

Muraco Elementary School Parents Association

33 Bates Road Winchester MA 01890 781-721-7030

March 27, 2009

Dear Superintendent McAlduff and School Committee Members:

On behalf of the parents and staff at Muraco, we are writing to follow up on our January 24, 2009 letter and our March 5, 2009 meeting with you regarding the serious overcrowding situation in the building. We appreciate your taking the time to come and talk with us and we found the dialogue to be both constructive and positive. It is clear that we all share the same goal of fostering a safe, nurturing and enriching learning environment for our students.

We understand that you are still considering the various options that you previously outlined. We have previously stated our position with respect to each of these options, both in our letters to you (from MESPA and individual parents) and in our meetings. To the extent that modular classrooms are available and feasible, we welcome them. At the same time, we also find there is significant unutilized or underutilized space in the building. Through a thoughtful and efficient planning process, this space can be recaptured and reconfigured by September 2009, yielding a facility that functions more efficiently and provides better safety and security to our children, Muraco staff, and visitors.

Our Facility Committee with architectural and engineering professional background has prepared a revised proposal for reconfiguring the administrative and support spaces in the building, which provides a suggested timeline and funding source for the reconfiguration and includes fully developed scaled schematic drawings to illustrate one such possible reconfiguration. There are a number of ways in which this proposal might be modified, particularly with respect to the planning and design of the Main Office/Principal Office space (we can discuss these options in person at your convenience).

As you will see, this proposal contemplates building two new classroom spaces this coming summer. Although we may not use the second space as a classroom in September 2009 due to school budget constraints that limit hiring additional teachers, we feel strongly that the addition of a second classroom space at this juncture is appropriate and prudent. This second classroom would better prepare Muraco to accommodate any unexpected enrollment increases this summer and/or next year and would alleviate the significant overcrowding that Muraco is projected to experience over the next several years (a projected minimum of 20% over capacity).

This proposal also includes the relocation of the Main Office/Principal Office suite to a more appropriate location, adjacent to the front door and lobby. This central

location would afford for the first time direct visibility and monitoring of Muraco's front door, providing a new level of accessibility and a much needed level of security for our students, teachers, staff, and visitors. We believe this location is particularly well suited to accommodate a functioning security system (with buzzer and intercom) in the future.

Finally, this proposal also contemplates a "Muraco Renovation Working Group," consisting of representatives from the District, the School Committee, the DPW, the EFPBC (and/or the Building or Engineering Department), Muraco administration/staff and parents. We envision the Working Group's role as a collaborative one, reviewing and discussing the planning and design and overseeing the implementation of any such reconfiguration going forward.

We understand funding is an issue in this time of economic uncertainty, but we also understand that there are funds available for urgent needs. Consequently, to the extent that there is a surplus in the School's budget for this year or capital funds available, we ask that such funds be dedicated to finding sufficient classroom space for the students at Muraco. We also ask that such funds be used to implement the "Tech on a Cart" wireless program that will be required in conjunction with any interior space reconfiguration, and will be instrumental in bringing Muraco students up to the same level in technology instruction as their peers at the other schools in Winchester.

On behalf of the parents, faculty, staff and particularly the children, we thank you for sharing our concerns.

Sincerely,

Muraco Elementary School Parents Association