

BuildBPS Grade Configurations

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Focus on Equity, Access to Quality and Pathways

- **High quality learning environments** for more students, which contributes to closing opportunity gaps for more of our learners.
- **Equity of program placement** for students with disabilities and English learners by prioritizing space for them in new/expanded buildings.
- **New approaches to identifying schools** for new buildings based on student needs, quality of school proposals, and equity analyses.
- **Fewer K-12 transitions for students and families** by creating 20 or more K-6 schools and 7 more 6/7-12 school buildings, while preserving K-8 and 9-12 options.

A renewed focus on the interaction between school buildings and students

The BuildBPS Fact Base illustrates the need for this renewed focus:

1. There are not enough elementary seats to serve students close to home in the southern half of the city.
2. There are limited options for expanding Special Education, English Learner and K1 programs.
3. English Learner and Special Education programs are not evenly distributed across our high schools.
4. Enrollment in standalone middle schools has declined by 1,800 students over the past 6 years.
5. K-8 schools experience a high level of student turnover and many are under-enrolled in grades 7 and 8.
6. Current grade configurations lead to multiple transitions for many students.
7. On a per pupil basis, small schools cost more and have less diverse programming than larger ones.
8. Roughly 50% of our current elementary schools are too small to house a K-6 school with more than one class per grade.

Proposal

Why This is Better for Students

Why This is Better for School Communities

How This Reflects Community Feedback

How We Plan to Implement This Shift

Proposal for School Committee Vote

Boston Public Schools will become primarily a K-6/7-12 and K-8/9-12 system, offering BPS students educational experiences that require only one transition for most students (while still offering the choice of various options).

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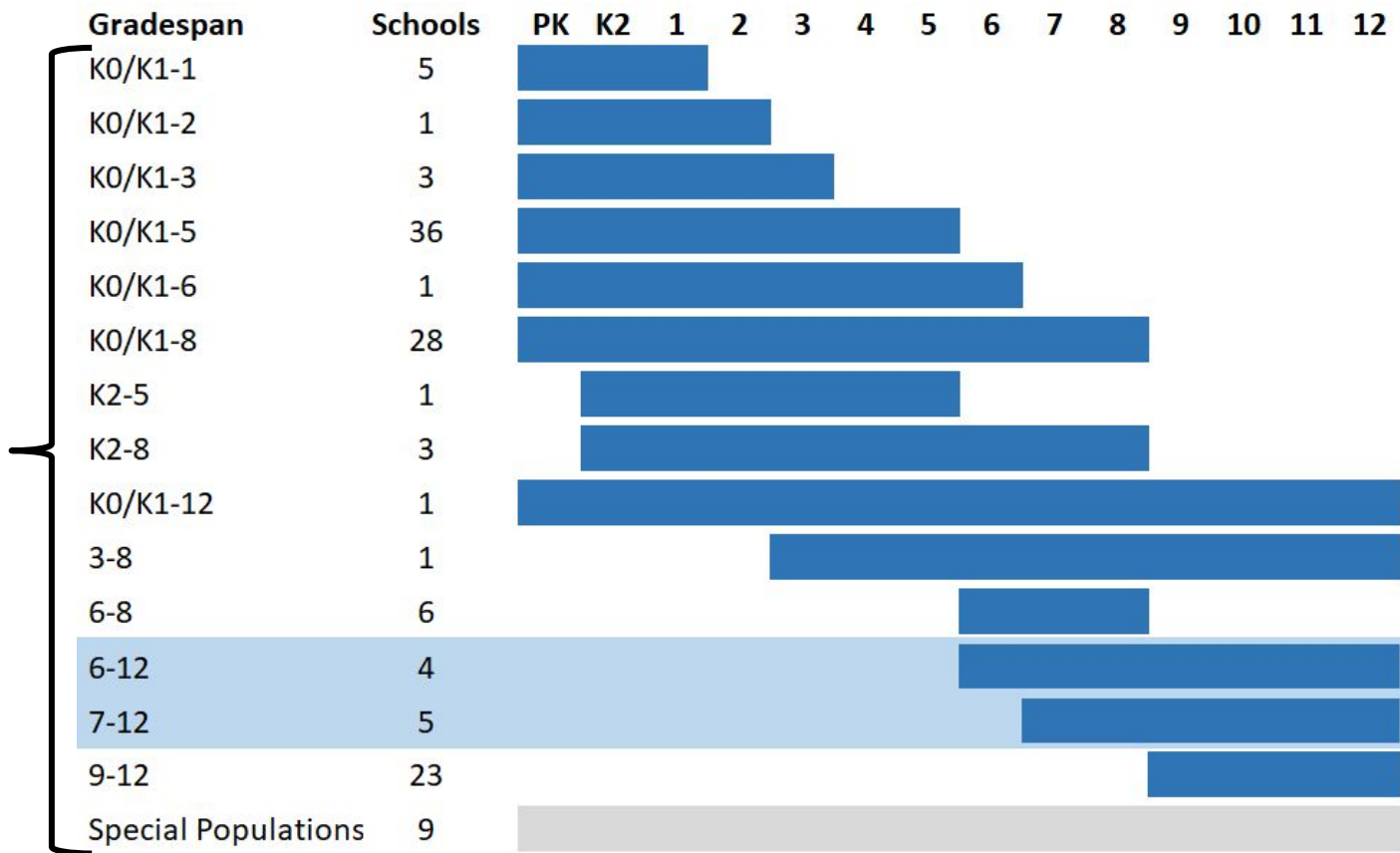
The BuildBPS Plan identified the reduction of transitions as a main goal

