



# Galvin Middle School

Community Forum #2

October 25, 2023

## Agenda:

Project Schedule Overview

Grade Configuration

Student Centered Design

Existing Elementary School Analysis

Massachusetts Middle School Configurations

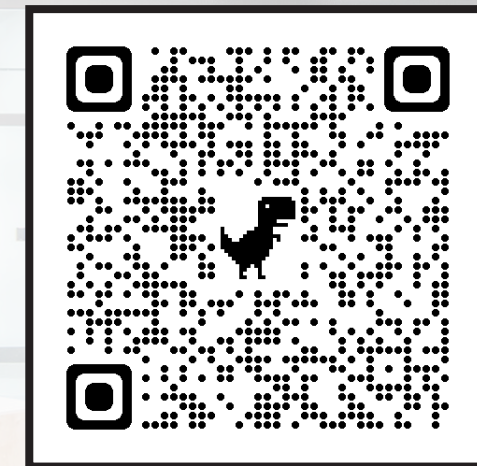
Social Emotional Learning aspects

Case Study Interviews with Natick & Quincy

Building Organization Options

Community Engagement / Live Polling

**PLEASE SIGN IN**

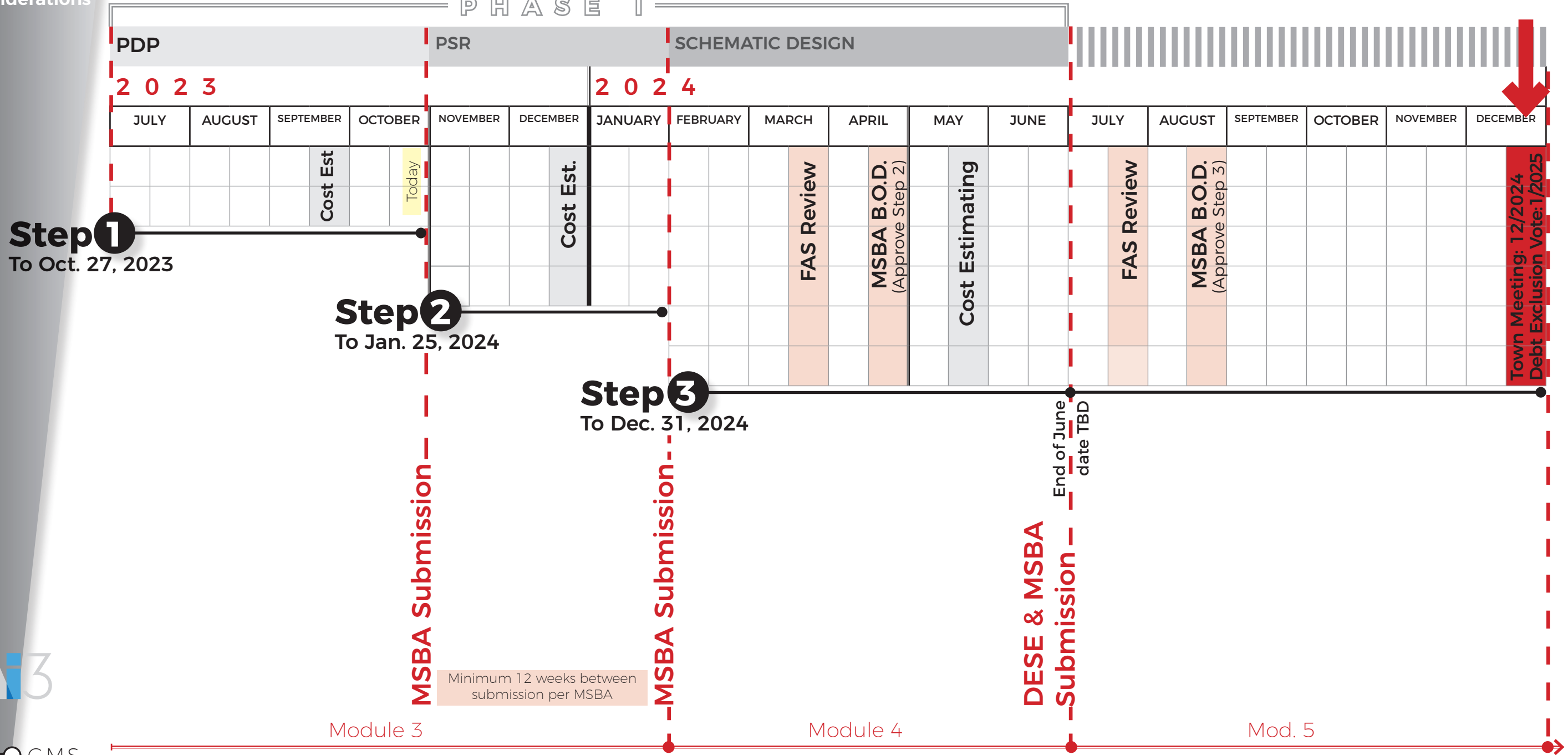




Considerations

# Galvin Middle School Project Schedule Overview

## PHASE I



**Step 1**  
To Oct. 27, 2023

**Step 2**  
To Jan. 25, 2024

**Step 3**  
To Dec. 31, 2024

MSBA Submission

MSBA Submission

DESE & MSBA Submission

Town Meeting: 12/2024  
Debt Exclusion Vote: 1/2025

Minimum 12 weeks between submission per MSBA

Module 3

Module 4

Mod. 5





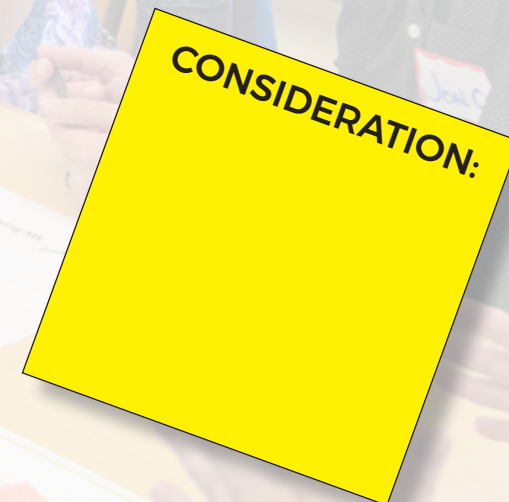
# Activity 1

## Post-it notes

**1** Write one consideration you feel the School Committee should consider when making the grade configuration decision.

**2** When finished, spend 3 minutes sharing your thoughts with your table

Please leave these post-it notes on your table when you leave this evening





# Student Centered Design

- **Developmental common throughlines:**
  - Need for flexible space
  - Need for space to move
  - Need for acceptance and connections
  - Transitional periods
