABC  
Foliage  
Week of  
OCTOBER 17

















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Our  
Cool  
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# Teaching and Learning Implications

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## Reconfiguration

- Regular job-alike collaboration time on a weekly basis across all teachers
- All schools would have modern classrooms ready for project-based learning
- Early childhood center customized to the developmental needs of students in PreK-1
- Clustering students with similar strengths and challenges to better address student needs
- Newcomer ELL program becomes viable
- Professional development model more targeted

## K-6 Model

- Six hours of time per year for job-alike collaboration across all teachers
- Two schools ready for project-based learning; program would need to be adjusted for Fort River students and teachers
- Maintains a seven-grade classroom span, which contributes to mentoring opportunities
- Teachers have easy access to students' former teachers to learn about learning profiles (across 7 grade levels)





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# Evidence Base on Teaching and Learning Issues with Current Infrastructure

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- **Academic Achievement**
  - Uline & Tschannen-Moran (2007)
  - Tanner (2008)
- **Acoustic Privacy**
  - Evans & Maxwell (1997)
  - Maxwell & Evans (2000)
- **Natural Light**
  - Heschong Mahone Group (1999)
  - Kuller & Lindsten (1992)
- **Teacher Morale & Retention**
  - Schneider (2003)
  - Buckley et al (2004)



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# Continuity/Connections

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## Reconfiguration

- All students would transition from Crocker Farm to intermediate school after Grade 1
- Specialized special education programs would need to be present in both buildings
- Town-wide or unified schools (not tied to specific area of town)
- Sense of community would need to be rebuilt at all three schools given the changes of student and staff population

## K-6 Model

- Some students would transition during the redistricting period in 2019 from Crocker Farm and Wildwood to Fort River (unless CF redistricting is needed to be completed earlier)
- Specialized special education programs would likely be moved from Fort River to Crocker Farm or Wildwood to provide an appropriate learning environment
- Schools would have attendance zones defined a specific area of town (neighborhood schools), making walking to school more likely for a greater number of families





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# Efficiencies/Costs

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## Reconfiguration

- Reductions
  - 585k for staffing (fewer custodial, classrooms, one less administrator) *mostly or completely done through attrition*
  - 75k for health insurance savings
  - 35k for cafeteria closure
  - **Total: 695k**
- Additions
  - **55k-165k** for transportation costs
  - World Language?
  - Preschool classroom(s)?
  - Smaller class sizes?
  - Prevent budget reductions?

## K-6 Model

- No significant changes in either reductions or additions
- Transportation costs remain lower than in reconfigured model
- Families with multiple children at the elementary level would have them at the same school for their entire elementary experience



# Transportation

## Reconfiguration

- **If new/renovated school is at Wildwood and we maintained 19 runs (no additional cost):**
    - 36.8 min (AM)
    - 33.8 mins (PM)
  - **If three runs are added (165k):**
    - 30.8 mins (AM)
    - 27.8 mins (PM)
- 
- **If new/renovated school is at Fort River and we maintained 19 runs (no additional cost):**
    - 30.8 mins (AM)
    - 27.8 mins (PM)
  - **If one run is added: (\$55k):**
    - 28.8 mins (AM)
    - 25.9 mins (PM)

## K-6

In our current K-6 model (19 runs):

- 28.3 min (average) in AM
- 23 min (average) in PM





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# Operational Efficiencies/Lifecycle Costs

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## Reconfiguration

- Operational efficiency with new school through:
  - Reduced total square footage of building. Existing Fort River and Wildwood are 216K SF combined; whereas, proposed new school building area approximately 109K SF.
  - New high efficiency mechanical equipment.
  - New high performance exterior door, roof, wall and window systems.
  - Projected costs to be determined once a design and mechanical systems have been approved

## K-6 Model

- Future need to renovate/replace Fort River
- Anticipated costs would be similar to the Wildwood project plus an additional 3-4% annual escalation
- Fort River will need capital improvements prior to a construction project



# School Size/Predicated Enrollments in FY19

## Configuration Change, school split 2-4; 5-6

Crocker Farm: 292 K-1  
students (359 total), 15 K-1  
classrooms; classes btw 19-  
20

New School: grades 2-4 wing  
would have 451 students, 22  
classrooms between 20-21  
students per class

New School: grades 5-6 wing  
would have 305 students, 15  
classrooms between 20-21  
students per class

## Configuration Change, school split into grade 2-6 wings

Crocker Farm: 292 K-1  
students (359 total), 15 K-1  
classrooms; classes btw 19-20