Goal 3: Reduce the number of school transitions for students by creating clear pathways (p.12)

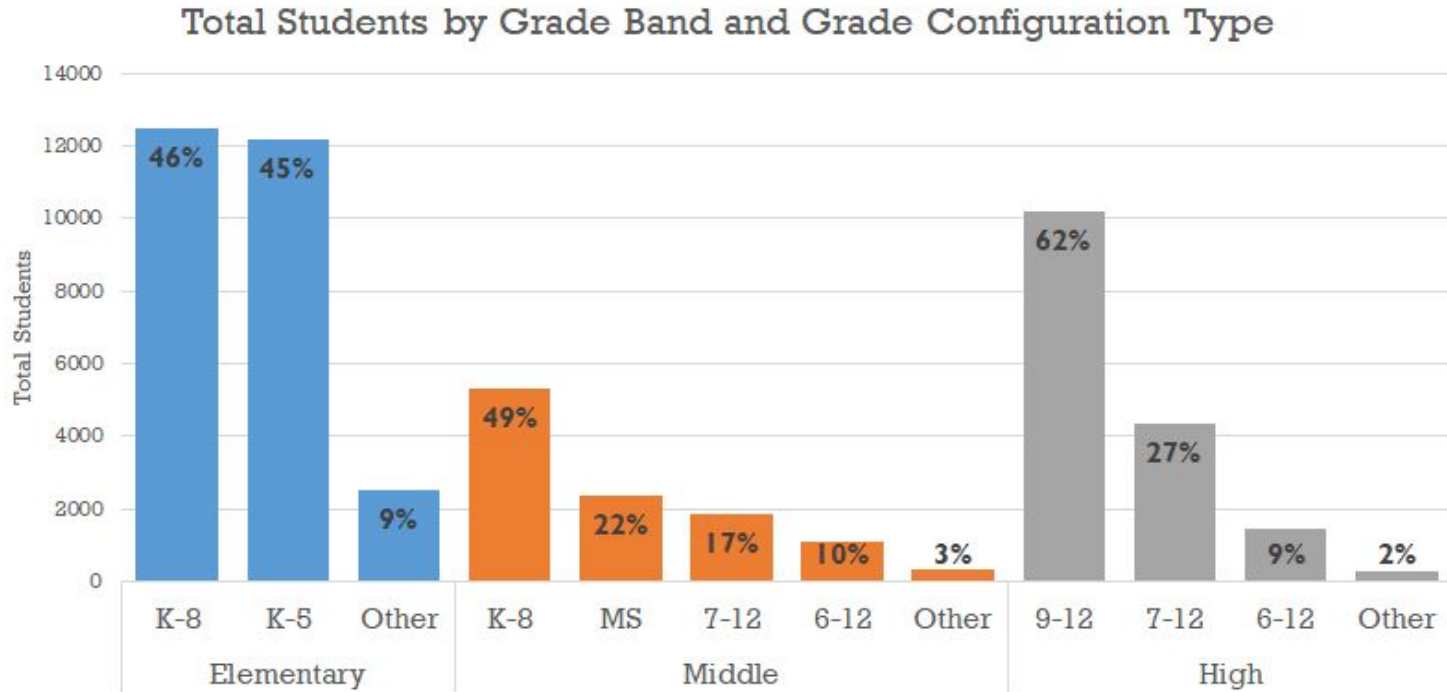
- Research indicates that multiple student transitions, even at "normal transition" grades (6 and 9), can have a negative impact on student success and outcomes that can persist as far out as the 10th grade.
- Each time a student moves from one school to another, there is a risk of relationships and learning being disrupted. The impact of grade configurations on student achievement and other findings from this research review helped inform BuildBPS planning and priorities.
- A bibliography of more than 20 research articles that examined the relationship between specific grade configurations and student outcomes is included in the latest BuildBPS Report.

