

What's to gain, what's at risk?

The continued excellence of the Wayland Public Schools requires an expansion and modernization of Wayland High School.

Failing to act will lead to degradation of that education and the value that it adds to the community.

The Wayland School Committee

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Wayland High School: The Next 50 Years

Q: What is the history of Wayland High School?

The current High School was built in 1960. In 1965, a Math/English building was added. In 1972, a Media Center was built, and renovations to the Commons/Cafeteria and Art Center were completed. Between 1989 and 1991, a safety, structural, and code renovation project was completed to update major systems (e.g., roofs, HVAC, offices and classrooms, and the field house) and to keep the buildings functional until enlargement was necessary.

Q: Why are we looking at a renovation and expansion project for the High School to be completed by 2007?

There are three key reasons:

1. The High School's physical plant has many significant shortcomings relative to code compliance, environmental and energy efficiency problems, and physical deterioration.
2. The projected enrollment of the High School will exceed capacity by the year 2007.
3. Educational imperatives have changed, which require updated science labs, language labs, technology upgrades, greater performing arts capacity, and moving faculty offices to encourage interdepartmental course offerings.

Q: How do we know there is a need for renovation and expansion at the High School?

At the 2002 Annual Town Meeting, voters approved a \$50,000 warrant article for a feasibility study of the High School. To complete this study, the School Committee appointed a High School Feasibility Study Committee, which in turn selected and engaged an architectural firm, Dore and Whittier, Inc., and a project adviser, JFA Associates.

The architects were commissioned to thoroughly consider options to renovate the existing High School facilities, to build a new school complex, or to construct a combination of the two, with the objective of meeting the High School's long-term needs in terms of space and educational programs. A comprehensive analysis was conducted between July and October 2002 and culminated in a Feasibility Study report available for review at the Town Building and Town Library.

Dore and Whittier's architects demonstrated that, as a result of ongoing degradation and expected obsolescence coupled with Building Code changes, the current facility has significant shortcomings that render it unsuited to fulfilling the High School's educational needs. These deficiencies necessitate either major renovations or new construction to replace most of the existing buildings.

Q: What is the plan to respond to enrollment changes?

After the last renovation in 1992, there were 596 students at the High School. Currently, there are 829 students in grades 9-12. Recent enrollment projections conducted by the School Committee forecast approximately 1,000 students in grades 9-12 by 2007. Current thinking among educators is that capacity should be 110% to 115% of expected enrollment. In 1969, the High School housed 1,292 students, but conditions were extremely crowded. Educational program needs have changed as space has been reallocated to accommodate smaller class sizes, expanded guidance programs, special education areas, a cable studio, and computer labs. This reallocation has resulted in a substantial decrease in overall capacity at the school. Further, to accommodate potential enrollment increases due to empty nesters selling homes to families with children and new construction up to 20%, the design goal for the expanded Wayland High School is 1,200.

Q: What are the High School construction options as outlined in the Feasibility Study?

1. Doing nothing will not work, because of the code compliance issues, deteriorating space, and enrollment exceeding capacity.
2. A code upgrade of \$12M doesn't work, because it fails to meet growing enrollment needs and it disregards educational imperatives.
3. A minimal addition and code upgrade option of \$20M doesn't work, because the facility needs additional cafeteria and performing arts space to meet enrollment projections as well as updates to aging science and language labs.
4. Modernized expansion and renovation, costing as much as \$40-50M, is the recommended option.

Q: What are the Warrant Articles put forth by the School Committee?

1. Article 25 proposes the development of Schematic Design Services for Wayland High School at a cost of \$375,000. This step will allow an in-depth look at the options put forth in the Feasibility Study. This article takes a measured approach with respect to the recent moratorium on state reimbursement for school building projects without putting the construction schedule (2007 goal) at risk.
2. Article 26 proposes to form a High School Building Committee with 11 appointed members who will hire an architect to conduct the schematic design phase and, provided the town approves, oversee the design and construction of a modernized, expanded, and renovated Wayland High School. The Building Committee's charge will be to satisfy the educational plan of the Wayland High School in the most cost-effective manner.

Q: How can I get more information?

Please visit the School Committee website at www.waylandschoolcommittee.org. You will be able to access the High School Feasibility Study for more detailed information, and you can also review the presentation about the project prepared by the School Committee.