  - Social-emotional opposites (i.e. - need for independence but also want to be a part of a group)
- **Developmentally, 5th and 6th graders are more similar and 7th and 8th graders are more similar**
- **There is a progression in the way students challenge rules - as students get older, they think about what's just**
- **There is a need for space to move, especially in the younger grades as students use the floor and like to spread out**

"Information is  
currency of demo





# Student Centered Design

## Student - Centered Design Considerations

- Still kids
- High energy
- Rapidly growing
- Small and immature
- Eager to please
- Searching for a social group
- Nervous, anxious, fragile
- Emerging executive functioning
- Overwhelmed
- Excited and sweet
- Prepubescent and young
- Seek teacher/adult interaction and approval
- Structured friendships
- Structure in academics and expectations
- Exploration and team activities
- Physical growth and need for movement and outdoors



# Student Centered Design

## Physical

## Grade 5

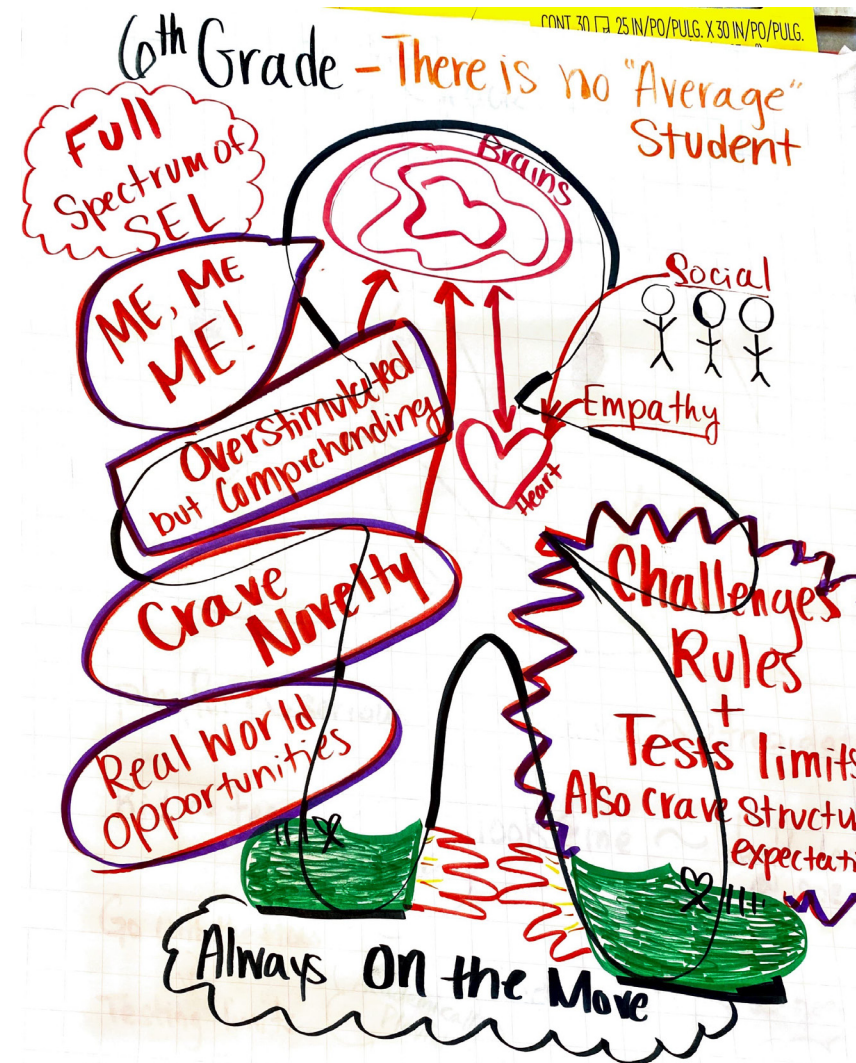
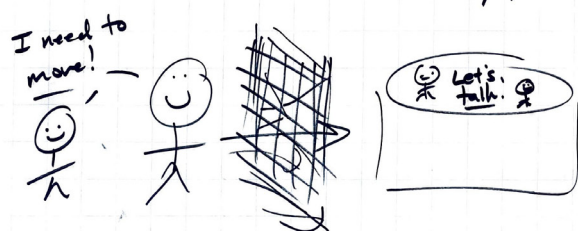
- Flexible Groupings
  - ~ work well with peers & adults
  - ~ enjoy debates + discussions
- Need for movement!
  - time of physical growth
  - ~ flexible furniture arrangements
  - ~ in + out of the classroom
  - ~ flexible classroom space
  - ~ need for outdoor space + time + views