Current Grade Configurations

The current system requires families to understand a complicated choice system with multiple transition points and too many opportunities to fall through the cracks.



One in six students attend a 7-12 for middle school, but only one elementary school is aligned

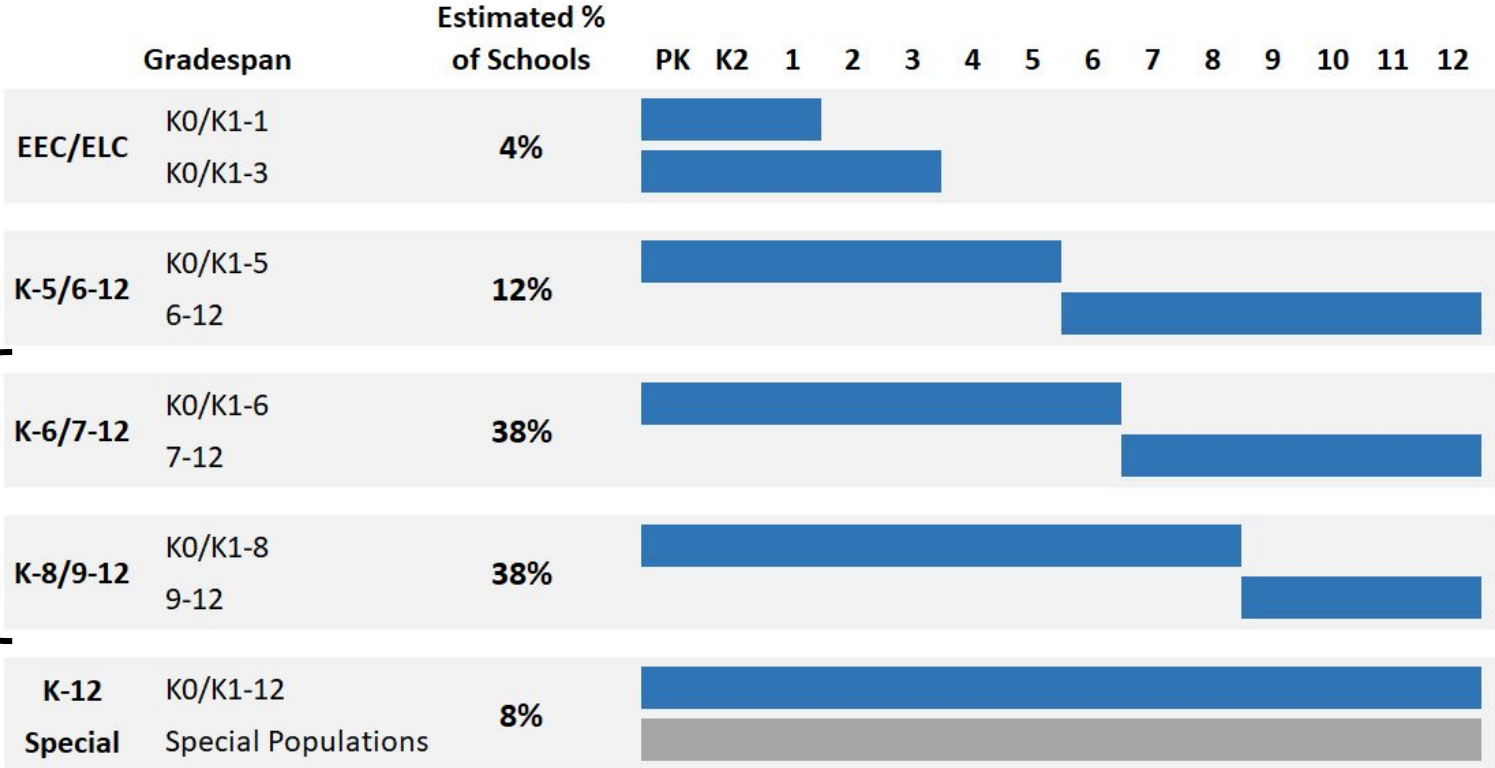


Access to current K-8 pathways differs by race

Student Race	% in K-5	% in K-8
Asian	61%	39%
Black	54%	46%
Hispanic	50%	50%
Other	49%	51%
White	35%	65%

- White elementary students are almost twice as likely to attend K-8 schools as they are K-5 schools.
- While Asian students are the most likely to attend a K-5, nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of Asian elementary students attend the Quincy Elementary (K-5), which has a guaranteed pathway K-12 with JQUS. As a result, 64% of Asian students are in a K-12 pathway with one transition.
- This means White and Asian students are the most likely to have access to a K-12 pathway with one transition.

Model of Reduced Grade Configurations in 10+ Years



This proposal simplifies the BPS experience: the majority of schools and students will be in one of the two preferred grade configurations.

Proposal