New School: grades 2-6 wing  
“A” would have 388 students,  
19 classrooms at between 20-  
21 students per class

New School: grades 2-6 wing  
“B” would have 368 students,  
18 classrooms between 20-21  
students per class

or

or

## New/Renovated K-6 Wildwood\*

Crocker Farm: 363 K-6 students (430  
total) 20 classrooms K-6, average class  
size of 18/range from 16-22)

Fort River: 301 students, 15 classrooms,  
average class size of 20 with range  
from 17-23

Wildwood: 384 students, 21  
classrooms, average class size of 18  
with range from 17-21

**\*However, this scenario would need to be  
adjusted. CF cannot hold 20 K-6  
classrooms and the MSBA will only  
support a 360 student WW, so significant  
redistricting would need to occur to send  
more students to FR from CF and WW.**



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# Schools Within A School Model: Follow-Up

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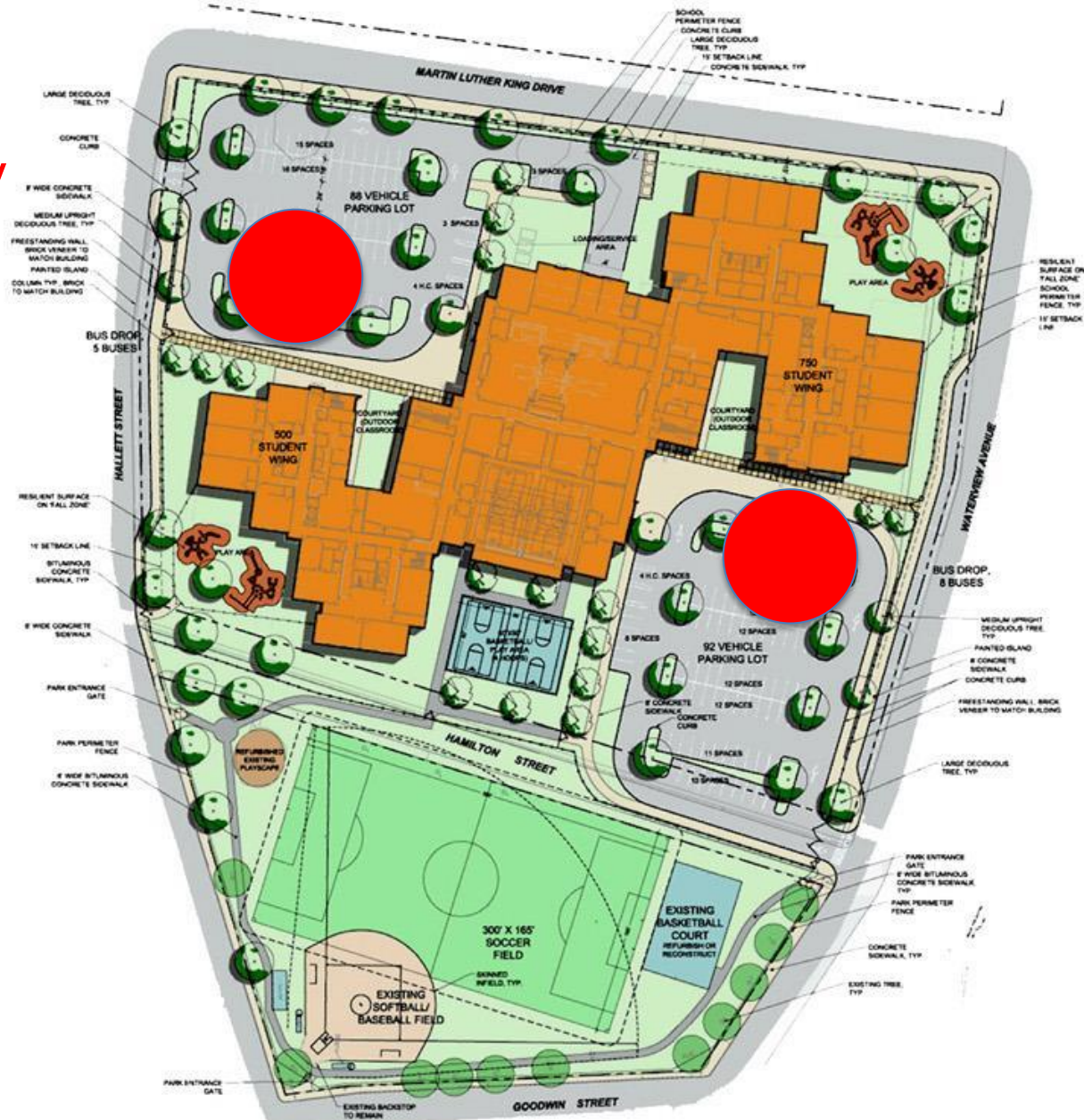