importance of windows

## Social-Emotional

- Crave social interactions
- thrive off + need social interactions
  - academic + SEL benefits
- developing conflict resolution skills
  - sensitive to fairness / right, wrong
  - atriums for debates/presentations

## PODS



## GRADE 5

- Work well in groups
- Enjoy cooperative and competitive games
- Developing large muscles
- Enjoy collecting, classifying, and organizing
- Able to concentrate for longer periods
- Growth spurts lead to hunger and tiredness

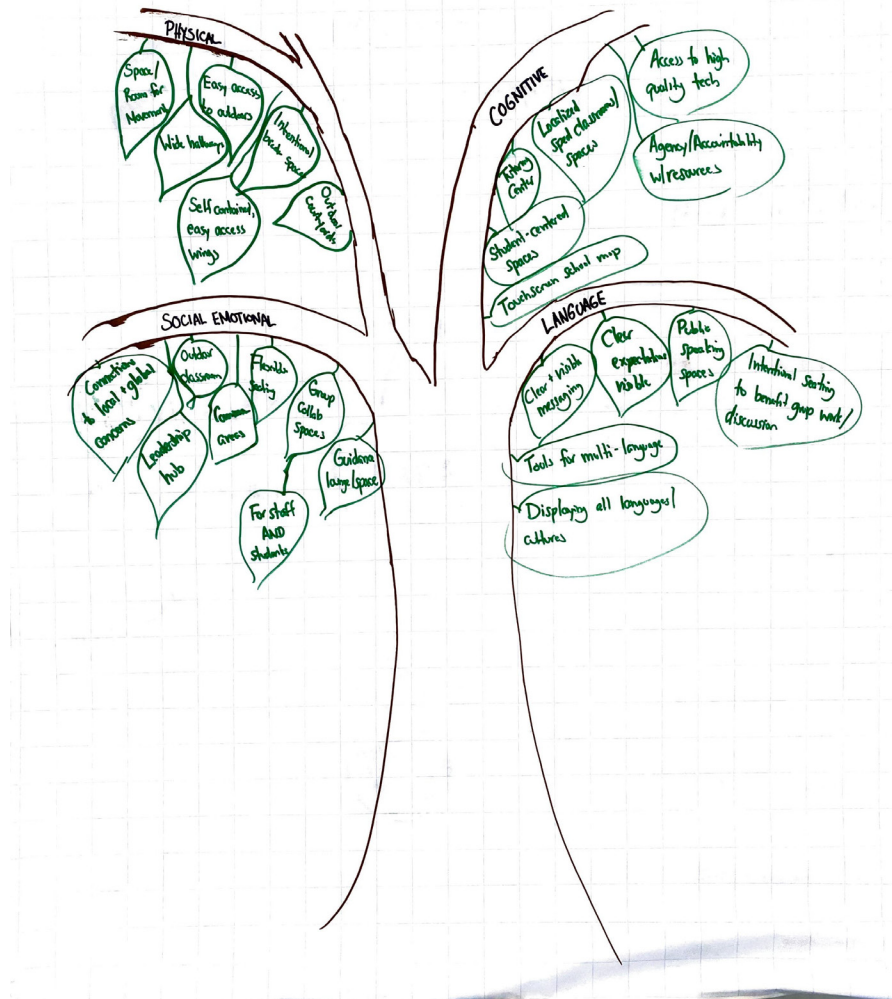
## GRADE 6

- Very social & engage with peers
- Enjoy competition and team activities
- Restless and energetic
- Growth spurts lead to hunger and tiredness
- Benefit from physical activity
- Enjoy challenge of increased responsibility