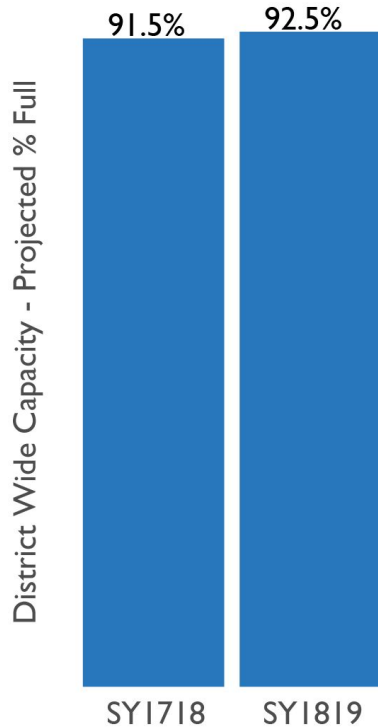
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Reconfiguration as a strategy to leverage our existing investments in schools



Increasing the classrooms fill rate by 1% across schools would result in between **\$2.1 and \$3.4 million** in additional, discretionary spending.

In SY1819, the district-wide projected % full was 92.5%, but that varies by school, grade, and program.

Most students who leave BPS for charter schools do so after 4th or 5th grade

This table shows the last grade a student was enrolled in BPS before enrolling in a Charter the following year.

Grade	SY1213		SY1314		SY1415		SY1516		SY1617	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
K2	52	1.2%	34	0.7%	46	1.0%	58	1.4%	59	1.4%
1	94	2.0%	42	0.9%	19	0.4%	29	0.6%	50	1.2%
2	20	0.5%	27	0.6%	14	0.3%	41	0.9%	28	0.6%
3	33	0.8%	49	1.2%	45	1.1%	55	1.2%	36	0.8%
4	474	11.6%	485	11.8%	479	11.7%	517	12.5%	483	10.9%
5	184	5.5%	165	4.7%	128	3.6%	144	4.1%	173	4.8%
6	76	2.1%	51	1.6%	64	1.9%	69	2.0%	92	2.7%
7	57	1.4%	49	1.2%	42	1.2%	59	1.6%	80	2.2%
8	36	0.9%	43	1.1%	78	1.9%	142	4.0%	157	4.3%
9	2	0.0%	2	0.0%	1	0.0%	9	0.2%	15	0.3%
10	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	1	0.0%	5	0.1%	3	0.1%

