



District Boundary & Realignment Update

September 16, 2026

Dillinger Research & Applied Data

Agenda

Subcommittee Meeting

1

Introductions

2

Work to Date

3

Draft #2 Deep Dive

4

Next Steps



Who are we? DillingerRAD is a non-profit group from Connecticut. We help schools and state education groups with challenging problems. We use data to make sure our solutions are fair, lasting, and support the community.

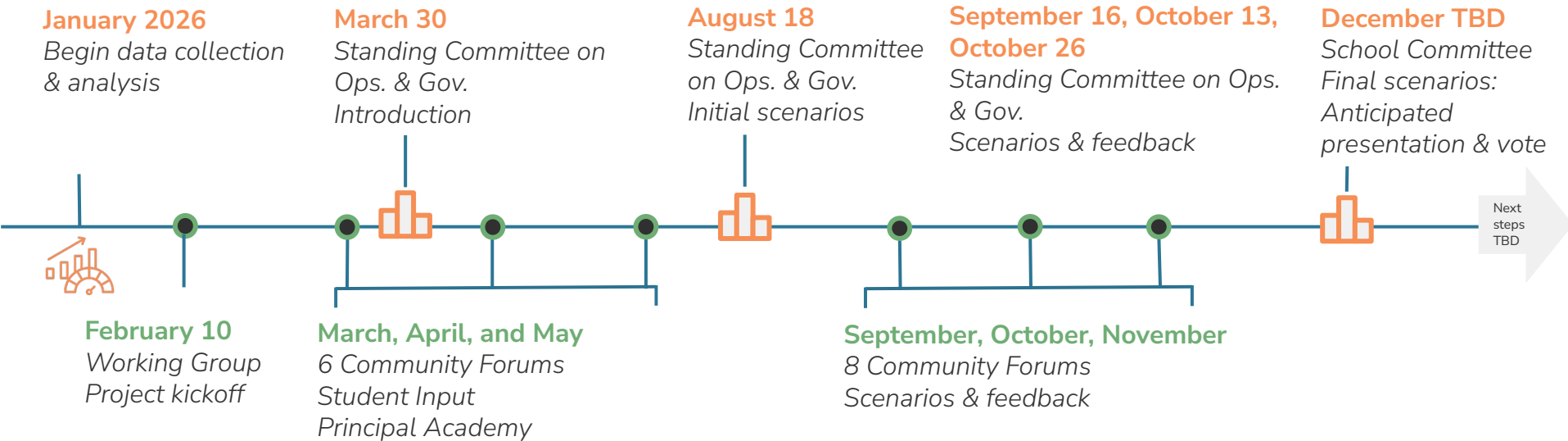
Why are we here? To help Worcester Public Schools realign attendance zones (borders), with a focus on elementary schools & feeder patterns.

SECTION 02

Work to Date

WPS OG Subcommittee Meeting

WPS School Boundary Realignment Key Milestones



Continued throughout project:

- Realignment Working Group meetings
- Qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, including:
 - Geographic Analysis
 - Capacity & Utilization Analysis
 - Demographic Trends

Project Timeline Aligned to [O.gb 6-72 - Boundary Realignment School Committee June 25, 2026](#)

Online Feedback Overview

Summary of community input received via web app submissions and direct email outreach:

76

Web App

Submissions broken
out in table

47

Emails

100% Responded

Category	# Submissions	%
Blank or N/A	32	42%
Against NE Nelson to Norrback	10	13%
Keep Worcester Arts Magnet as is	10	13%
Walkability safety concern	8	11%
Anti satellite boundary	3	4%
Great Brook Valley	2	3%
Bus/Transportation Concerns	1	1%
Change Flag/May/Midland boundary	1	1%
Demographic or Equity Concerns	1	1%
Keep McGrath in Burncoat	1	1%
Magnet School Considerations	1	1%
Move WAM	1	1%
Public housing suggestion	1	1%
Request Midland, not Flag	1	1%
School Bell Times	1	1%
Support	1	1%
Traffic Concerns	1	1%

Stakeholder Feedback & Draft Iterations

Key community feedback from Aug 18 Initial Draft informing Draft 2 (Sep 16) and Draft 3 (Oct 13)

Worcester Arts Magnet (WAMs)

- Proposed facility was too small for existing program needs
- Did not satisfy operational requirements of the current program
- Highlighted WAMs' unique identity as both a **neighborhood** and **magnet** school

Neighborhood Reassignments

- Strong concern regarding specific neighborhoods being reassigned to different schools
- Focus on direct impact on students during school changes
- Emphasis on minimizing disruption and supporting student adjustment

School Start Time Tiers

- **Tier structure:** Tier 1 High School, Tier 2 Middle School, Tier 3 Elementary
- Late elementary start creates significant strain on working parents
- Concerns raised regarding lack of identified before-school care options

Aug 18: Initial Draft Released

Sep 16: Draft 2 Released (Current)

Oct 13: Draft 3 Release

Tiers

Overview of proposed start time tiers and updated schedule considerations.

Original District Proposal

Tier 1 — 07:15 AM

High School

Tier 2 — 08:15 AM

Middle School

Tier 3 — 09:00 AM

Elementary School

Updated Schedule Consideration

Tier 1 -07:15 AM

High School

Tier 2 (Under Consideration) - 08:15 AM

Elementary School

Tier 3 (Under Consideration) - 09:00 AM

Middle School

Draft #1 & #2 are Preliminary - Take Part in the Discussion

Date	Day	Forum Type	Location	Quadrant	Time
09/02/26	Wednesday	Community Forum	Belmont Tower Apts <i>40 Belmont Street</i>	North / Burncoat	COMPLETE
09/03/26	Thursday	School Committee	City Hall <i>Full Meeting</i>	Citywide	COMPLETE
09/16/26	Wednesday	Ops & Gov Meeting	Worcester Technical High <i>Auditorium & Virtual</i>	North / Burncoat	6:00 PM
09/29/26	Tuesday	Community Forum	Quinsigamond Elem <i>Cafeteria</i>	South	6:00 PM
10/13/26	Tuesday	Ops & Gov Meeting	Vernon Hill Auditorium <i>Auditorium & Virtual</i>	North / South	6:00 PM
10/19/26	Monday	Community Forum	Chandler Elementary <i>Cafeteria</i>	Doherty	3:00 PM
10/26/26	Monday	Ops & Gov Meeting	Forest Grove Cafeteria <i>Cafeteria & Virtual</i>	Burncoat / Doherty	6:00 PM
11/07/26	Saturday	Community Forum	Goddard Elementary <i>Auditorium</i>	South	Noon

Conversations Had & Planned: Wraparound Coordinators (Aug) Principal 1-1 reach outs (all principal meeting in Oct) Teachers (in planning)

SECTION 05

Draft #2 Deep Dive

WPS OG Subcommittee Meeting

Key Changes: Draft 1 to Draft 2

Summary of operational adjustments, quad swaps, and zone boundary revisions.

Facility & Building Operations

- WAMS operates as is
- Francis McGrath operates as is
- Open new K-6 in Greendale Head Start building:
 - Existing Head Start program potential move to UPCS building
 - Norrback shift required adjusting Great Brook Valley split

Quad Swaps & Boundary Restructuring

- Quad swaps: Columbus Park stays in South, Jacob Hiatt to Doherty, Belmont back to North for secondary solution with Proportional lotteries
- Zone changes: West Tatnuck & Tatnuck border restructured using part of original May zone
- 6th grade in North: one additional school zoning 6th graders to WEM (City View, Grafton, Rice)
- Refined distribution of sub-sep classrooms

Housing Development & Data Status

Overview of data provided



Data File

Scenario Metrics

File Name

[Data Table](#)

Interactive Map

[Zone Comparison App](#)

Last Updated

Sep 14, 2026

Data Overview

- **Draft 1 Data**

Kept for historical and reference sake.

