

Open Letter to the Community Regarding Two New Schools

This letter represents the shared opinions of citizens of Guilford who have taken diligent time to review all the pertinent information available regarding the current status of Adams Jr. High School and Guilford High School, and have come to the collective conclusion that our first and strongest recommendation is to pursue the funding to build two new schools. We recognize the challenges of this option, and as tax payers, will be absorbing the costs with our fellow neighbors as a necessary sacrifice for the betterment of our community as a whole.

We also recognize the ultimate feasibility of these options will be carefully reviewed by the Board's of Education, Selectmen and Finance. However, we felt it important that our voices be directly spoken, and our varied views expressed cohesively:

“As a pediatrician, a mother, and a Guilford resident, I find the state of Adams middle school and Guilford High School extremely concerning. We all know that asthma and allergies are on the rise and to expose our children to a learning environment with mold, poor ventilation and water drainage problems is not acceptable. Many of us moved to this town because of the reputation of the school system. It is therefore our responsibility to make sure our children get the best education available to them. That means building two new schools that have good ventilation and air quality, have adequate space for teaching and gathering, and are equipped to handle all the modern technology essential to educating children in this day and age. We do not want a band-aid. This needs to be a priority. The time to act is now.”

- Dr. Karen Goldberg, pediatrician.

“Given the options to renovate like new or build new for the High School and Adams the choice is obvious-build new. The savings in life cycle and energy costs make building new the obvious choice.”

-Peter Jelley, architect

“Both Guilford High School and Adams Middle School have serious deficiencies in terms of inadequate size for the current population, insufficient ventilation and excess cost to heat. Guilford High School is 20,000 sq. ft. less than what the state recommends for a school with its population. Neither school has mechanical ventilation systems resulting in poor air quality. The sprawling layout of both schools along with insufficient insulation results in skyrocketing heating costs.”

-Laurie Flaherty, artist

“Clearly the problems with our schools are not new and can no longer be ignored. Just

like renovating an old house, the costs involved in the 'Renovate Like New' option could easily skyrocket to be much higher, as it is difficult to know exactly what will be uncovered - and we would still not be creating the ultimate design of choice. Also, the damaging impact on the children attending school during the time of renovation is a concern. We cannot allow our town and our children's quality of education to continue to deteriorate because of our fear of action. The relatively minor difference in costs seems to support the myriad additional benefits of building new."

-Kari Henley, small business owner