Our commitment to robust academic programming regardless of configuration

- As we reconfigure our schools, we are simultaneously reviewing the types of programming that need to be in place to provide rigorous and robust learning opportunities for students in grades 6-8 regardless of the school configuration.
- The Network Structure differentiates resources to ensure highest need schools have prioritized access to academic and non-academic interventions.

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Community Input Themes (Initial Round of Community Engagement)

1. Expand access to **high-quality** schools close to home
2. Create clear **educational pathways**, pre-K to graduation
3. Reduce the number of **transitions** between schools
4. Address **shifting enrollment patterns** in upper elementary and middle grades
5. Improve the **physical condition** of interior spaces: classrooms, cafeterias, libraries, bathrooms, auditoriums, gymnasiums, etc.
6. Modernize buildings with **instructional technology**
7. Ensure full **accessibility** for students with disabilities

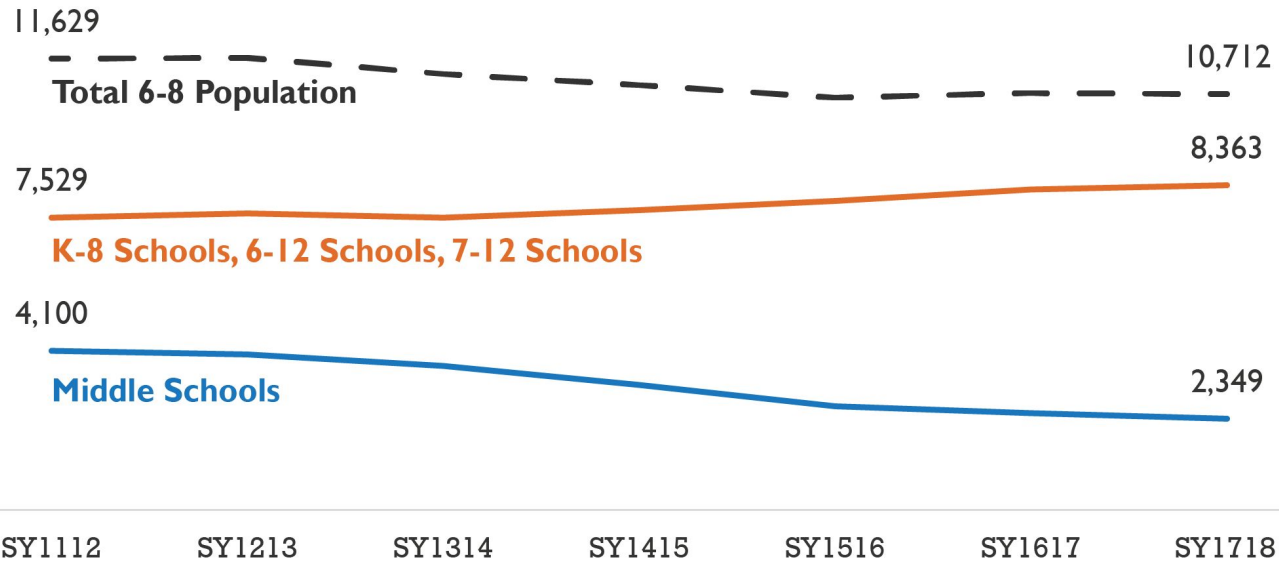
Themes and Integration of Feedback (since updated report was published)

- Stakeholders appreciate having a plan to react to
- **Desire to move to K-6 sooner and begin reconfiguring for fewer transitions**
- Need to address quality at the same time -- invest in school performance and academics
- Appreciation for instituting a process for continued maintenance of all schools and focusing on equity
- Application process feels competitive and is being piloted at the McCormack using a collaborative, technical assistance process
- Addressing facility resiliency issues and sustainability regarding green buildings and climate change
- Trust will be earned as we receive and integrate feedback on the plan, and continue to stay the course on the principles