- **Draft 2 Data**

Includes baseline data, utilization, and student demographic breakdown by school.

- **Housing Development Data***

Includes status, location, and number of units.

- **Program Lottery Data**

Program lottery details maintained directly in the Google Sheet.

**Note: Pending student yield calculations will be included in the next draft update.*

Middle & High School Landscape

Addressing the core middle & high school capacity challenge

Primary Challenge & District Breakdown

Middle and high school capacity alignment as the primary problem.

Draft 2 Zone Proportional Breakdown:

- Burncoat: **16%** | Claremont: **5%** | Doherty: **27%** | North: **25%** | South: **28%**

Structural Boundary & Operational Planning

Focuses on the relationship between Structural Boundary Changes and Operational Process Adjustments.

Lotteries & Operational Adjustments

Examining lotteries and their effect on capacity alignment across various approaches.

Stakeholder feedback and ongoing discussions will dictate Draft 3.

Current Landscape of Special Programming

Program	Quadrant	Enrollment*
Burncoat Arts Magnet (High)	Burncoat	345
Hanover Arts Academy (High)	Burncoat	220
Burncoat Arts Magnet (Middle)	Burncoat	250
Hanover Arts Academy (Middle)	Burncoat	100
Construction Craft Laborer	Doherty	120
Programming & Web Dev	Doherty	160
Marketing	Doherty	160
Engineering Technology	Doherty	400
Advanced Science Academy	Doherty	192
Business Technology	North	60
Health Assisting	North	68
Diesel Technology	South	93
Early Childhood Education	South	73
Culinary Arts	South	102
Goddard Scholars (High)	South	78
Goddard Scholars (Middle)	South	105

*Enrollment figures represent either current enrollment or fully phased in enrollment

Better Alignment is Needed

- Some programs draw more equitably than others across school quadrants.
- Partially governed by DESE lottery policies, but also driven by ease of access and awareness for families.

Enrollment Impact:

Uneven program participation directly affects high school and middle school capacity utilization across the district.

Programs Not Included in Discussion

Claremont & UPCS

Status: Co-Location Under Exploration

- Excluded due to **ample current space**; potential merger under evaluation
- Internal co-location wing analysis ongoing; may **push space limits**

Worcester Tech

Status: Recommend Maintain Existing Model

- Continue current operational structure
- Proposed lottery modeled on existing proportional acceptance by quad size
- Current balance leans Burncoat over Doherty
- Adhere strictly to proportions; keep enrollment steady

Option 1: Proportional Lottery (Current Draft 2)

Assumes Belmont remains in the North quadrant. Models secondary specialized programming proportional to quadrant size.

Middle School

- **Burncoat (90%):** Manageable, but relies on new facility completion and phased rollout.
- **Doherty & South:** Maintain ample available capacity.
- **North (90%):** Significant enrollment jump; requires administrative alignment.

High School

- **Overall Utilization:** Relatively stable across all quadrants.
- **North:** Provides substantial capacity relief compared to current levels.
- **Burncoat (68%):** Expanded new facility will trend toward lower overall utilization.

Quadrant	Middle Adj. Utilization	High Adj. Utilization
Doherty	74%	84%
South	72%	84%
North	89%	76%
Burncoat	90%	68%

**Adjusted Utilization reflects projected building enrollment after accounting for lottery placement and specialized programming.*

Option 2: Program-Level Lottery Adjustments

Draw proportions can be tuned program by program, but the combinations are effectively unlimited, and the choices are value judgments based on feedback and School Committee input

Flexibility & Access

- Every special-admission program can draw from each quadrant in different proportions, and each program acts as an independent dial.
- Across all programs, that creates dozens of combinations, many of which balance the buildings equally well but distribute access very differently.

Governance & Next Steps

- Which combination is "right" depends on overarching priorities guided by the district and School Committee.

Elementary Landscape

With new Greendale added in Draft 2, district-wide elementary utilization is ~81% (excl. magnets). Space is not a constraint; the challenge is distribution.

- **Ideal building utilization is 80-90%.** Provides room for class-size balance and growth without wasted space.
- **Today**, elementary buildings range from **57% to 113%**
- **Draft 2** tightens that to **73-90%***
- **Multiple buildings will sit sub-80% (in the 70s)** With citywide trends decreasing, space isn't a constraint, and geography, walkability, and neighborhood boundaries naturally vary building utilization.

**once adjusted for sub-separate placement, magnet programs, preK, and other special programming.*

Decision Points: Student Pathways & Transportation

Measure	Current Baseline	Draft #2
% of elementary schools with a Pre-K classroom	41 classrooms / Unequal access	100% (Every school has Pre-K)
Proportional distribution of Pre-K seats across quadrants	Highly unequal across district	+/- 5% within proportion of Pre-K
# of schools that are over-capacity	5 schools above 95% capacity	Zero over-capacity
Middle & High Schools' utilization	Secondary range 62-94%	Secondary range 72-90%*
Elementary Schools' utilization rates	Elementary range 57-113%	Elementary range 73-90%
Elementary to Middle & High pathways split	9 zones split across quadrants	Zero splits (Groups kept together)
Alignment of secondary boundaries	Fragmented pathways & zones	100% Boundary Match
Access to Magnet & Tech schools	Restricted by quadrant boundaries	Proportional Lotteries
Lottery & decision transparency	Opaque process / Complex policies	Clear, public, & accessible



Data File

Scenario Metrics

File Name

[Data Table](#)

Interactive Map

[Zone Comparison App](#)

