

# COMMUNITY FORUM #1 COMMENTS – 7:00PM Page 1

- Ratification of education plan by School Committee; whereas, School Building Committee ratifies site selection and design options ... funding by Town Meeting.
- Debt exclusion vote following Town Meeting ... verify and track dates.
- “Gee, that’s what they were saying in 1970 and look where it got us” ... be respectful of history ... legitimate concern ... maximizing all square footage than traditionally used ... flexible learning environment in the most efficient way.
- When will costs be discussed? ... will they identify construction costs plus life cycle costs? ... Operating costs (transportation/staffing) by District end of November; building cost near year end.

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- Proximal concerns ... CFES over enrollment ... when will redistricting occur? ... District evaluating options.
- Media and screens over load for ES students.
- Separate computer lab desirable.
- Separate cafeterias / dining spaces for students.
- Cost and energy efficiency important ... student needs must be top priority.
- Size of school and social chaos a concern.
- Appropriate scale of spaces for ES students.
- Travel distances between common spaces and classroom cores.
- No discussion about after school programs in presentation ... include in planning discussions.

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- New facility should maintain community spaces within District ... new facility should not reduce community resources.
- Anticipate parking/traffic impacts of a 750 student facility.
- Opportunity to address two schools with needs ... Fort River ES and Wildwood ES ... preserve existing playfields.
- Do something functional for the community to preserve all three schools and community resources.
- Impact to Wildwood ES students in a renovation/addition scenario? ... Phasing to be reviewed ... is there swing space available?
- Regionalization ... will this project open up School Choice? ... Is School Choice an option for displaced students impacted by school building project?
- October 6<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30P... Regionalization Forum at ARHS Library.

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- Grade reconfiguration decision before Regionalization decision ... is this the cart before the horse? ... MSBA driven process focused on building to capacity.
- CFES experience supporting keeping small school communities.
- Small school communities are important.
- Ability to make good decisions for the elementary schools absent decisions on other District issues.
- School operation costs will be known before November 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reconfiguration decision.
- MSBA did not support exploring one K-6<sup>th</sup> school to replace two schools.
- Contact Pre-schools to spread the word about Community Forums ... we are open to suggestions to improve public engagement.
- How do we create flexibility and adaptability in the new facility for the future? ... Design to include plans for expansion ... provide a variety of size of spaces within school.

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- Location in neighborhoods critical ... ability to bike and/or walk to school.
- Concern of impacts to students during construction.
- Western MA school districts experiencing declining enrollments.
- FY'16 students @ 850 for Grades 2-6 ... identify School Choice out numbers.
- Public review of DRAFT of Educational Plan.
- Three elementary schools campuses and distribution within community preferred.
- Renovation/addition at Wildwood ES ... is there available space? ... to be studied and presented at future Community Forums.
- November 7<sup>th</sup> Forum to discuss secondary schools.
- October 14<sup>th</sup> film "Most Likely to Succeed" open to the public.
- Notice for public engagement ... rename to be inclusive of all elementary schools.

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- Value of community schools of Grade K-8 ... strong sense of community ... when you teach, you learn the best, rich opportunity for older students.
- Keep community and student relationships as higher priority over innovation.
- Green building discussion ... to what degree will the facility be used a teaching tool ... MSBA provides additional reimbursement if meet or exceed LEED-S silver certification.
- Ditto to community schools comment ...
- Can Fort River ES be eligible for MSBA grant? ... yes, requires a separate SOI ... two school projects would require Town Meeting approval ... multiple town capital projects in the works.
- Redistricting ... apprehension it would be the worst thing ... provide to be the opposite.
- Connection between interior and exterior spaces ... daylight is central to JCJ design approach ... learning environment includes the entire site ... MSBA limits site development cost to 8% of eligible costs.

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- Playgrounds, gardens, sport fields to be included in the plan ... community resources.
- Technology hardware ... reuse existing where possible ... inventory of existing to be evaluated.
- Flexible classrooms ... classroom as the building block with internal flexibility ... agility = movable furniture/equipment .. different sized rooms ... while maintaining acoustical separation.
- Opportunities ... ES language immersion program to be considered ... create Amherst as a destination for neighboring communities.