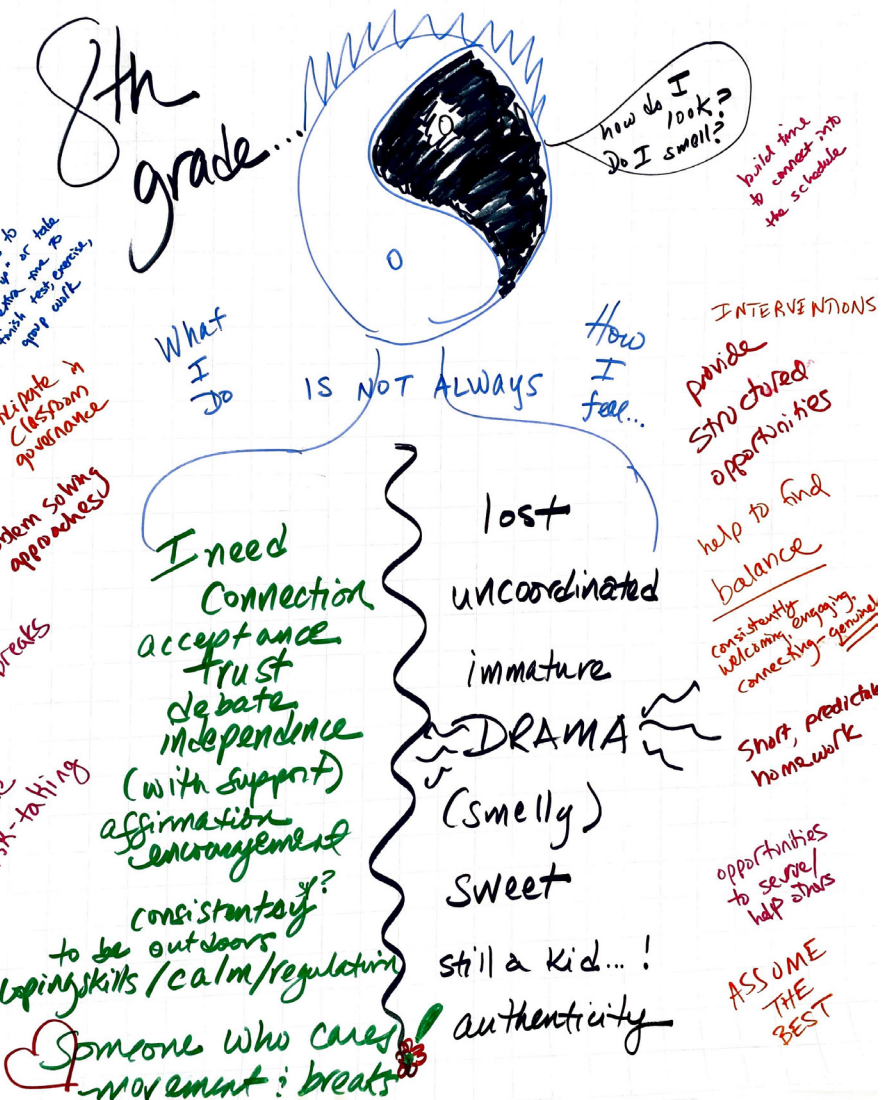
# Student Centered Design

7<sup>th</sup> Grade



## GRADE 7

- Spontaneous but care about peers' opinions
- Growth spurts lead to being fidgety and energetic
- Benefit from movement and activity
- Enjoy conversation



## GRADE 8

- Pay close attention to what's in and what's out
- May need support working in groups
- Tentative or unwilling to take risks on academic tasks
- Likes to express their likes and dislikes (more vocal)
- Have lots of physical energy



# Hansen Elementary School

## What programs could utilize the vacated 5th grade classrooms:

- Music Room
- Health Classroom
- Loop Classroom
- Reading / Special Education Classroom
- School Conference Room (from previous reading room)

\* Examples based on current needs



Floor 2



Floor 1





# Kennedy Elementary School

Elementary School Floor Plans

**What programs could utilize the vacated 5th grade classrooms:**

- Computer & technology space
- Counselors Office
- Calming Space
- Testing Space