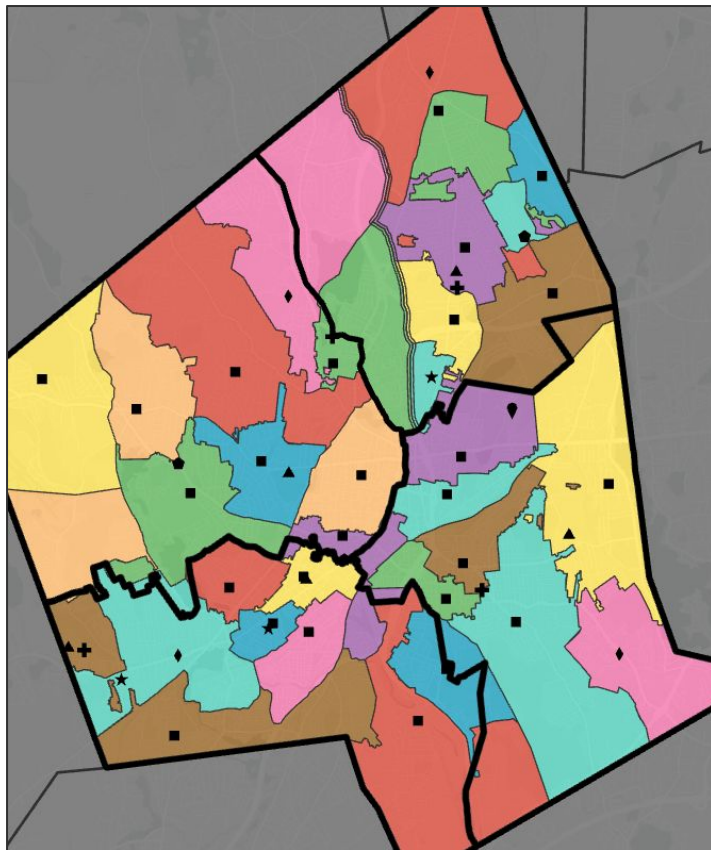
Last Updated

Sep 11th, 2026

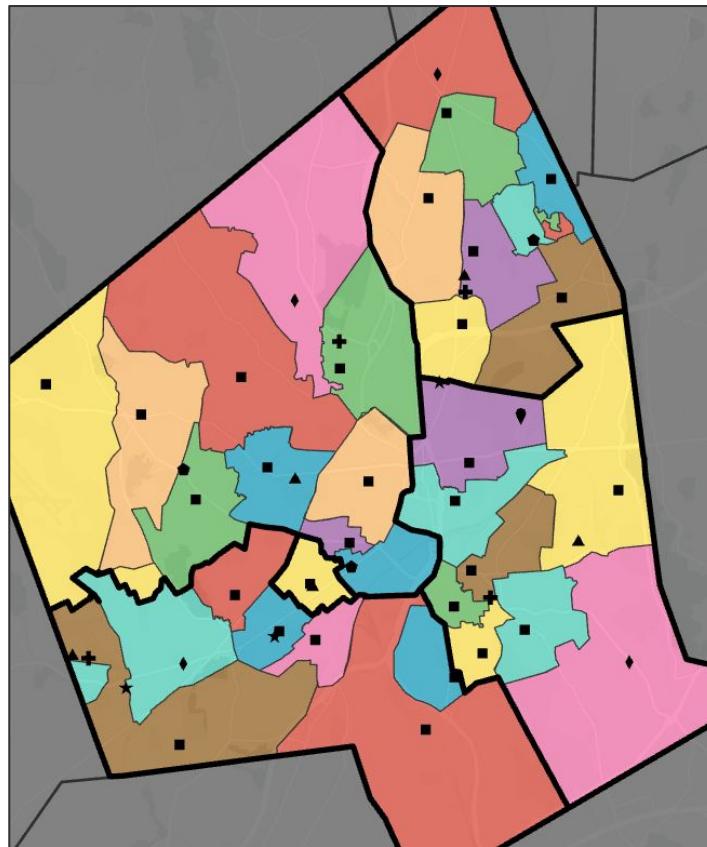
**Doherty High School & Burncoat Middle represent the lower and upper limits respectively. Operational design considerations are being investigated to improve this range.*

Draft #2 Overview

Current Boundaries



Draft #2



School Type

- ★ Alternative
- Elementary
- ⬠ Elementary- Magnet
- ◆ Elementary- SPED Hub
- + Middle
- ▲ High
- 📍 High- Tech
- ▬ High Quads
- ▬ Middle Quads

DRAFT ONLY
Not a Final Solution



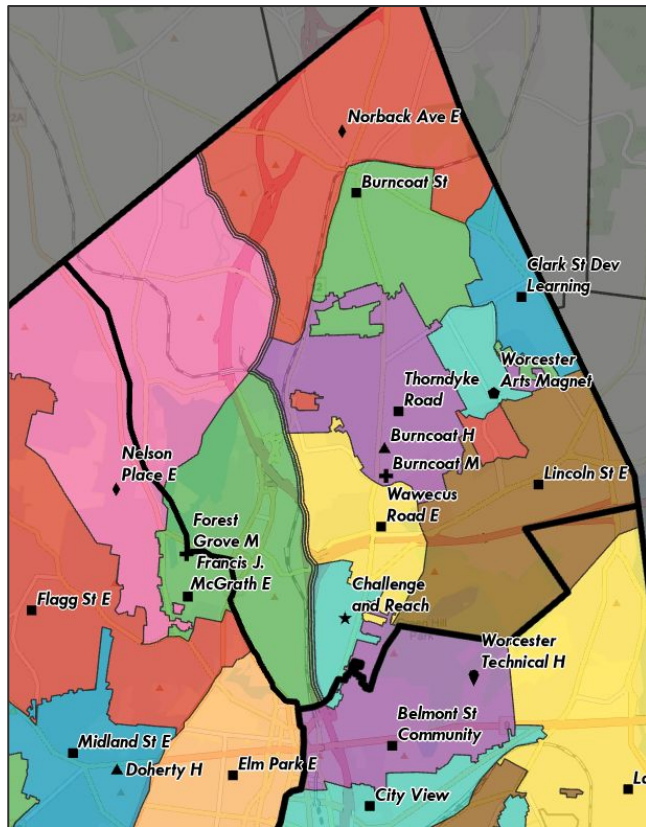
Zone Comparison App

Last Updated:

