

**REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
2004-2005**

**SUZANNE LITTLEFIELD, CHAIRMAN
ANNA SEREIKO, VICE CHAIRMAN
GERALD G. MURPHY, SECRETARY
SUSAN JABLONSKI
SUZANNE NEWMAN**

Under the leadership of Dr. Matthew King, Superintendent of Schools, the Wellesley Public Schools continued to plan a facilities renovation and construction program to meet the needs of a rapidly growing student population housed in aging schools while addressing its ongoing initiative to improve and assess student performance. The School Committee wishes to report the following:

1. A \$26.1 Million renovation of Wellesley Middle School was approved by a Special Town Meeting on December 6, 2004, and by a subsequent town-wide debt exclusion vote on January 25, 2005. Under the auspices of the Permanent Building Committee, contractors began to work at Wellesley Middle School on May 16, 2005. It is expected the project will be completed in August 2007. Renovation work at the Middle School required the relocation in June 2005 of the Preschool from the Middle School to another site. At a Special Town Meeting on December 6, 2004, funds were approved for construction, under the auspices of the Permanent Building Committee, of a pre-engineered preschool building at the Hastings Street site on the Fiske campus. It is anticipated that construction will be completed to permit occupancy at the new site by the Preschool in January 2006. In the interim, the Preschool has been temporarily housed in modulars on the DPW yard. School Committee appreciates the willingness of the Board of Public Works to accommodate the preschool modulars while the permanent site is constructed.
2. School Committee appointed a twelve-member Facilities Advisory Committee to review facility needs at Wellesley High School. Based on their recommendations, School Committee successfully sought funds at Annual Town Meeting to be allocated to the Permanent Building Committee to explore four options: (1) limited renovation and addition; (2) complete renovation and addition; (3) a new school on a clean site; (4) a new or substantially new school on the existing site.
3. At Annual Town Meeting funds were approved to complete a feasibility study of all the elementary schools except for Sprague (completed in 2002) and Bates (completed in 2004) in order to assess both building needs as well as student capacity of each school. The study will be completed in November 2005.
4. School Committee approved a budget request in FY06 that was a 6% increase over FY05. The total FY06 budget approved by Town Meeting in March 2005 required an override of Proposition 2-1/2. Town Meeting sent to the voters a two-tier override choice of \$2.6 Million and \$3.6 Million. The \$2.6 Million override was approved, requiring School Committee to reduce its budget by \$700,000. Services lost due to the failure of the \$3.6 Million override included the Elementary Spanish program and key services at both the middle school and the high school.

5. There were many new and continued initiatives to strengthen existing programs and examine new and better ways to deliver curriculum. A review of the interscholastic athletic program examined current practices and sought to identify increased fitness opportunities for the increasing student enrollment. The middle school faculty continued to explore differentiated instruction as a means to better acknowledge and address individual needs of students. A program initiative to help struggling K-12 mathematics students was developed for implementation in 2005-06. Continued study of issues in the 8th to 9th grade transition resulted in a recommendation to eliminate the override process. The mathematics curriculum review was completed. A new fitness and health curriculum review will be completed in the fall of 2005. In light of the emerging national focus on childhood obesity, a review of our food service program was completed with several important changes recommended and implemented in the spring of 2005. The high school community discussed in many forums the ever-increasing stress load upon high school students. Some changes to reduce stress have been introduced, and the study will continue into the following year.

6. The success of the Wellesley Public Schools is enriched by ongoing support from hundreds of volunteers who serve on school councils and contribute time and abilities to parent-teacher organizations, the Central Council of PTO's, the Creative Arts Committee, the Wellesley Education Foundation, and as classroom volunteers and chaperones. In addition, the schools continue to receive support from a number of civic service clubs as well as many local businesses. The School Committee, the superintendent, and staff extend their deepest gratitude for all such efforts on behalf of our students.

7. In March the voters re-elected Susan Jablonski and elected Suzanne Newman to three-year terms on the School Committee. Dr. Kaplan retired from the committee after serving one term. The School Committee extends to him its heartfelt appreciation for his dedication and commitment to the children of Wellesley.

The School Committee extends to the following members of the staff who retired this year its deep appreciation for their years of dedicated service to the community:

Ginny Balicki
 Laura Baum
 Diane Burkhardt
 David Collins
 Jon Jay Hamilton
 Karen Lowery
 Barbara Mastro
 Maureen Murphy
 Sandra Nicolucci
 Kim O'Byrne
 Tim O'Sullivan
 Tom Plati
 Frank Scafati
 Brenda Troy
 Elizabeth Walston
 Christine Wood

WELLESLEY RESIDENTS ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS

as of
October 1, 2004 in Grades K-12

WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	<u>Non-resident*</u>	<u>Wellesley resident</u>
Elementary Schools	Grades K-5 77	Grades K-5 2,122
Middle School	Grades 6-8 41	Grades 6-8 939
High School	Grades 9-12 <u>56</u>	Grades 9-12 <u>1,077</u>
	174	4,138

(Total Wellesley Public Schools enrollment,
both resident and non-resident) 4,312

STUDENTS ATTENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS OUTSIDE OF WELLESLEY
(including programs under the direction of The Education Cooperative). 17
VOCATIONAL/REGIONAL SCHOOLS 3

PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN WELLESLEY

Dana Hall	Grades 6-12	67
St. John's School	Grades K-6	133
St. Paul's School	Grades K-8	72
Tenacre Country Day	Grades K-6	<u>68</u>
	TOTAL	340

PRIVATE SCHOOLS OUTSIDE OF WELLESLEY**

In-State	Grades K-12	333
Out-of-State	Grades K-12	<u>0</u>
	TOTAL	333

GRAND TOTAL **5,005**

* Includes students paying tuition, in approved foreign exchange programs, participating in ABC or METCO programs, and others.

** Excluding state-approved private special education schools for which Wellesley pays tuition.

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

The office of the Town Clerk serves as the repository of vital records for the town; conducts all activities related to census, elections and voter registration; issues a variety of licenses and permits; and serves as the office of record for a variety of public filings. A staff of four assists the Clerk in carrying out the various functions of the office.

Census and Elections

The elections and voter registration activity of the office was busy this past year with a State Primary in September and the quadrennial State and Presidential Election in November. The November 2004 election saw record participation with 88% turnout. On the local level the