



WILMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Wildwood School Building Project *Proposed Cost*

✗ FICTION

The proposed elementary school will cost the Town \$200 million dollars.

✓ FACT

The total project cost for the new school is \$173 million, and the MSBA has approved a State contribution of \$62 million*, leaving the local share at \$111 million. Additionally, the Town has proposed allocating \$15 million from the Town Stabilization Fund to offset the cost to the taxpayers, resulting in the Town's estimated share for the Project to be approximately \$96 million**. The Town has previously done this for the new Senior Center and new Town Hall projects.

* At a minimum, the State has committed to a grant of \$62 million. Based on contingencies that may be expended, additional grant funding may be provided by the MSBA.

** value subject to change based on final expenditures and State grant funding.



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Wildwood School Building Project *Expense Comparison*

✗ FICTION

The Wilmington Elementary Project is the most expensive in the state.

✓ FACT

This statement is inaccurate. A comparative analysis was conducted using data from similar projects in the MSBA pipeline over the past several years, with costs adjusted for inflation to allow for a fair comparison. It's important to note that total construction costs can vary significantly due to factors such as site conditions, demolition requirements, and other elements beyond the school building itself. To provide a more accurate picture, the proposed Wildwood School project was evaluated based on construction cost per square foot—both overall and for the building only. In both cases, the Wildwood project falls below the average cost of comparable MSBA school projects.



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Wildwood School Building Project *Building Cost Comparison*



* Building Construction Cost values represent building costs only; abatement, demolition, site development, construction mark-ups, and other miscellaneous construction related costs have been EXCLUDED. To level projects from preceding years, escalation adjustments have been made from the date of MSBA Board Approval to the midpoint of construction for the Wildwood Elementary School project. All project data was collected from the MSBA website.

** Wilmington Wildwood Elementary School building cost has NOT been included in the average.

*** Andover West Elementary, Total Construction Cost at Schematic Design was estimated at \$119,178,907 but Total Construction Cost at the date of the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) was \$136,311,316, the latter has been included above; Building Construction Cost at Schematic Design was estimated at \$72,338,002 but Building Construction Cost at the date of the GMP was \$91,020,733, the latter has been included above. The values have been escalated from the date of the GMP.



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Wildwood School Building Project *Total Construction Comparison*



* To level projects from preceding years, escalation adjustments have been made from the date of MSBA Board Approval to the midpoint of construction for the Wildwood Elementary School project. All project data was collected from the MSBA website.

** Wilmington Wildwood Elementary School building cost has NOT been included in the average.

*** Andover West Elementary, Total Construction Cost at Schematic Design was estimated at \$119,178,907 but Total Construction Cost at the date of the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) was \$136,311,316, the latter has been included above; Building Construction Cost at Schematic Design was estimated at \$72,338,002 but Building Construction Cost at the date of the GMP was \$91,020,733, the latter has been included above. The values have been escalated from the date of the GMP.



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Wildwood School Building Project *Cost Overruns*

✗ FICTION

In MA, school building projects run over their projected construction cost by an average of 14% — thus, this new school will actually cost us \$197 million.

✓ FACT

It's unclear where the claim of a 14% average overrun originates. While it's true that school construction projects across the state experienced unprecedented construction cost volatility starting in 2022, peaking in 2023, with gradual leveling in 2024. The proposed Wildwood School project includes appropriate contingencies for both construction and non-construction-related costs within its total proposed budget of \$173 million. These contingencies are based on current market conditions and best practices for cost management in public school construction.



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Wildwood School Building Project *Tax Increase*

✗ FICTION

Taxes will increase by over \$1,000 per year.

✓ FACT

The FY2025 average single-family residential assessed value is \$702,889. The projected tax rate impact of the debt exclusion is \$0.60 per \$1,000; thus, the projected yearly increase for the average single-family residence is \$422 per year, or \$35 dollars per month. To view a comparison of the proposed Wildwood project tax impact as compared to other MSBA school projects, please click [here](#).



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Wildwood School Building Project *Impact of Senior Center & Town Hall*

✗ FICTION

We're already paying too much for the new Senior Center and new Town Hall.

✓ FACT

The Senior Center and Town Hall/School Administration projects were funded within the annual budget without a debt exclusion or override. Free cash and capital stabilization funds were used to reduce debt service. The Senior Center land was purchased with free cash, with no borrowing required, while the Town Hall/School Admin building is on town-owned land, incurring no additional land cost.



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Wildwood School Building Project *No Vote Tax Impact*

✗ FICTION

Voting "No" will prevent taxes from increasing.

✓ FACT

We will still require capital funding to upgrade and maintain the existing buildings, without any contribution from the State. For more information on this, please visit the FAQ section of the Project Website.



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Wildwood School Building Project *No Vote MSBA Impact*

✗ FICTION

If the project doesn't pass, we can easily reenter the MSBA process.

✓ FACT

It is important to understand that if a community chooses not to partner with the MSBA, the full cost of any addition/renovation is the sole responsibility of the Town. The MSBA process allows for only ONE Project opportunity. If the Project were to fail, the community would need to resubmit a statement of interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority and start the entire process all over. Currently, this reentry process is trending between five and ten years. For more factual information on this data point, please click [here](#) and [here](#). For more information on the MSBA's policy regarding failed votes, please click [here](#).



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Wildwood School Building Project *Land Reuse*

✗ FICTION

If the project is approved, the land at the current Wildwood and Woburn Street Schools would be sold.

✓ FACT

If the proposed project moves forward, it would result in the consolidation of multiple schools. In order for any vacated property to be sold for development, the Town Manager would first need to declare the property as surplus. This designation must then be approved by both the Select Board and Town Meeting. If a property is declared surplus, the Town's Reuse Committee would provide recommendations regarding potential reuse of the site or facility, if any. However, at this time, the Town Manager has indicated that he does not intend to declare either of the schools involved in the consolidation as surplus.



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Wildwood School Building Project *Gym Size*

✗ FICTION

The community does not want a PreK-5 school built at the North Intermediate School site or a 12,000 square foot gymnasium. They voted for a smaller school and gym.

✓ FACT

From June 21, 2023, to July 22, 2025 — a span of 25 months — the School Building Committee held seven publicly posted Community Forums and 35 publicly posted School Building Committee meetings. Over this period, the Committee averaged an open public meeting approximately every 2.6 weeks.

Based on public input gathered through surveys at these forums, there was overwhelming support for key topics such as school consolidation to serve a PK-5 enrollment, the inclusion of a high school-sized gymnasium, and the proposed solution of constructing a new PK-5 school at the North Intermediate site.