# SCHOOL WITHIN A SCHOOL

Wildwood School, Amherst, MA



Waltersville  
School entry



Barnum  
School  
entry

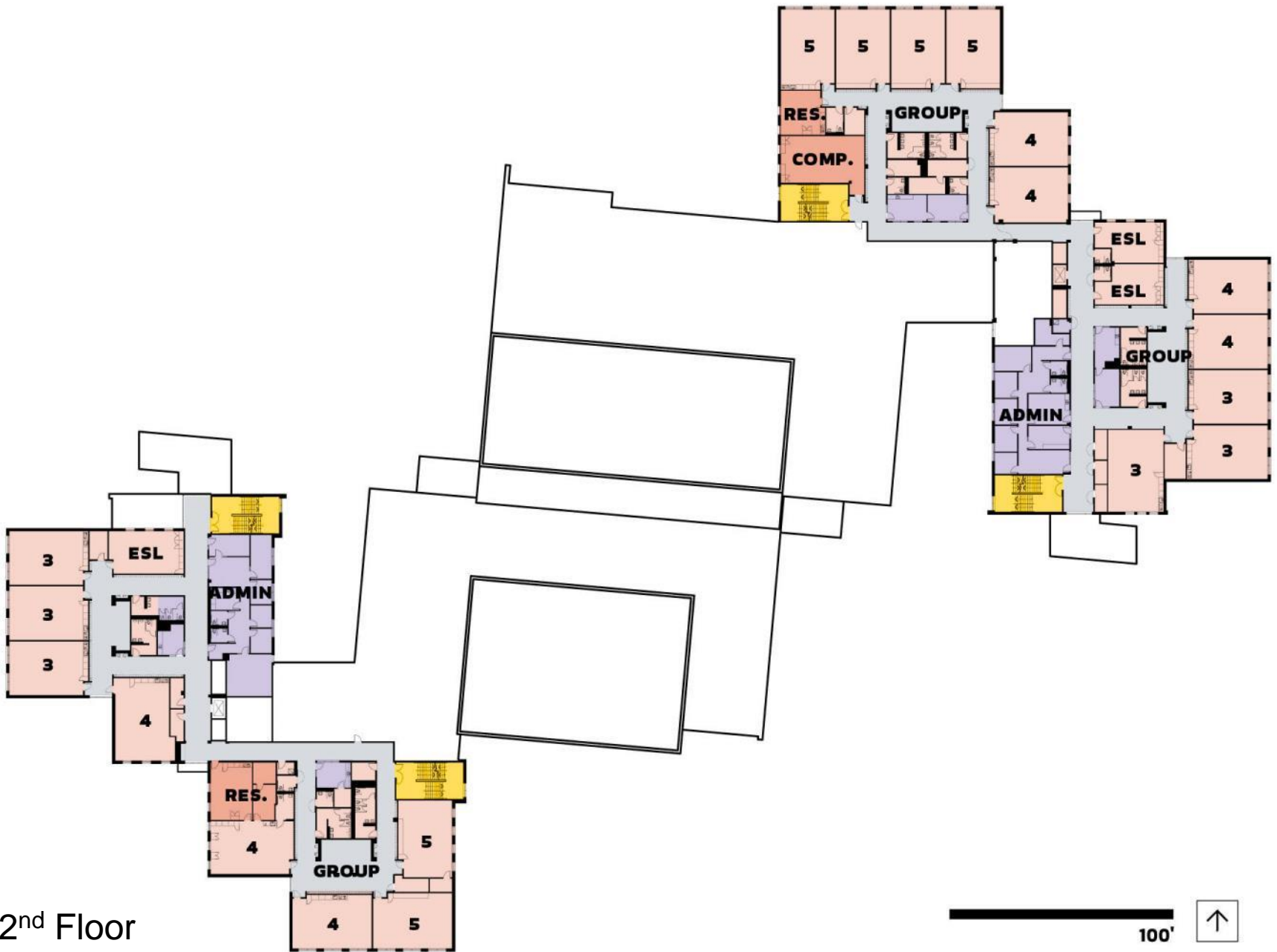
Barnum / Waltersville Schools



1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Barnum / Waltersville Schools