\* Examples based on current needs



**Floor 1**



**Floor 2**



# Luce Elementary School



**What programs could utilize the vacated 5th grade classrooms:**

- Conference room
- Testing / breakout room / small group collaboration space
- Office space (assistant principal)
- SEL & Sensory room

\* Examples based on current needs

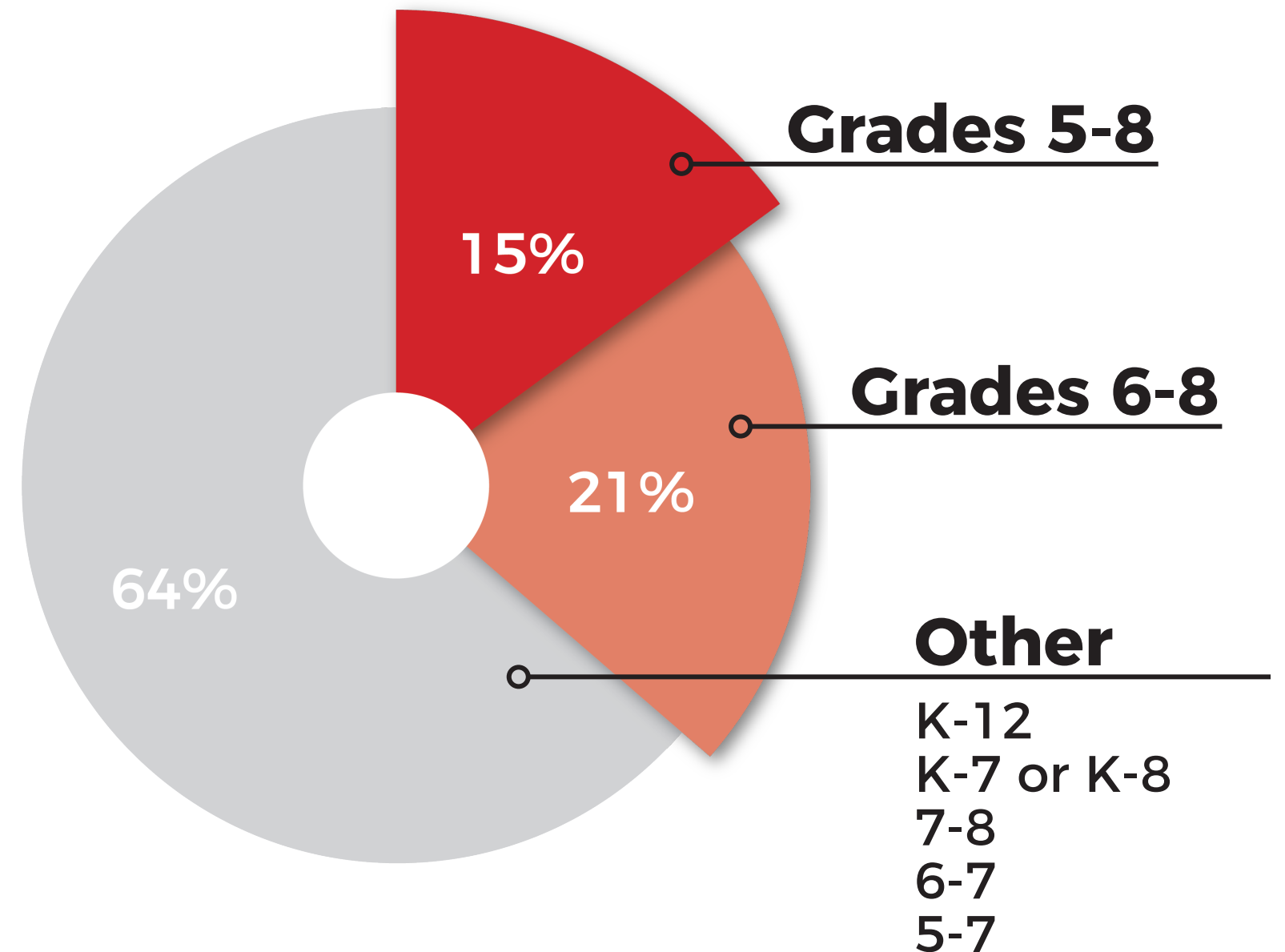


# Grade-Level Configuration

Ai3 has assisted many cities/  
towns in 20+ years with Middle  
School grade configurations

- 5-8 // Abington
- 5-8 // Beverly
- 6-8 // Brockton
- 5-8 // East Bridgewater
- 6-8 // Hingham
- 6-8 // Hull
- 6-8 // Lincoln, RI
- 5-8 // Lynnfield
- 5-8, 5-8 // Natick (2)
- 5-8 // Norwood
- 6-8 // Providence, RI
- 5-8, 6-8 // Quincy (2)
- 6-8 // Reading
- 6-8 // Somerset
- 6-8 // Watertown
- 5-8 // Whitman
- 5-8, 5-8 // Woonsocket, RI (2)

## Public Middle Schools in Massachusetts





# Social Emotional Learning

- ❑ Elementary Parent Perspective
- ❑ The child-development continuum
- ❑ Designing for support



# Case Study Interview

Dr. DeCristofaro - Former Superintendent of Quincy Public Schools

Quincy:  
became a 5-8 grade configuration in 2019  
Interview occurred in 2021

**CONSIDERATION:** 5th grade children engaging with 7th and 8th graders during dining and outdoor recess. How have you addressed this concern in your school?

