



Wolcott Public Schools

Capacity & Utilization Study

February 10, 2025



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Wolcott Public Schools



Capacity Approach & Process

- Capacity of the buildings should reflect the district’s educational programs, operations, and staffing policies.
- Capacity changes over time as educational programs and policies evolve.
- **“Maximum Capacity”** is not achievable in districts that group by neighborhood since students don’t come evenly distributed across all grades. Typically, these schools can achieve 85% to 90% of the maximum capacity. In addition, it is important to factor in headroom in each classroom to accommodate enrollment bubbles and enrollment growth that may occur throughout the school year.

- In our experience the “**Planning Capacity**” should reflect operational best practices as opposed to the “maximum” number of students that can fit in a building. Note that a school that operates at 100% of the Planning Capacity is **NOT** overcrowded but rather operating efficiently from a class-size and staffing standpoint. The Planning Capacity also accounts for the placement of districtwide self-contained programs and Pre-K.



Wolcott Public Schools



Capacity Process

Last Name	First Name	Room #
Ametli	Monila	R250
Antonowicz	Nicole	Security
Balanda	William	C237
Barkauskas	Brianna	C132
Barrett	Anamarie	School Counseling
Bartlett	Dale	R255
Barry	Michael	Security
Boggio	Kelly	B120
Brochu	Kelley	School Counseling
Brown	Linda	Gym
Clement	Justin	Band Room
Conroy	Matthew	SPED PARA-B123
Coppola	Lori	C223
Cormier	Angela	Main Office
Cormier	Rob	C145



Core Subject Rooms

Floor Plan Markups CR Schedules Inventory Other

Teacher Work Room 1

- Inventory of standard classrooms, special purpose rooms, and core facilities at each school facility was developed from floor plans, schedules, placement of districtwide programming, and walkthroughs of each facility.

Detention 1

- WPS classroom loading levels were applied to the various types of teaching spaces.
 - A scheduling factor was incorporated into the capacities for the middle school and high school.
- Capacity inventory was developed in the fall of 2024 and reflects the 2024-25 use of space.



Enrollment Projections Refresh





School Year

Enrollment

Projections Project Refresh

12 P K

Birth

PK-12

PK-5 Total

6-8

Total

9-12 Total

Year Births K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Total K-5 Total

2023-24	2018	120	163	161	163	137	150	155	164	180	163	150	153	166	168	59	2,132	929	988	507	637	2024-25	2019	102	120	167	166	160	140	154	156	159	184	153	148	151	163	63	2,084	907	970	499	615
2025-26	2020	121	153	127	167	166	166	147	158	159	160	163	152	149	156	63	2,086	926	989	477	620	2026-27	2021	117	148	162	127	167	172	174	151	161	160	142	162	153	154	63	2,096	950	1,013	472	611
2027-28	2022	131	164	157	162	127	173	180	179	154	162	142	141	163	159	63	2,126	963	1,026	495	605	2028-29	2023	141	170	174	157	162	132	181	185	183	155	144	141	142	169	63	2,158	976	1,039	523	596
2029-30	2024	133	163	180	174	157	168	138	186	189	184	137	143	142	147	63	2,171	980	1,043	559	569	2030-31	2025	134	165	173	180	174	163	176	142	190	190	163	136	144	147	63	2,206	1,031	1,094	522	590
2031-32	2026	136	166	175	173	180	180	171	181	145	191	169	162	137	149	63	2,242	1,045	1,108	517	617	2032-33	2027	137	167	176	175	173	186	188	176	185	146	169	168	163	142	63	2,277	1,065	1,128	507	642

2033-34 2028 138 169 177 176 175 179 195 193 180 186 130 168 170 169 63 2,330 1,071 1,134 559 637 • Enrollment projections developed based on 2023-24 enrollment data were refreshed with fall 2024 data.

- Actual enrollment was trending slightly below the projections with the biggest gap at Kindergarten. This was largely drive by the recent change in entry age that went into effect for the 2024-25 school year.
- Remaining grades are trending about 1% below the projections due to slower migration driven by current housing market conditions.
- Overall trends are similar to previous projections, with enrollment growing to about 2,330 students by 2033-34
- Refreshed projections were revised downwards slightly compared to previous projections





Elementary Schools



Elementary Educational Program



Grade Level Instruction

Kindergarten *(with in room
toilets)* **1st Grade**
2nd Grade
3rd Grade
4th Grade
5th Grade



Specials

Art
Music
STEM/Computer Lab
...