2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Barnum / Waltersville Schools



Barnum/waltersville school, bridgeport, ct





West Woods Upper Elementary School

5th Grade Cluster

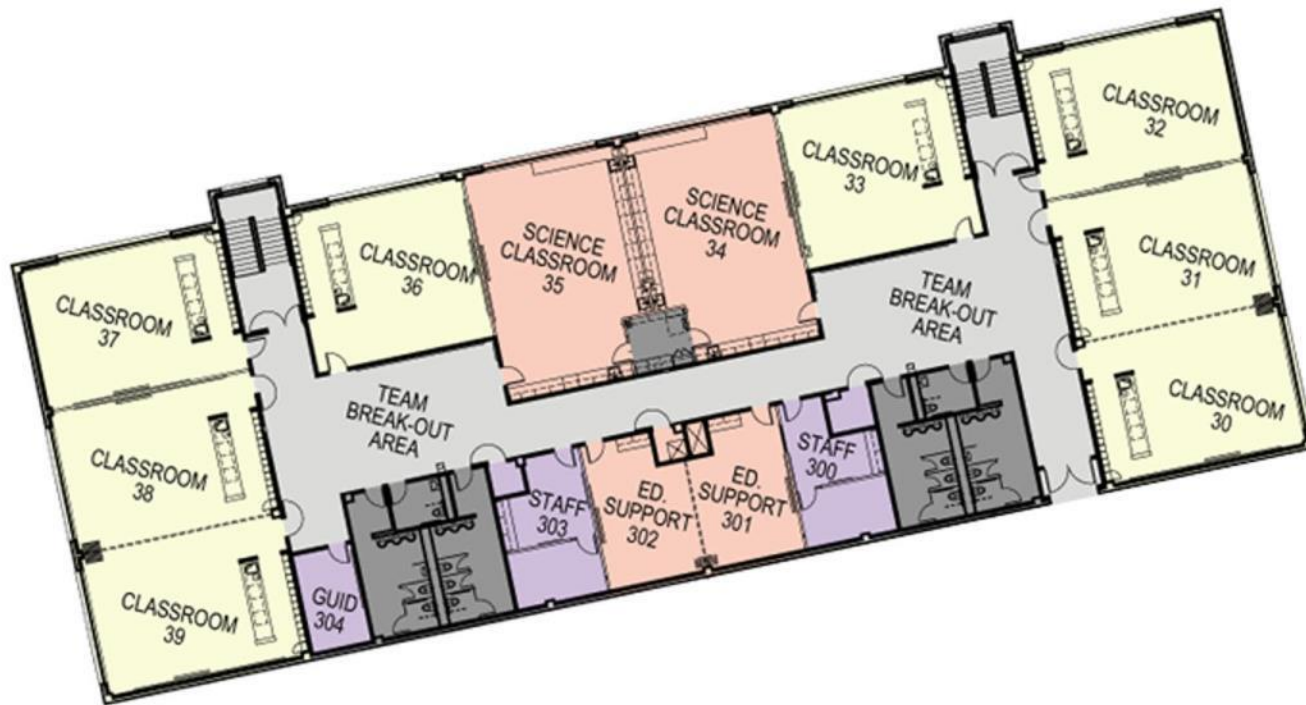
6th Grade Cluster



Floor plan

West Woods Upper Elementary School





Classroom cluster  
West Woods Upper Elementary School



West Woods Upper Elementary School





West Woods Upper Elementary School





West Woods Upper Elementary School





West Woods Upper Elementary School

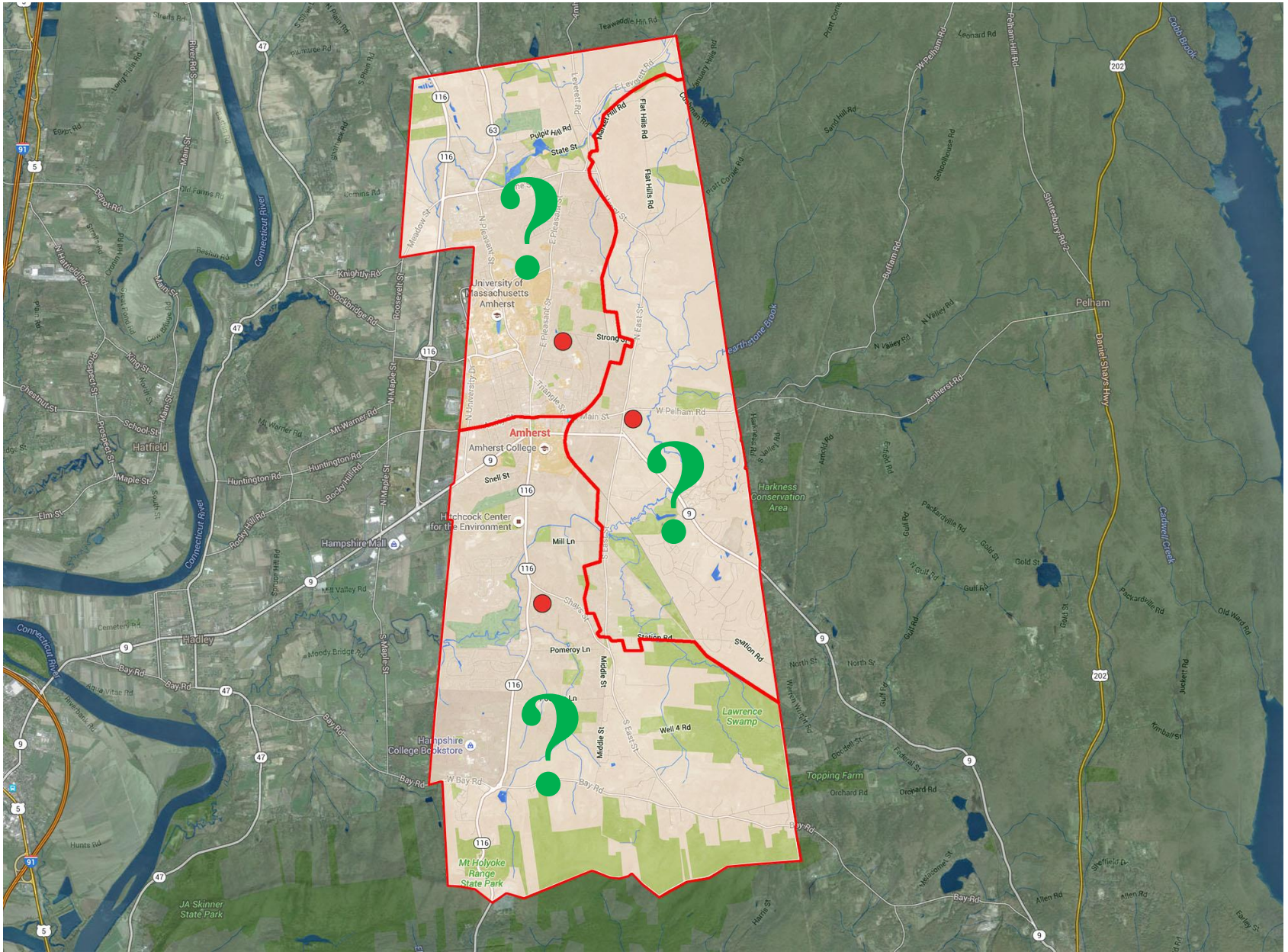




West Woods Upper Elementary School

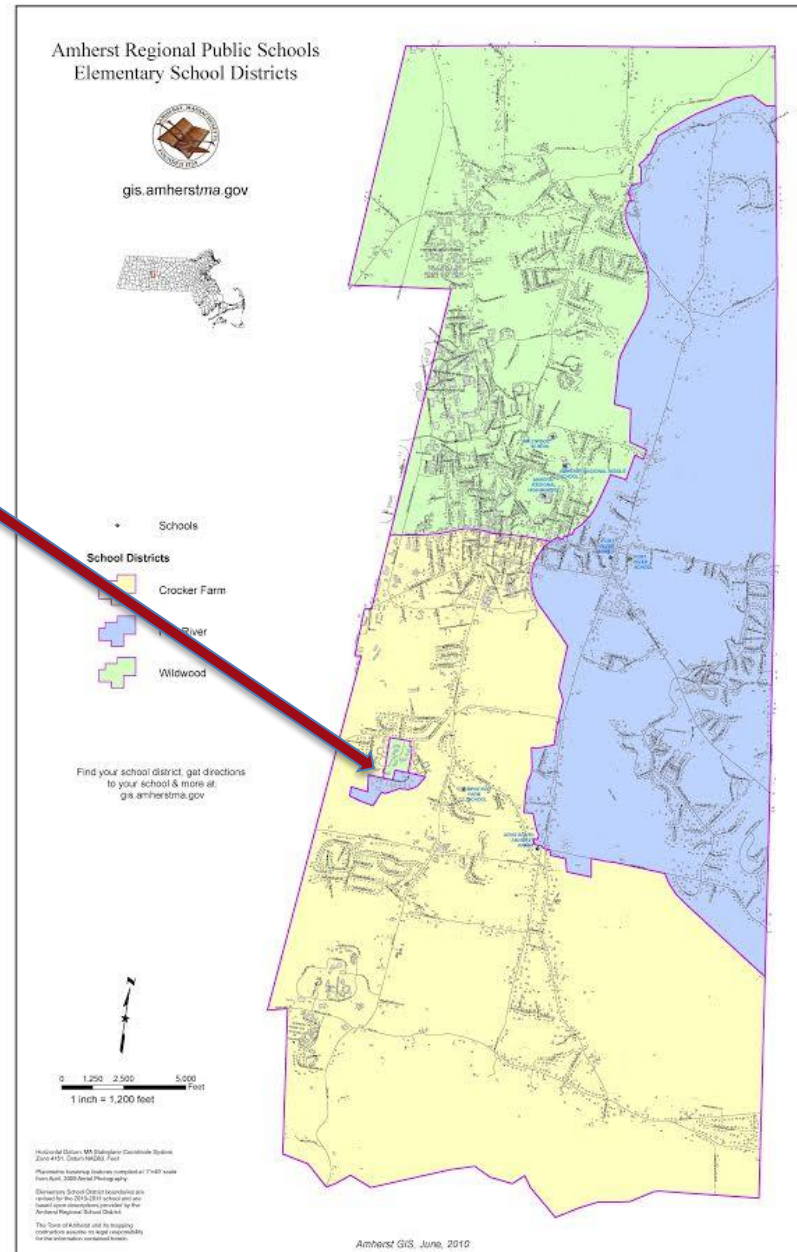


# Redistricting



# Current Enrollment Map

**46 Students Total**  
**89% Students of Color**  
**83% F/R Lunch**



**19 Students in  
specialized programs  
do not attend  
neighborhood school**

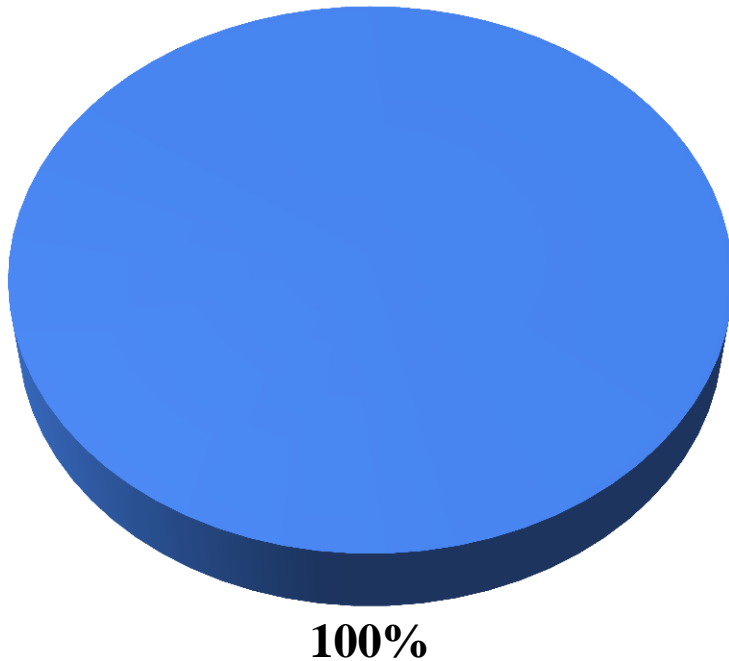


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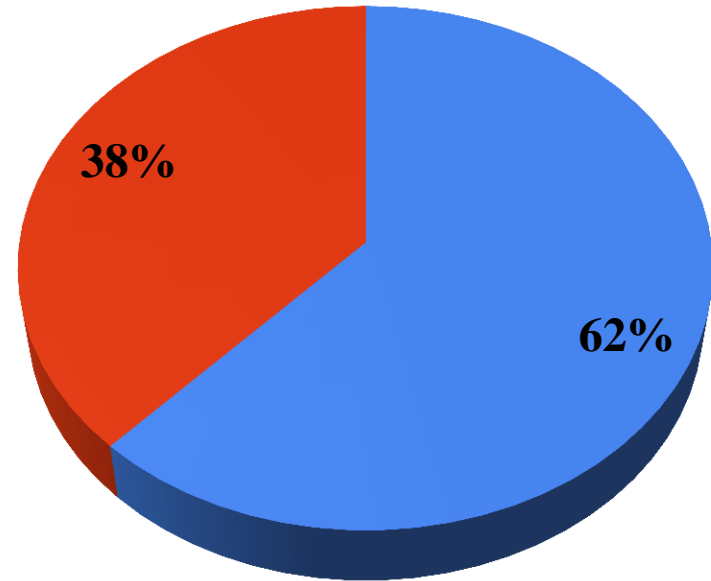
# Percent of Students in High-Quality, ADA-Compliant School Environment

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Reconfiguration