- What we have is a **separate lunch**
- The **5th graders** also **have their own play** when they are outside prior to coming back to class

**EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS:** such as access to advanced placement programs, 5th graders have when they are included in a 6-8 middle school environment? Do 5th grade students have access to more specialized educational opportunities and support services at the middle school level than compared to an elementary school level?

- In the middle school the 5th graders receive **more art class, physical education class, additional health classes, additional use of the library and more band/choral** time in the music area.

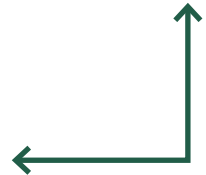
Have you experienced more or less instances of **NEGATIVE INTERACTION WITH THE 5TH AND 8TH GRADERS** than you expected/braced for?

- Quincy constantly talked at the Building Committee level, and at the School Committee level, about how this design would service our students
- **Each grade would all have their own individual house/academic neighborhood**
- There was very, **very limited interaction** with the 5th graders and the 8th graders.
  - Outside of some clubs/organizations, such as Drama, or Community service. These would be either all grades, or paired off as 5/6 and 7/8.
- **A lot of times the 8th graders really don't want to be around 5th graders.** Everything was planned or designed in a way that there was a lot of separation between the grades.

How has **REMOVING 5TH GRADE FROM THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IMPACTED THE CULTURE AND CLIMATE** at the elementary schools?

- The changes were **less cultural and more attitudinal.** With the 5th graders in the middle school it allowed for more focus on the 4th graders that were still very much elementary students.
- For the most part, **there was not a tremendous change** to the elementary schools

All true for Canton  
PLUS  
World Language





# Case Study Interview

Dr. Nolin - Former Superintendent of Natick Public Schools

Natick:  
Made the grade configuration  
shift to a 5-8 20+ years ago  
Interview occurred in 2021

## CONSIDERATION: Busing

- Natick has **assigned seating**, they are organized by grade level; so 5th at the front, 6th directly behind, 7th behind them, 8th graders - of course, kings of the bus - rule the back.
- For all the angst that went into worrying about this, **8th graders could not be less interested in 5th grade people.**

## CONSIDERATION: 5th grade children engaging with 7th and 8th graders during dining and outdoor recess:

- Natick **doesn't mix grade levels** for lunches.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS: such as access to advanced placement programs, 5th graders have when they are included in a 6-8 middle school environment? Do 5th grade students have access to more specialized educational opportunities and support services at the middle school level than compared to an elementary school level?

- In terms of the total development of young people, we don't have a robust club offering scenario at the K-4 level. We also don't offer as much after-school music programs, dance, etc, but we do offer all of that at our middle school programs.
- **The number one benefit we feel is that very early on in their academic career, grade 5 students are able to taste a bunch of different life experiences and club experiences.**
- The 5th graders do engage with older students through mentorship programs and support. We do have a tutoring program where 8th graders help with the 5th graders, so there are a lot of nice relationships that come.

What was your COMMUNITY'S BIGGEST CONCERN in regards to adding 5th grade to the middle school? How have these issues changed over time?

- **The biggest focus has been on finding the balance to push students to the just right sweet spot** of "hard enough" but "not so hard that it creates desperation and loss of hope", while they're going through this massive developmental change in the brain, the spine, the size of their body, the hormones, all of those pieces.



## Quincy

What was the **DECIDING FACTOR** to include 5th grade into the middle school?

- Ideally it would have been all pedagogical and what was the best thing in that regard, but the elementary schools were struggling with class size and something needed to be done. That drove Quincy to the 5-8 school, **class size and enrollment.**
- We're going to build a new school, let's make sure that we do what's best for our students and give them class size and give them beautiful space.

## Natick

What was the **DECIDING FACTOR** to include 5th grade into the middle school grade configuration standard?

