

Pollard Middle School Needham, MA 02492

Memorandum

To: Steve Theall
From: Joe Barnes
Re: Space Needs at Pollard
Date: February 2, 2005

As of October 1, 2004, 1070 students were enrolled at Pollard. Cluster class sizes range from an average of 21 in Grade 8, to 22 in Grade 6, to 23 in Grade 7. Elective and non-cluster classes are far less uniform and many classes are in the upper 20s. As previous studies and reports document, we have reached capacity at Pollard and are, in fact, teaching students each day in a setting designed for far fewer adolescents.

With the addition of 10 modular classrooms in 2002, the overcrowding was eased somewhat. Fifty-eight multipurpose rooms are now available (12 are specifically designed for science.) These additional rooms allowed me to:

1. Reassign teachers so that each cluster teacher was able to teach in one room for the entire day.
2. Schedule art classes in classrooms designed for art instruction.
3. Assign foreign language teachers to classrooms within close proximity to each other. It made it possible for these teachers to no longer be "on a cart!"

Enrollment projections through FY09 keep the enrollment at or just under 1,100 students. If these figures continue to be accurate, I believe we can maintain reasonable cluster size and "get by" as we are currently doing with our current space. This assumes no change in program and living with class sizes that push 30 in some noncluster or in leveled math classes.

The limitation of available space at Pollard may be further compromised with the addition of some very needy special education students to the school. I anticipate a need for 2-3 more locations to teach substantially separate groups of students. There are classrooms that can be used for a period or two during the day to meet this need. There will be no space available which they could call a home base. Of far greater concern is the challenge of managing the near 1100 students as they pass in the corridors; the use of the cafeteria at lunch; or access the media center or auditorium. The infrastructure of this building cannot accommodate these numbers.

I believe we are stretched to the limit and are using every available space at Pollard. I can no longer divide rooms to create office or instructional areas. We are most definitely in need of additional space; more specifically ... a second middle school.