K-6 Model



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# Equity

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## Reconfiguration

- All elementary students would attend healthy classrooms with:
  - infrastructure to support 21st Century Teaching & Learning
  - acoustic privacy, critical for all students but especially students with ELL and special needs
- Funds could be redistributed to introduce world language program, add an additional early childhood classroom(s), or other in other ways that benefit students
- A newcomer ELL program could be supported
- By default, demographics of students will be balanced; imbalance of poverty rates is starting to be seen again (35.8% CF, 44.4% FR, 43.4% WW)

## K-6 Model

- 62% of elementary students would attend healthy classrooms with:
  - infrastructure to support 21st Century Teaching & Learning
  - acoustic privacy, critical for all students but especially students with ELL and special needs
- Redistricting would need to occur
- In the past, the Amherst School Committee has requested that demographics of students be balanced; imbalance of poverty rates is starting to be seen again (35.8% CF, 44.4% FR, 43.4% WW); this may drive redistricting efforts





# Likelihood of Fort River School being Renovated/Rebuilt if K-6 Model is Chosen



Massachusetts School Building Authority

*Funding Affordable, Sustainable, and Efficient Schools in Partnership with Local Communities*

- 109 applications (statements of interest) went to the MSBA this year; they expect to select 15 to enter into the process
- The MSBA has an interest in ensuring that a wide range of communities get into the pipeline, so the fact that the Wildwood project was accepted makes getting into the pipeline for Fort River less likely
- Funding the project without MSBA support would have very significant funding implications for the town



# Likelihood of Fort River School being Renovated/Rebuilt if K-6 Model is Chosen

- In addition, the town has multiple significant capital projects that are under consideration or exploration (Jones Library in feasibility study; Department of Public Works; Central Station Fire Station)
- If these projects are funded, they will fill a significant part of the town's capital expenditures for an extended time period since projects of this scope are typically paid off over a 20-30 year time period (even if we were fortunate enough to get into the MSBA process for Fort River)





# Financial Information

## ■ Reconfiguration (750 students)

- Total project cost estimate between \$47-53 million
- Effective reimbursement rate of 58%\*

**Total Cost to Amherst taxpayers: \$19.7-22.3 million**

\*The MSBA Reimbursement rate is 68% of eligible costs. However, many project costs are not eligible for MSBA reimbursement, hence the effective reimbursement rate is estimated to be 58%

## ■ Replacing Wildwood (360 students)

- Total project cost estimate between \$29-33 million
- Effective Reimbursement rate of 58%\*
- Cost to Amherst taxpayers ranges from \$12-14 million

## ■ Replacing Fort River (390 students)

- Total project cost estimate between \$31-36 million
- No reimbursement
- Cost to Amherst taxpayers of \$31-36 million

**Total Cost to Amherst Taxpayers: \$43-50 million**



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# Assumptions in Financial Information