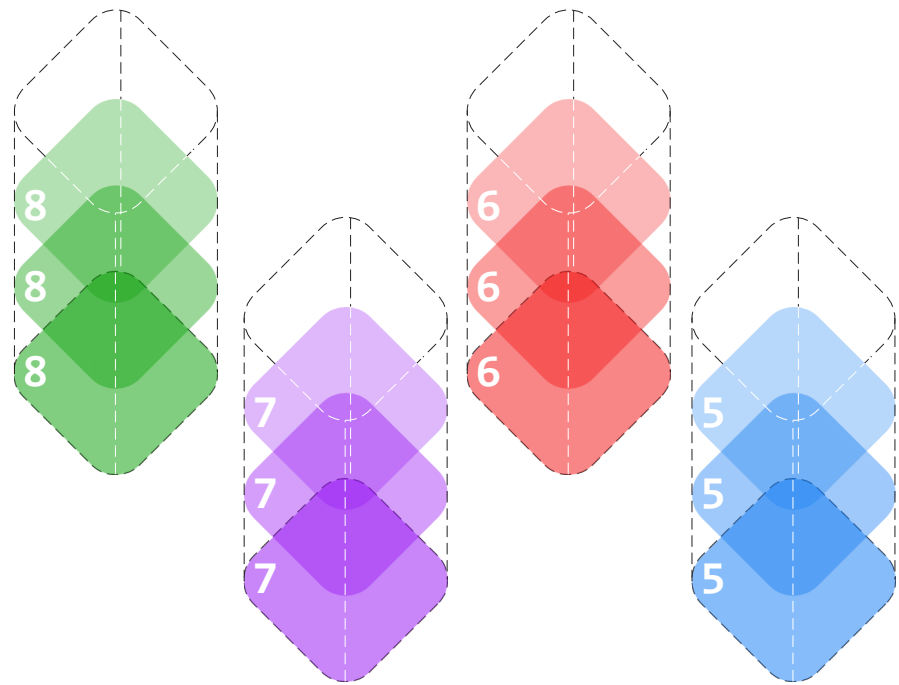
- The process started in Natick in the late '90s, of putting the middle schools with the 5th grade, due to a resurgence of interest in middle school modeling and middle school teaming, and there was a pivotal report put out earlier called "***This We Believe***" about middle schools and what they should look like and what teams should look like. So, Natick undertook the process to study what would we like our schools to be, and ultimately decided to move the middle school to include 5th grade.
- Another desire was for a **longer time period with families within the middle school** model.
- The final factor was the reality around **enrollment and arrangements.**



# Grade-Level Configuration - Organization Options

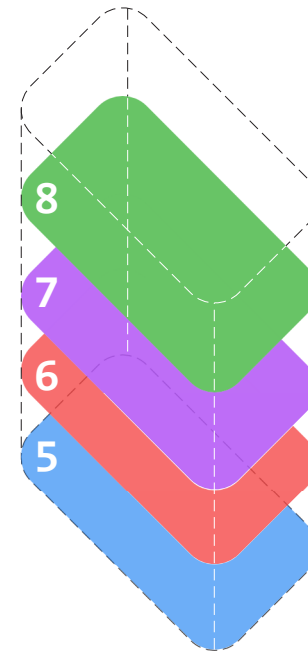
## Using building design & organization to control grade-level interactions