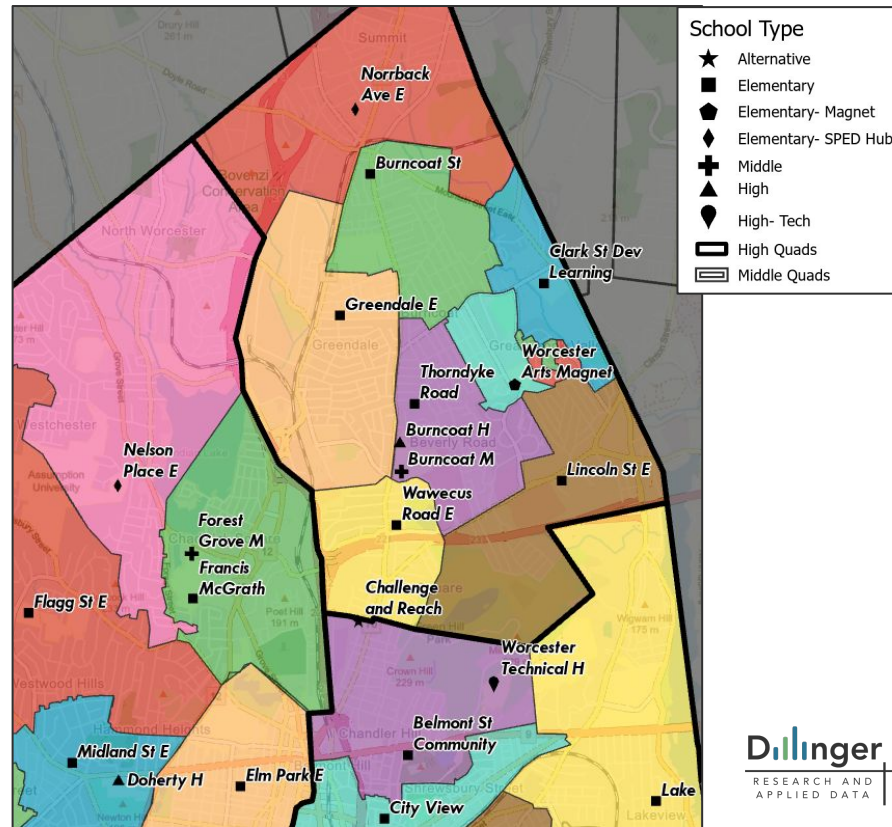
Aug 10, 2026

Draft #2: Burncoat Quadrant

Current Boundaries



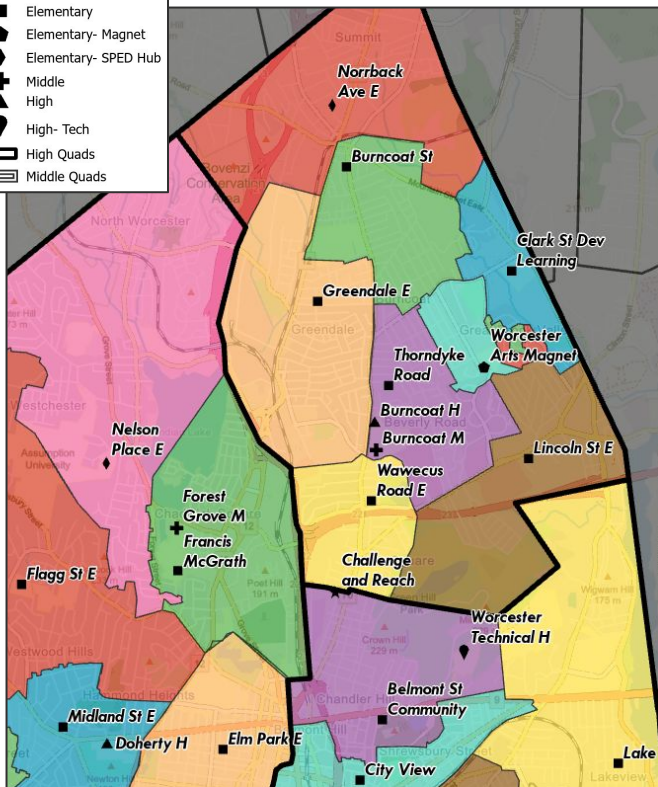
Draft 2



Draft #2: Burncoat Quadrant

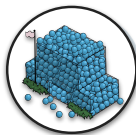
School Type

- ★ Alternative
- Elementary
- ◆ Elementary- Magnet
- ◆ Elementary- SPED Hub
- ✚ Middle
- ▲ High
- High- Tech
- ▭ High Quads
- ▭ Middle Quads



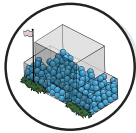
Significant Updates (Compared to Current):

- Open new Greendale Elementary. Existing Head Start Program would potentially move out of Quadrant.
- Adjust District and Magnet Arts lotteries to be proportional to quadrant populations.
- Dissolve multiple non-contiguous (satellite) boundaries to streamline student feeder patterns.



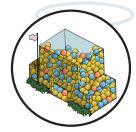
Higher Capacity Buildings

- Wawecus & Lincoln St 90%
- Burncoat MS 90%



Lower Capacity Buildings

- Burncoat High School 83% (New Building)



Notable Changes in Enrollment

- **Decreases:** Norrback Avenue
- **Increases:** Greendale ES, Clark St

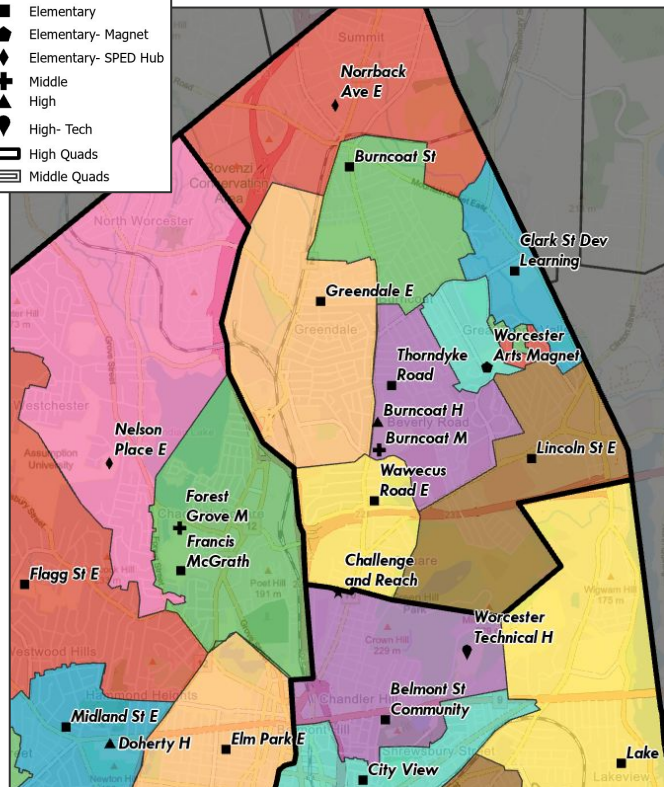
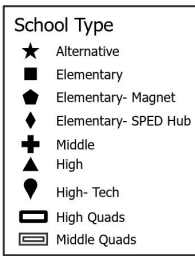
Next Steps

Engage with Housing Authority to confirm Curtis Apartment Projections; Engage with City Administration and MSBA to discussion Middle School design; Collect feedback

Pressure Points

1. Addressing long-term declining enrollment trends within the quadrant
2. Managing constrained middle school capacity relative to high school facility sizing
3. Planning for significant enrollment increases resulting from The Phoenix at Curtis redevelopment
4. Existing district wide lotteries are over represented by Burncoat and need to be redistributed

Draft #2: Burncoat Quadrant



Key Discussions

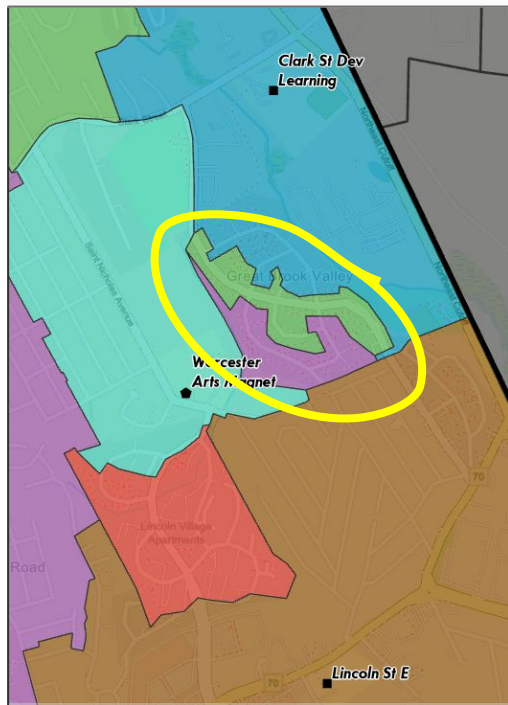
1. **Proportional Capacity:** With new high school capacity fixed at 1,400, how can we align middle school classroom counts to ensure structural balance?
2. **Boundary Realignments:** How can we address community feedback on the dissolution of satellite boundaries, such as the full consolidation of Lincoln Village (previously 73/20/7 Norrback, WAM, Lincoln St)?
3. **Transition Management:** Given the significant restructuring required in this quadrant, how can we best support schools absorbing large influxes of students?
4. **Phased Implementation:** How can we align boundary transitions with the multi-phase construction schedule of The Phoenix at Curtis through 2032?

Potential Solutions

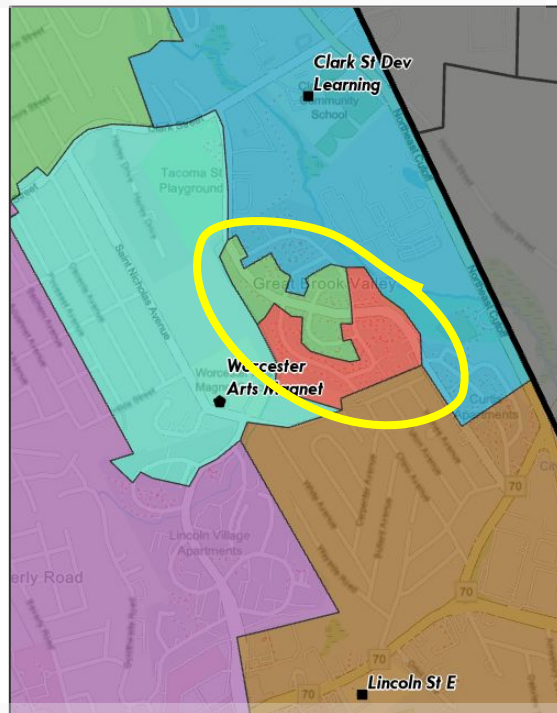
- **Infrastructure Adjustment:** Evaluate the feasibility of adding 3–4 classrooms to the Burncoat Middle School future design to ensure proportional capacity with the high school.
- **Operational Adjustment:** Assess program placement, sizing, or lottery processes to optimize student distribution and quadrant capacity.
- **Staged Transition:** Delay the reassignment of Belmont Street to the Burncoat Quadrant until new building projects are complete.