Special Education
Resource OT/PT
Self-Contained Special Education

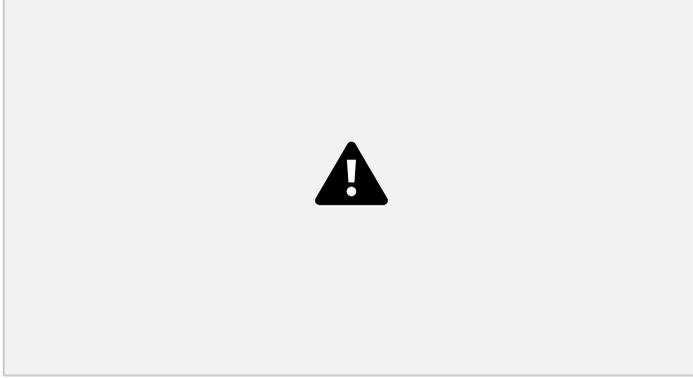


Support Services

ELL
Reading
Math
Tutors
Paraprofessionals
Speech Language
Pathologist Social Worker
School Psychologist



Special Education



Administrative

Main Office Suite
Health Suite
Conference Room
Teacher Workroom
Faculty Lounge



Core

Spaces

Cafeteria
Gymnasium

Core spaces should be sized appropriately based on enrollment

Uses that need full-sized classrooms



Special education and support services may be located in shared full-sized classrooms if smaller spaces are not available

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Elementary Class Size Policy

Elementary Class Size Policy

- Class size maximums for the elementary schools are 23 in Kindergarten

and 1st grade and 25 in 2nd through 5th grade.

- Maximum class sizes are not achievable in districts that group by neighborhood since students don't come evenly distributed across all grades. Typically, these schools can achieve 85% to 90% of the maximum capacity. In addition, it is important to factor in headroom in each classroom to accommodate enrollment bubbles and enrollment growth that may occur throughout the school year.

- For WPS, we recommend using a 90% efficiency factor.

- Based on the district's staffing policies, **a loading level of 22 students per classroom was used**, which aligns with the average of the class size targets for all grades with a 90% efficiency factor applied.

- Capacity based on both existing K-5 rooms and "flex" classrooms that could support K-5 instruction. "Flex" classrooms are often used as additional support service rooms when not needed for grade level instruction, and can be converted or "flexed" to grade level instruction in the event increased enrollment or the occurrence of an enrollment bubble.



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Kindergarten	23
1 st Grade	23
2 nd Grade	25
3 rd Grade	25
4 th Grade	25
5 th Grade	25

Target (90% Efficiency): 22 Target (85% Efficiency): 21



Districtwide Programs (Elementary)

Pre-K

- Three classrooms located in the lower level of Alcott ES. Mix of full-day and part-day enrollment
- Pre-K loading levels not to exceed **17 students per classroom.**
- Need for a fourth classroom. One additional Pre-K classroom was incorporated into the Alcott Capacity to account for current program needs. There is a fourth full-size room in the lower level that could be used for this purpose (currently used for support services).

Self-Contained Special Education

- Two programs at Frisbie - Compass program (currently uses 2 classrooms shared between one group of students) and one Alternative Behavior Classroom (ABC).
- Life Skills program at Wakelee (currently uses 2 classrooms shared between one group of students).
- While “double rooms” at Frisbee & Wakelee are not required, they improve program function. Historically, the second rooms have been used for K-5 instruction when needed.
- **Loading level of 12 students per classroom used for districtwide Self-Contained Programs**



Elementary

Space Inventory

Alcott 2 3 2 2 2 2 1 1 1 0 3 4 13 **23 321**

Frisbie 2 3 2 2 2 2 1 1 2 3 0 2 13 **22 283** Wakelee 3 3 3 3 3 4 1 1 1 2 0 6 19 **30 366**

Frisbie is not full-sized

Space inventory reflects full-sized classroom usage as of Fall 2024

Note - one of the districtwide program rooms at

- Inventory of full-sized classrooms conducted based on floor plans, schedules/room assignments, and facility walkthroughs conducted in November 2024.
- All schools have one art room, one music room, and at least one full-sized resource room. • Each elementary school has either Pre-K (Alcott) or districtwide special programs (Frisbie, Wakelee)
- “Other” classrooms include Reading, STEM/Computer Lab, OT/PT, TAG, and Library, and in some cases (not all) can be “flexed” into grade level instructional spaces that contribute to capacity.