A new school can be designed to maintain separation between grade levels



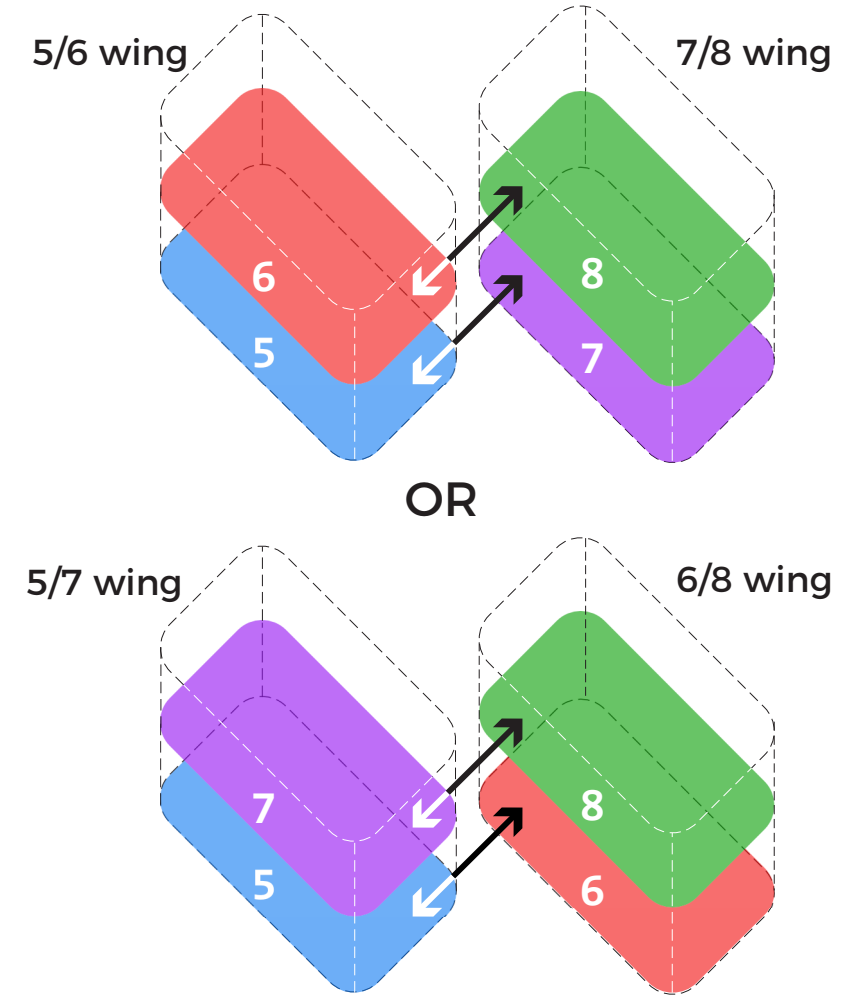
**A**

Vertical Organization



**B**

Horizontal Organization



**C**

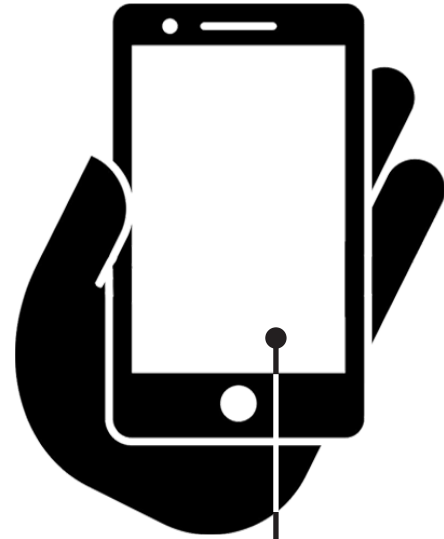
Grade Level Component Organization





# Virtual Live Polling

Visit [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and enter code **1195 9723** to participate in the poll



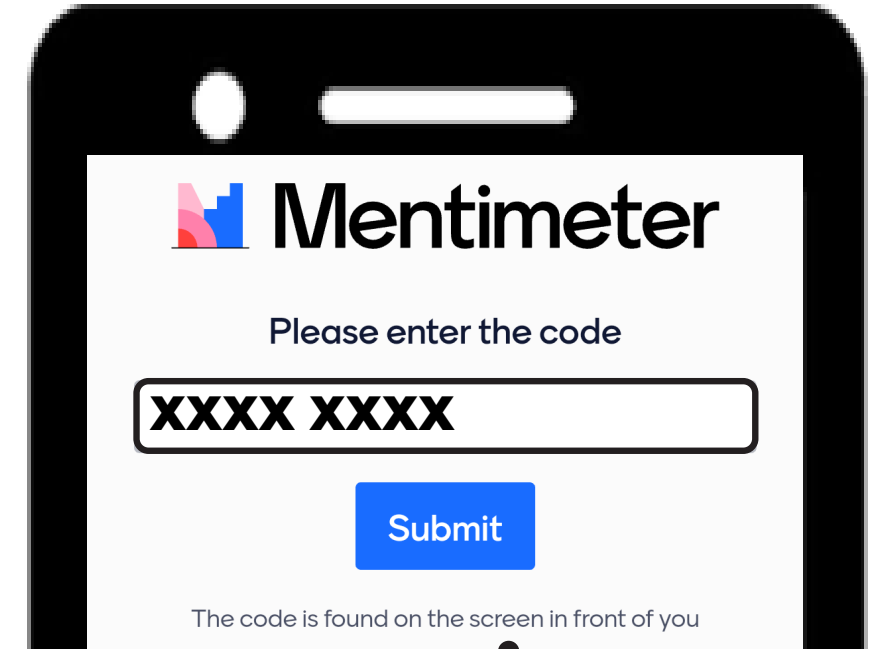
## Step 1

On your phone/ tablet/ computer



## Step 2

Visit the Mentimeter website



## Step 3

Enter code **1195 9723** and take poll



# Virtual Live Polling

Visit [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and enter code **1195 9723** to participate in the poll



## Multiple Choice Questions

Rank the following considerations the District needs to be mindful of when making the grade configuration decision:

- Peer-to-peer interactions
- Bussing
- Traditions
- Lunch/recess
- Access to clubs and programs
- Transition time - 3 or 4 years in same building
- Capacity at Elementary Schools
- Offering of Academic Programming

## Multiple Choice Question

Are you open to the idea of modifying the grade configuration of Galvin to include 5th grade?

**YES** \_\_\_\_\_

**NO** \_\_\_\_\_

**UNSURE** \_\_\_\_\_

Polls close at:

**9:00pm on  
Sunday, October 29**

Results from this poll will be utilized to inform the decision, not make the decision.



# Galvin Middle School Discussion