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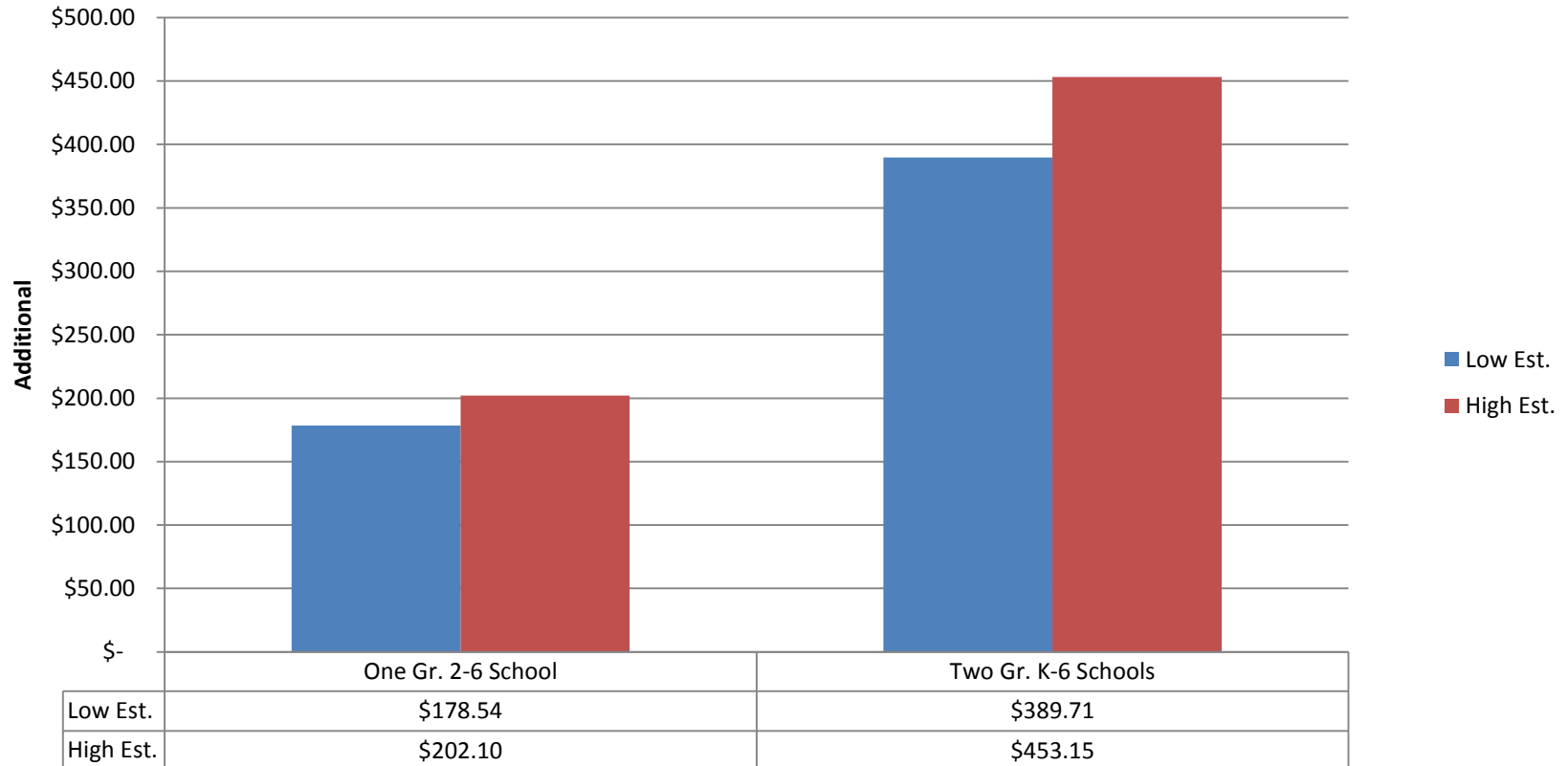
- \$375/sq. foot (Grades 2-6 Model)
- \$390/sq. foot (K-6 Model)
- MSBA Model School Program—officially “on hiatus” as per MSBA





# Debt Exclusion Financial Information

## Average Annual Impact on Property Taxes on Median Amherst Home



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# Waiting for the MSBA for Fort River: Additional Challenges

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- Capital Projects needed for Fort River in next five years total \$1.5 Million:
  - Generator (\$85,000)
  - Roof (\$1.3 million)
  - Parking Lot (\$71,000)
  - Exterior Doors (\$47,000)
- The MSBA process lasts for six years from acceptance to new/renovated building
- Not likely that Fort River will be accepted in the near future
- Town capital projects may be at capacity by that point in time





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# Recommendation

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The Superintendent recommends that the Educational Program be accepted with a reconfiguration of Crocker Farm to be a PreK-Grade 1 school and a new school to educate all Grades 2-6 students



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# Next Steps

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**November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015**

**School Committee Vote  
6:00 PM, HS Library**

## **Crocker Farm Visioning**

If the recommendation is approved, a Visioning Group will be formed to develop guiding principles and goals for an early childhood center

## **Future Forums & Dialogue**

More specifics and feedback on aspects and design of the school (regardless of configuration option) as well as costs