Enrollment patterns provide additional insights about parent and community preferences

Enrollment in BPS middle schools has declined by 1,751 students over the past 6 years

Total Enrollment in Grades 6 to 8, by School Type



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The plan to implement K-6 Expansion has 3 interrelated, but separate strands of work

1. McCormack-related K-6 Conversions
2. Other District-wide K-6 Expansions
3. Future K-6 Expansions related to New Builds and Middle School Reconfiguration

1. McCormack-related K-6 Conversions

The need and opportunity to expand from K-5 to K-6 starting as early as SY 20–21 as the result of the McCormack merger will affect the following schools in various ways:

- Perkins Elementary School
- Tynan Elementary School
- Clap Elementary School
- Dever Elementary School
- Everett Elementary School

*We are continuing conversations with the Perry K-8 and Russell Elementary regarding the best timing of any transitions for their school community.

2. Other District-wide K-6 Expansions

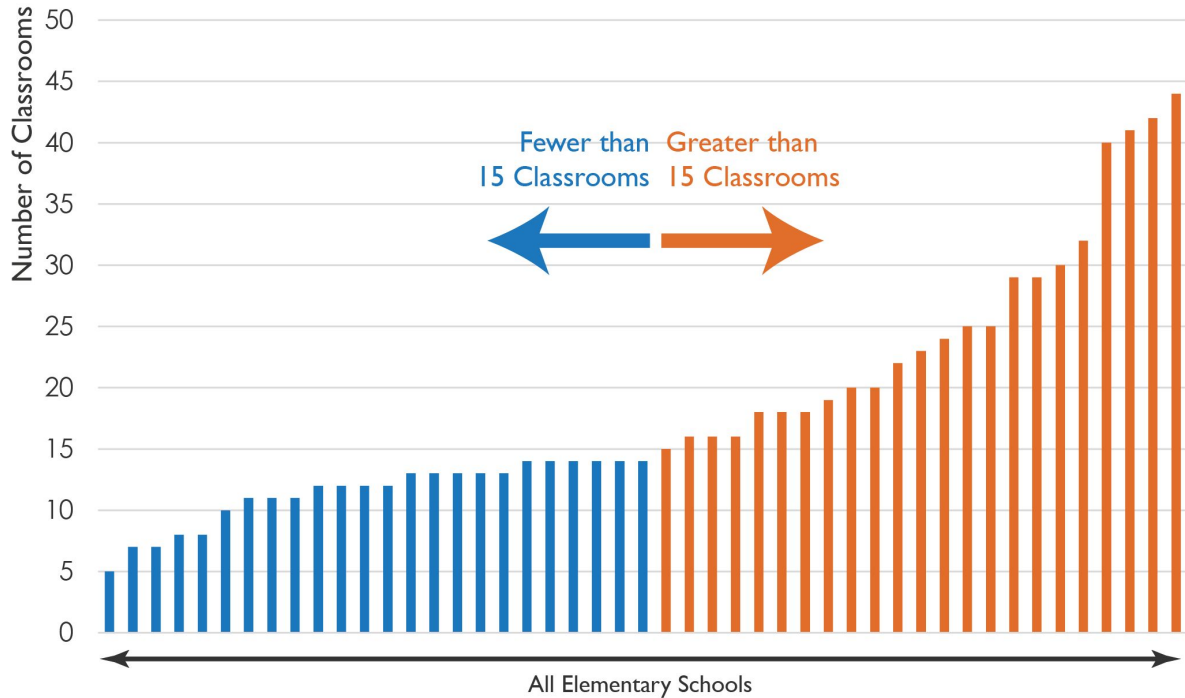
For SY 20-21 or 21-22, schools were told that their applications would be considered based on the following criteria:

- Ability to add 6th grade within existing space without substantial new construction.
- Preference to schools that serve high needs students.
- Preference for expansions that allow a school to maintain/develop 21st-century learning space.
- Accommodation of all general education and specialized populations rising to grade 6.
- District-wide impact on feeder schools, including but not limited to financial and enrollment implications as they relate to:
 - Reasonable planning time frames for all affected schools, with manageable mitigation (financial or otherwise) for all affected schools.
 - Awareness with regard to feeder patterns and impact on timing of the eventual elimination of the remaining middle schools.