Great Brook Valley (GBV)

Current Elementary Zones



Scenario 2 Zones*



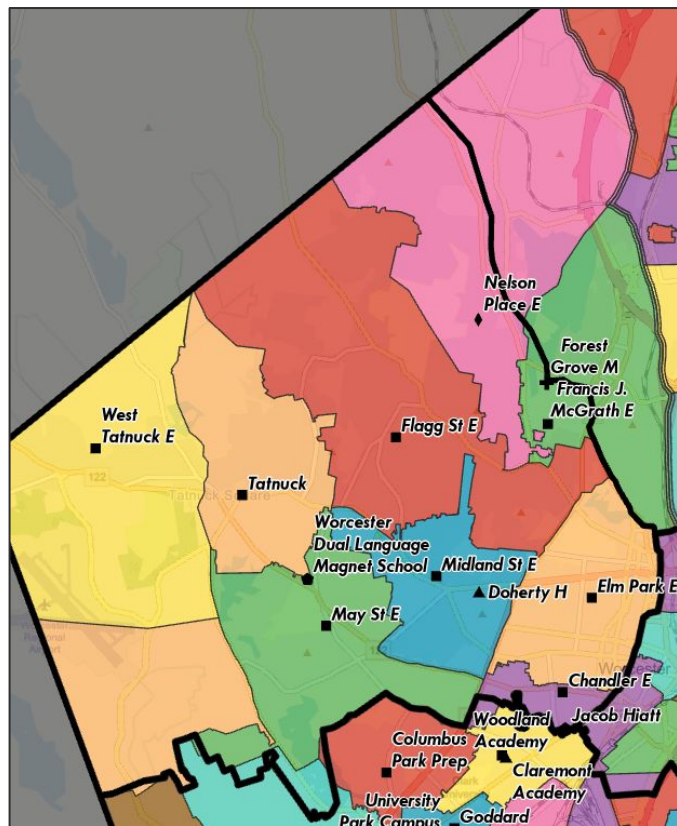
GBV	SY2526 Students	% of GBV	Draft #2 Student s	% of GBV
Clark	111	33%	67	20%
Burncoat	117	35%	120	36%
Thorndyke	104	31%	0	0%
Norrback	0	0%	145	44%
Total	332	100%	332	100%

- Zoned to Burncoat Street
- Zoned to Thorndyke Road
- Zoned to Lincoln Street
- Zoned to Worcester Arts Magnet
- Zoned to Clark Street
- Zoned to Norrback

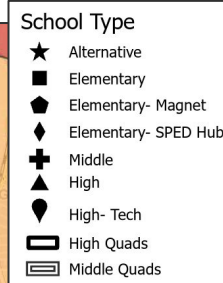
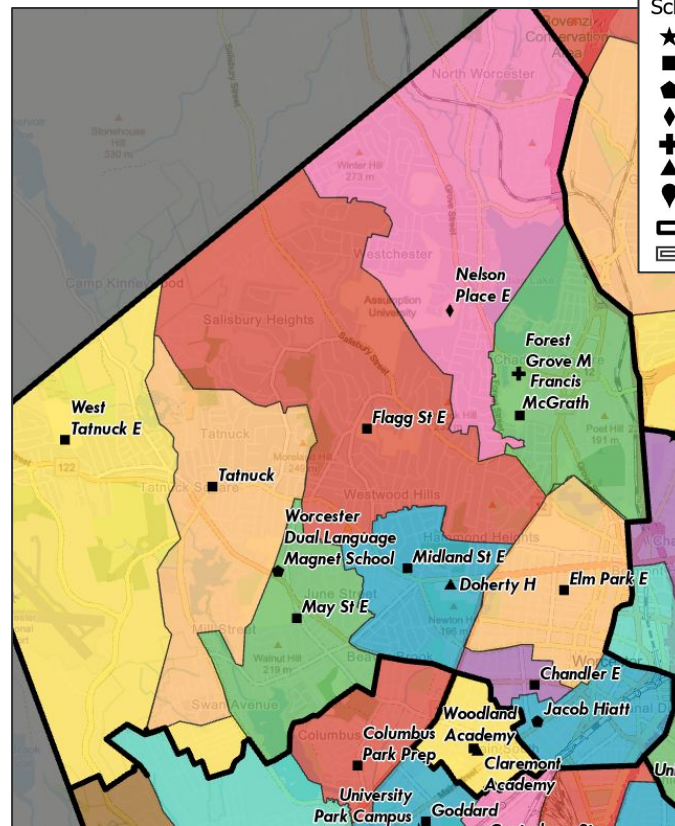
*We are modeling Scenarios based on full occupancy of Curtis Apartments in 2032. In reality, these changes will need to be phased so that Clark St and Lincoln St are not sitting half empty

Draft #2: Doherty Quadrant

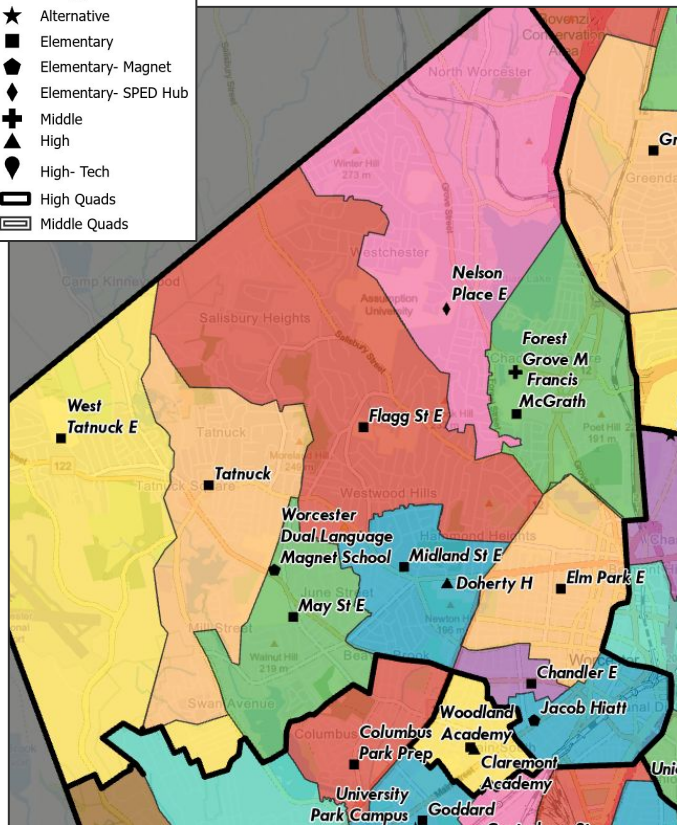
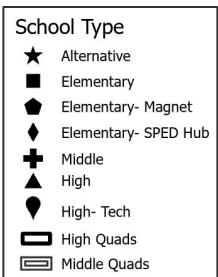
Current Boundaries



Draft #2

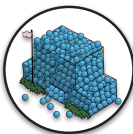


Draft #2: Doherty Quadrant



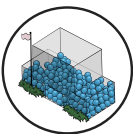
Significant Updates:

- Significantly adjust geographical boundaries for West Tatnuck ES and Tatnuck
- Incorporate Jacob Hiatt in Doherty Quad to relieve pressure
- No longer Middle/High split between Doherty and Burncoat Quad



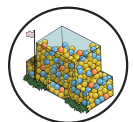
Higher Capacity Buildings

- Tatnuck 85%



Lower Capacity Buildings

- Nelson Place 73%, Forest Grove Middle 74%



Notable Changes in Enrollment

- **Decreases:** May Street, Chandler
- **Increases:** Doherty High School, Francis McGrath

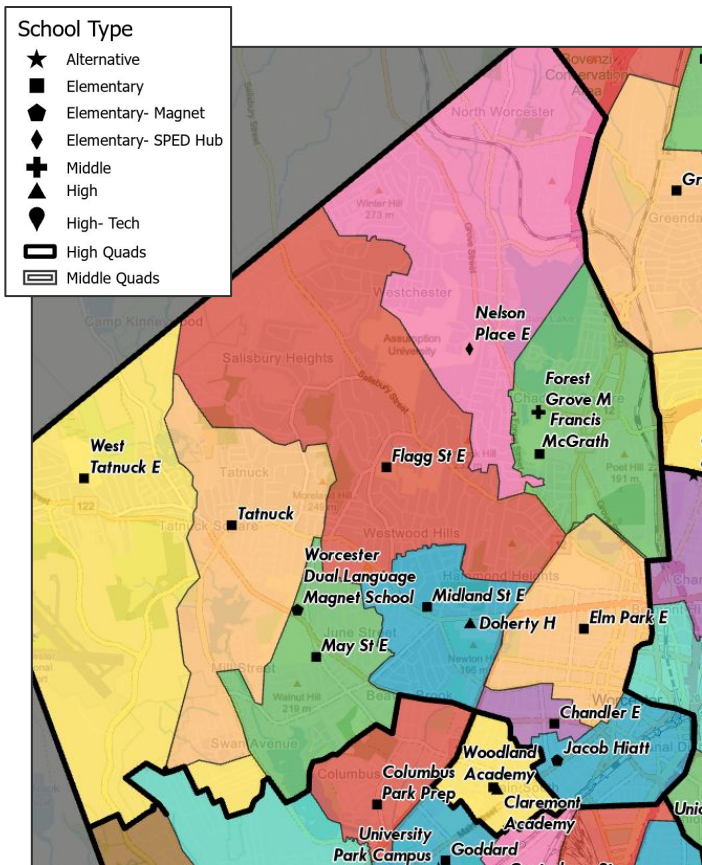
Next Steps

Continue to engage with Doherty HS principal and WPS Office of College & Career Readiness; Collect Feedback

Pressure Points

1. Maximizing Doherty High School capacity
2. Constrained middle school space

Draft #2: Doherty Quadrant



Key Discussions

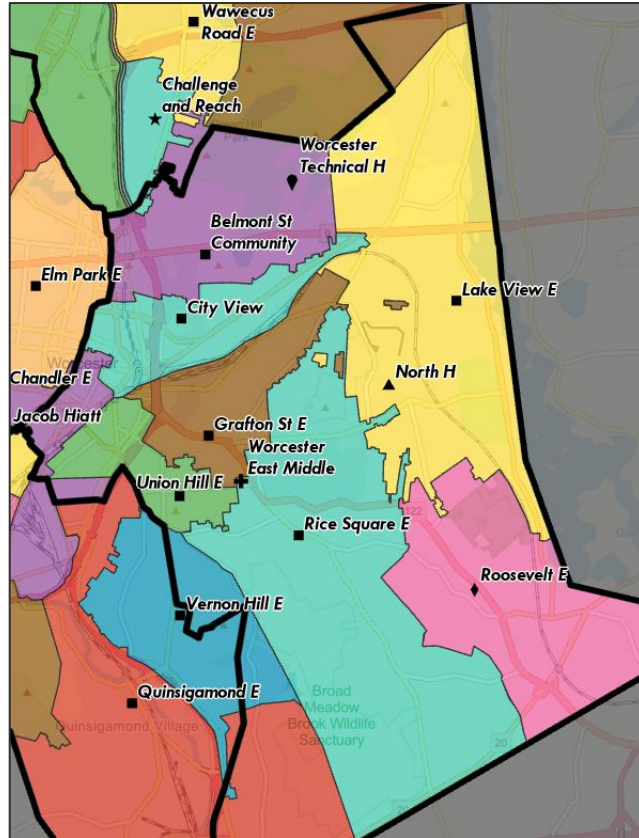
1. **Middle vs. High School Capacity:** The middle school has significantly less capacity than the high school. How can we maximize high school enrollment without overwhelming middle school resources?
2. **Future Housing Developments:** Significant public housing redevelopment at Lakeside apartments in Columbus Park zone, how do we ensure school is not overwhelmed upon full residential occupancy?

Potential Solutions

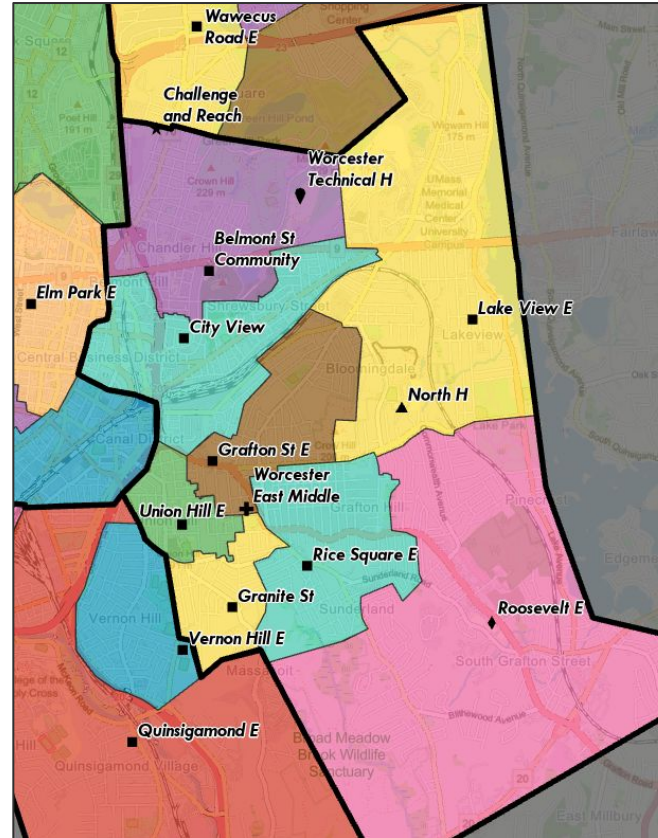
- **District-wide High School Lottery:** Creating a lottery for the entire district to include ADDITIONAL enrollment at the high school level above the middle school matriculation.
- **Leave extra space at Columbus Park:** Tentatively projecting ~50 added Elementary students in Lakeside Apartments rebuild; purposely left zone at 72% (83% once 50 factored in).

