



ENROLLMENT RESOLUTION FACTS:
THE DETERMINATION OF THE 628-STUDENT DESIGN ENROLLMENT NUMBER

This document supplies the history of how the 628-student design enrollment number was determined. This final number was driven by the Educational Program Plan, which must adhere to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Chapter 74 guidelines. These guidelines consider vocational technical program size, teacher-pupil ratios, and the square footage per student in specific programs/shops. They take into consideration the level of “hazard” in the vocational technical occupations as determined by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The specific programs that we selected, along with the estimated number of sections, resulted in this capacity number, which was guided by DESE, with final approval by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). In our expert opinion, 628 is also the smallest sized school that:

- Allows us to retain the quality of education our communities expect and deserve;
- Gives us reasonable room for future growth, and
- Allows us the possibility of a lower per student operating cost.

Following are some of the chronological milestones associated with the decisions to establish 628 as the preferred design enrollment:

- In March of 2008, Minuteman initiated the preparation of an MSBA Statement of Interest (SOI) based upon the new Superintendent’s preliminary observations of the school building and its condition. The Superintendent’s preliminary supposition was that the school should be in the range of 900 students, based upon the school’s current square footage, admissions metrics, and growing interest in high quality career and vocational technical education (CVTE) in the region. The final SOI was submitted to MSBA on February 15, 2009.
- In the summer of 2009, Minuteman was invited into the MSBA “pipeline” as a partner in the Feasibility Study process. On June 15, 2010, the School Committee voted unanimously to appropriate \$724,000 for a Feasibility Study. After nearly two (2) years, the last of the 16 member towns approved funding for the Feasibility Study (and notice of such approval was submitted to MSBA). On June 13, 2012, MSBA returned a fully executed Feasibility Study Agreement.
- MSBA initially recommended a design enrollment of 800, including in-district and out-of-district students. In its August 8, 2011 enrollment projection letter, the MSBA stated: “As a result of an analysis of the District’s historical and project enrollment, and application and waitlist data, the MSBA recommends a design enrollment of 800 students for the Minuteman Career and Technical High School.”
- On October 18, 2011, the District accepted the Design Enrollment Certification for 800. This Certification stated that: “As a result of a collaborative analysis...the MRVTSD District hereby acknowledges and agrees that the design of the proposed project at the MRVTSD shall be based on an enrollment of no more than 800 students.”

- After receiving input from member communities, the MSBA added a second Design Enrollment number – 435 – reflecting in-district student enrollment only. This gave the District two design enrollments to study: 435 and 800. On August 13, 2012, the District formally agreed to this revision and instructed its Design Team and School Building Committee to include both enrollments in the development of the Preliminary Design, within the original budget.
- In anticipation of this dual design enrollment, the Minuteman School Committee appointed an Education Plan Task Force, chaired by its member from Belmont. The Task Force was charged “with helping the School Committee better understand the educational program options for the School Building Project.” The Task Force met five (5) times between July 15, 2013 and September 25, 2013 at posted public meetings. The Task Force recommended CVTE programming for both a 435-student and an 800-student School. On October 8, 2013, the School Committee voted to accept the recommendations of the Education Plan Task Force in order to inform the Preliminary Design submission.
- On June 17, 2014, following a presentation by the Superintendent, the School Committee voted to approve a Design Enrollment of 628. This number was recommended by the Superintendent and by the School Building Committee based on a host of factors, including District input, educational objectives, operating and capital cost assumptions, and enrollment projections.
- After input from member towns that a 435-student school was unable to provide robust academic and CVTE programming, the Education Plan Task Force re-convened in August 2014 to review programming for a school of approximately 628 students. After further examination, the Educational Program Plan was revised to include two Career Academies comprised of 16 CVTE programs.
- On September 10, 2014, the revised Educational Program Plan was presented to the School Committee. The School Committee voted to accept the Plan as presented and as recommended by the Education Plan Task Force.
- On October 22, 2014, the revised Educational Program Plan was submitted to DESE.
- On February 23, 2015, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved revised Chapter 74 regulations. These regulations include a provision that an additional Capital Fee can be added to base tuition so that non-member sending communities may contribute to a capital project. Prior to this, the non-member sending communities were not responsible for capital costs, which put an unfair burden on the member towns. This paradigm has changed. Non-member communities no longer get a “free ride”.
- On July 21, 2015, MSBA Director of Capital Planning Mary Pichetti issued a staff memorandum recommending the project and stating “the MSBA would not be able to support the construction of a high school with a design enrollment of less than 600 students due to the diseconomies of scale affecting the cost and the ability of the District to deliver its desired curriculum.”
- On August 6, 2015, the MSBA Board of Directors voted unanimously to endorse the District’s preferred solution – a new school with a design enrollment of 628 students – and move the project into the Schematic Design phase.