A total of 14 schools formally applied to be considered for expansions effective SY 20-21.

50% of our elementary schools are too small for a K-6 school with more than 1 class per grade

Distribution of the Number of Classrooms in Elementary School* Buildings



- A K-6 school with more than 1 class per grade requires at least 15 classrooms.
- 23 of the 47 schools serving elementary grades are in school buildings that have fewer than 15 classrooms.

*Includes current ELC/EECs

3. Future K-6 Expansions related to New Builds and Middle School Reconfigurations

Expansions to address enrollment challenges:

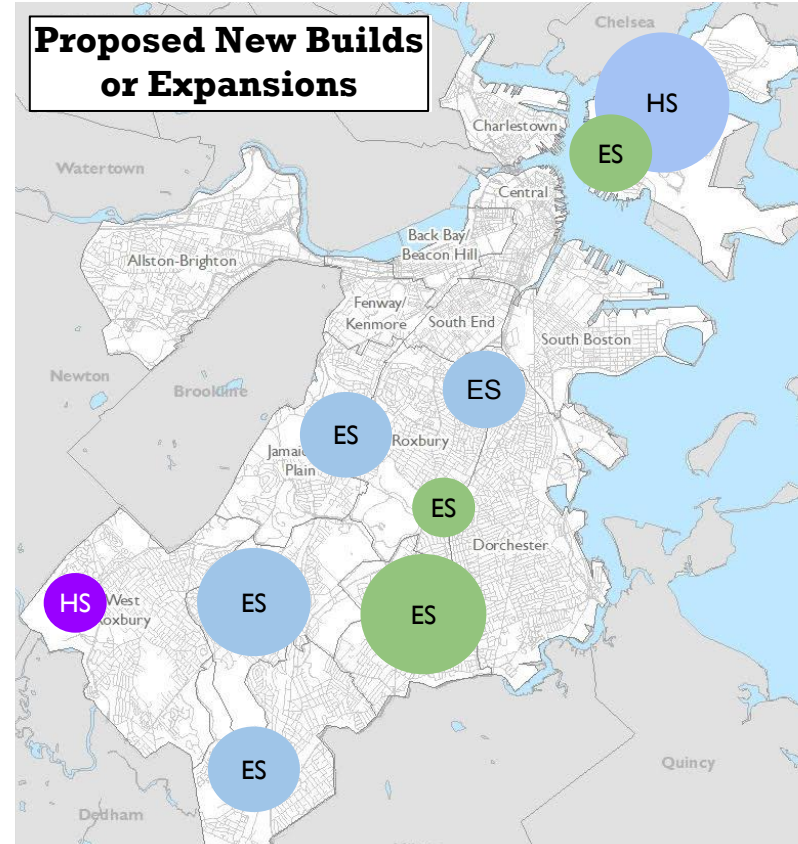
- Mattapan/Dorchester
- Roxbury/Dorchester
- East Boston

Expansions to address building limitations and reconfigure middle schools:

- Roslindale
- Roxbury/Jackson Square
- Hyde Park
- East Boston (HS)
- Roxbury/Dorchester (Upham's Corner)

Building Emergencies:

- West Roxbury



Our Commitment to K-8 / 9-12 Pathway

We estimate that 38% of our schools will exist within a K-8 / 9-12 pathway; therefore, our commitment to maintaining these strong communities includes:

- Designing 7-12s with additional capacity in 9th grade to ensure genuine choice for students in K-8 schools.
- Continuing to offer a variety of choices, including specialty high schools (e.g. Madison Park) that are and will be 9-12.
- Evaluating impact on K-8s as we roll out changes.
- Working with school communities to evaluate viability and programming.

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Questions?