Draft #2: North Quadrant

Current Boundaries

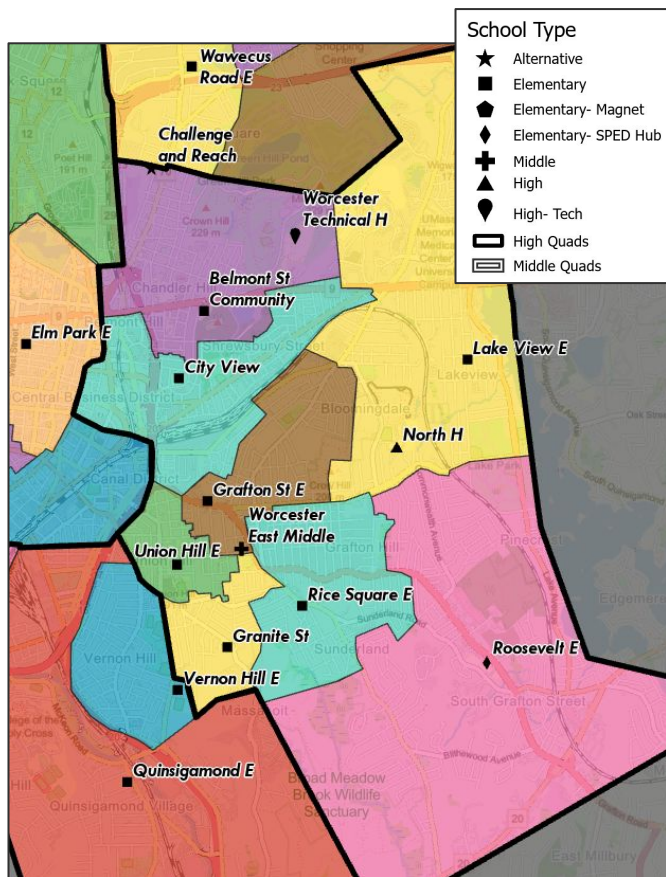


Draft #2



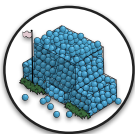
School Type	
★	Alternative
■	Elementary
⬢	Elementary- Magnet
◆	Elementary- SPED Hub
+	Middle
▲	High
⬆	High- Tech
▭	High Quads
▨	Middle Quads

Draft #2: North Quadrant



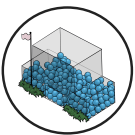
Significant Updates:

- Establish Granite St E boundary to relieve enrollment pressure, the Gerald Creamer Program would potentially move to the Fanning Building
- Rice Square, City View, and Grafton 6th-grade assignments to WEM
- Mitigate North High overcapacity (138% of zoned baseline) through strategic boundary adjustments



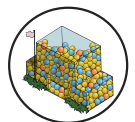
Higher Capacity Buildings

- Union Hill 89%
- WEM 89%



Lower Capacity Buildings

- North High 76%
- Grafton St 77%



Notable Changes in Enrollment

- Decreases: Rice Square
- Increases: Belmont St

Next Steps

Engage with MS/HS principals and collect feedback

Pressure Points

- Plumley Village Zoning proposed changes
- Significant historical population growth within the quadrant
- Significant misalignment of school boundaries and enrollment within the quadrant
- No 6th grade capacity at Rice
- Limited programming for advanced students

School Type

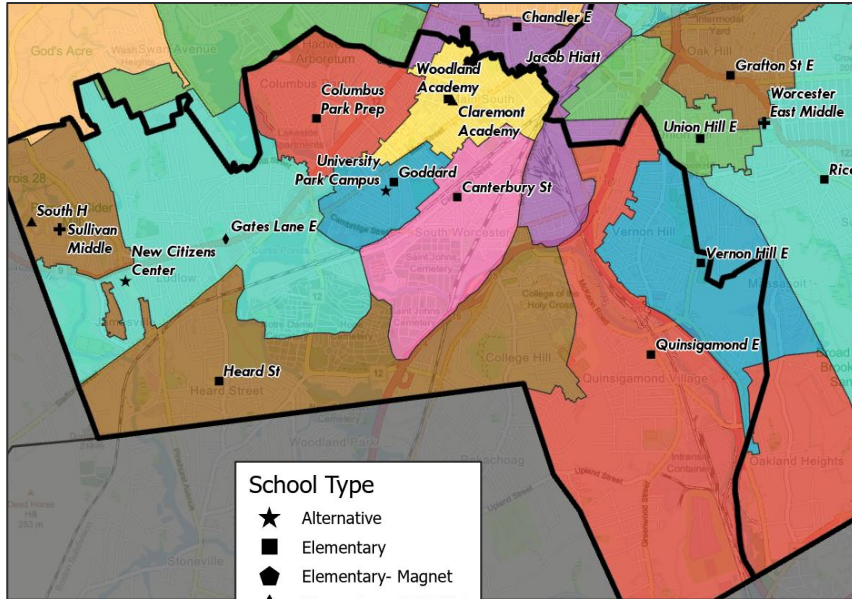
- ★ Alternative
- Elementary
- 🏠 Elementary- Magnet
- ◆ Elementary- SPED Hub
- ⛶ Middle
- ▲ High
- 📍 High- Tech
- ▬ High Quads
- ▬▬ Middle Quads

1. **Plumley Village Reassignment:** Reassigning all Plumley students (~200 elementary) to City View (previously split 80/20 with Belmont). How does the community feel?
2. **North Quadrant Growth:** With the North region growing, how can we ensure North High School does not become overwhelmed?
3. **Downtown Housing Impact:** Managing future crowding in elementary schools due to extensive housing development in the downtown area.

- **CTE Lottery Expansion:** In addition to the Worcester Tech lottery, route CTE lottery options to Doherty High where there is ample space.

Draft #2: South Quadrant

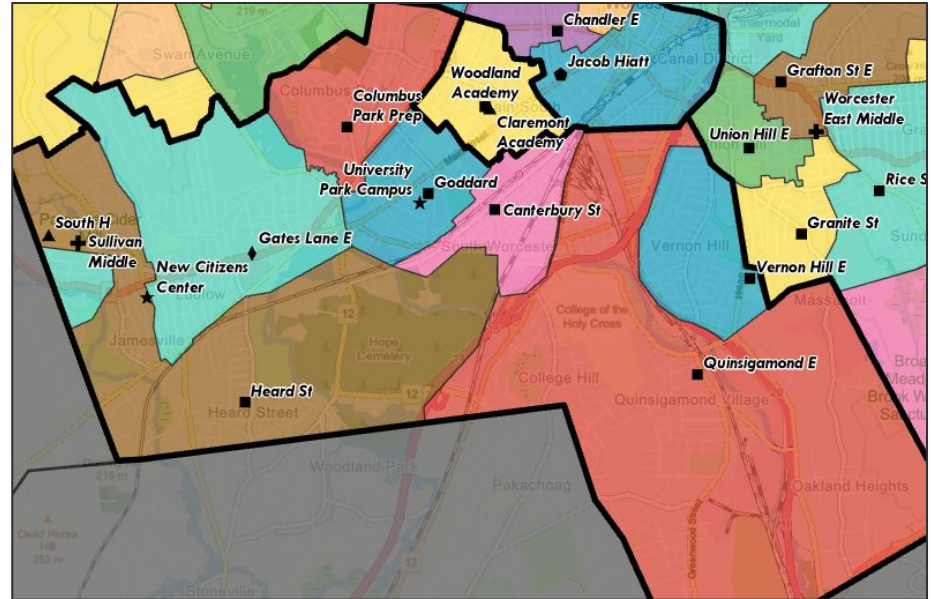
Current Boundaries



School Type

- ★ Alternative
- Elementary
- ◆ Elementary- Magnet
- ◆ Elementary- SPED Hub
- ✚ Middle
- ▲ High
- 📍 High- Tech
- ▭ High Quads
- ▭ Middle Quads

Draft #2



Draft #2: South Quadrant

Significant Updates:

- Convert Jacob Hiatt from Magnet to a Zoned school and move to Doherty Quadrant

Higher Capacity Buildings

- Quinsigamond 89%

Lower Capacity Buildings

- Sullivan Middle 72% including Goddard Scholar program
- Heard St 79%

Notable Changes in Enrollment

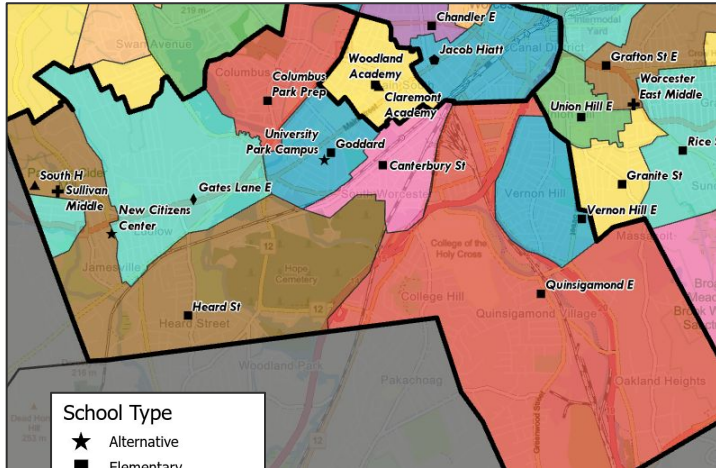
- **Decreases:** Heard Street
- **Increases:** Goddard, Vernon Hill

Next Steps

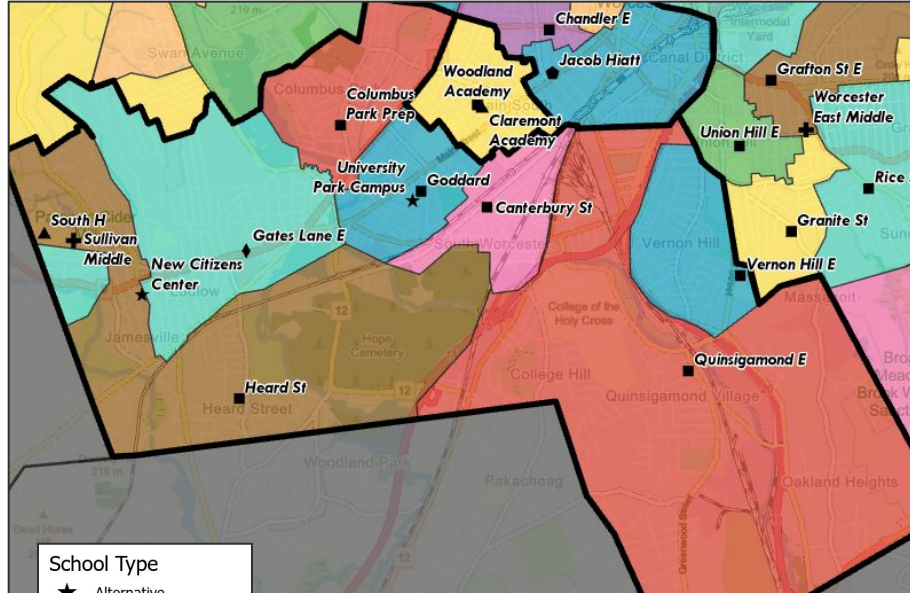
Engage with principals & staff at Claremont & UPCS; Engage with Jacob Hiatt principal; Collect feedback

Pressure Points

1. Significant space in middle school
2. Extra capacity at Claremont



Draft #2: South Quadrant



Key Discussions

1. **Middle vs. High School Capacity:** The middle school has significantly larger capacity than the high school. How can we maximize middle school enrollment without overwhelming high school resources?

Potential Solutions

- **Goddard Scholars Expansion:** Expand the Goddard Scholars program 6th-grade lottery at Sullivan Middle School.

SECTION 06

Next Steps

WPS OG Subcommittee Meeting

Neighborhood Growth

Draft #3 will further account for:

- Neighborhood growth in last decade (e.g., if Zone A is quickly shrinking, and next door to Zone B who is growing, potentially move part of Zone B to Zone A)
- Layering in student yield projections for private multifamily housing developments (public already incorporated)
- Optimal High School Capacity Enrollments including Scheduling Challenges

Implementation & Next Steps:

- Implementation discussions will begin once Draft 3 is published
- Next draft (Draft #3) will be published on October 13th

Street Level Boundary Splits

- **High-Level Boundaries:** Drawn to balance utilization and invite feedback, not to finalize every street.
- **Expected Rough Edges:** Lines may cut oddly or split blocks at this stage. This is not the final geometry.
- **Fine-Tuning Process:** Street-level adjustments occur last, taking several weeks after overall structure is set.
- **Minor Shift Expected:** Cleanup adjusts local edges and building numbers, not the overall totals.
- **Public Input Welcome:** We want your local knowledge on safety, street connections, and natural boundaries.



Submit Feedback

Scan QR code to share your
street-level input

worcesterschools.org/maptool

Appendix

WPS OG Subcommittee Meeting

Public Housing: Great Brook Valley

Development Breakdown Across Schools

GBV	SY2526 Students	% of GBV	Scenario 2 Students	% of GBV
Clark	111	33%	67	20%
Burncoat	117	35%	120	36%
Thorndyke	104	31%	0	0%
Norrback	0	0%	145	44%
Total	332	100%	332	100%

Burncoat Street Elementary Adjusted Util: 77%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	110	50%
GBV	111	50%
Total	222	100%

Clark Street Elementary* Adjusted Util: 76%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	53	19%
GBV	62	22%
Curtis	167	59%
Total	282	100%
*requires phasing		

Norrback Elementary* Adjusted Util: 77%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	196	59%
GBV	135	41%
Total	330	100%

*in reality there will also be a mix of
Substantially Separate students from across
the district

Public Housing: Lincoln Village

Development Breakdown Across Schools

LINCOLN	SY2526 Students	%	Scenario 2 Students	%
WAMS	40	20%	40	20%
Norrback	147	73%	0	0%
Lincoln	14	7%	0	0%
Thorndyke	0	0%	161	80%
Total	201	100%	201	100%

WAMS

Adjusted Util: 89%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	75	22%
Lincoln Village	40	12%
Lottery seats	227	66%
Total	342	100%

Thorndyke Elementary
Adjusted Util: 78%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	145	49%
Lincoln Village	149	51%
Total	294	100%

Public Housing: Phoenix at Curtis

Development Breakdown Across Schools

CURTIS	SY2526 Students	%	Scenario 2 Students*	%
Clark	3	3%	180	55%
Lincoln	96	97%	150	45%
Total	99	100%	330	100%

*modeled for full occupancy in 2032; these changes will require strategic phasing. Elementary projections at Curtis ~330-360.

Lincoln St Elementary
Adjusted Util: 90%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	112	45%
Curtis	139	55%
Total	251	100%
*requires phasing		

Clark Street Elementary
Adjusted Util: 76%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	53	19%
GBV	62	22%
Curtis	167	59%
Total	282	100%
*requires phasing		

Public Housing: Plumley Village

Development Breakdown Across Schools

PLUMLEY	SY2526 Students	%	Scenario 2 Students	%
Belmont	153	78%	0	0%
City View	44	22%	197	100%
Total	197	100%	197	100%

City View Elementary*
Adjusted Util: 81%

Zones	# kids	% of school
Neighborhood zone	300	62%
Plumley	183	38%
Total	483	100%

**City View houses substantially separate classrooms, meaning in reality there will be students attending from across the district. The adjusted utilization also accounts for the 6th grade class that is recommended to attend Worcester East Middle School due to space constraints.*