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Elementary Capacity

Alcott 23 13 1 14 0 4 5 **376** 321 85%

Frisbie 22 13 3 16 2 0 4 **376** 283 75% Wakelee 30 19 3 22 1 0 7 **496** 366 74%

1. Includes art, music, resource, support services, STEM, and other full-sized spaces

Note that 1 additional Pre-K classroom was allocated from a "flex" classroom at Alcott to account for program need

- Planning Capacity is based on existing K-5 classrooms and “flex” rooms (which could house K-5 instruction, Pre K classrooms, and districtwide special programs.
 - “Flex” classrooms rarely, if ever, go unused and are often used for various special education and support functions when not needed for K-5 instruction.
- Alcott has one flex room that could be used for K-5 instruction and second flex room on the lower level that was reserved as a 4th Pre-K classroom.
- Frisbie has three flex rooms that could be used for K-5 instruction. For the purposes of calculating the capacity, it assumed that only one Compass classroom is required (based on current needs), with the second counting as a

“Flex” room.

- Wakelee has three flex rooms that could be used for K-5 instruction. For the purposes of calculating the capacity, it assumed that only one Life Skills classroom is required (based on current needs), with the second counting as

a “Flex” room. 
 Wolcott Public Schools

Utilization

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Projected

PK-5 Utilization (Medium Model)

Alcott (PK-5) 87% 85% 90% 91% 93% 95% 92% 96% 97% 98% 99% **92% 376** Frisbie (K-5) 72% 75% 76% 79% 80% 78% 80% 86% 88% 89% 90% **79% 376**
 Wakelee (K-5) 75% 74% 74% 75% 76% 78% 80% 83% 84% 85% 85% **77% 496** Greatest

Confidence in 1st 5 Years

- Utilization compares current and projected enrollment to the Planning Capacity for each school.
- Overall utilization is projected to average about 82% over the next five years, growing to about 90% over the final years of the projections.
- Alcott is projected to be the most well-utilized building, averaging 92% of Planning Capacity over the next five years, with utilization ranging from 90% to 99% over the next decade.
- Frisbie is projected to average 79% utilization over the next five years, growing to about 90% utilization over the final years of the projections.
- Wakelee is projected to average 77% utilization over the next five years, growing to about 85% utilization over the final years of the projections.

- There is sufficient space within the elementary school buildings to accommodate projected enrollment growth.



Comparison of Capacity Approaches

Comparison of Elementary Capacity Approaches

Alcott ¹ 496 376 321 373
Frisbie 489 376 283 337
Wakelee 627 496 366 424

Building Square footage obtained from State ED050 reports.

1. Central Office Square Footage (9,750 SF) was deducted from Alcott

- CT State Space Standard (based on building square footage) is used for determining reimbursement rate for renovate-as-new projects and a tool for facility planning, by viewing each building through the lens of the Office of Grants Administration (OGA, formerly OSCGR). Oftentimes, buildings of older vintages have capacities that do not align with the CT State Space Standard.
- Comparing current enrollment to state space standard results in a current utilization of about 60% and a peak projected utilization of about 70%. However, State Space Standard does not reflect localized operations and educational programming.
- MP's Planning's Capacity (based on current building operations and educational program) is much lower than the capacity based on the state space standard. Drivers of this difference include:
 - Lower class sizes than state standard (state standard uses loading levels of 25 per classroom)
 - Large core spaces at WPS elementary schools relative to enrollment

• Increasing student needs, resulting in additional space needs to support special education and support services • **Renovating existing buildings would result in a reduction in reimbursement rate unless a space waiver or special legislation was obtained.**

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Middle School & High School

Wolcott Public Schools



MS Space Inventory & Capacity

- Core subject rooms and specials/electives count towards capacity. • Applied a class size target of 25 students per classroom and a scheduling factor of 71% (assumes classrooms are used 5 out of 7 periods).
- Currently 2 teams per grade (consisting of 5 teachers per team) with world language being shared across grades
- Average team size of ~85. Ideal team size of 100 to 120. • Specialty labs includes Tech Ed and FACS
- “Other Specialty” includes the Large Group room and TAG/Project Explore Room
- Two districtwide program rooms (1 Life Skills, 1 ABC) with a loading level of 12 students per classroom.

- **Results in a Planning Capacity of 770 students.**
- **Based on October 2024 enrollment of 499 students, current utilization is 65%.**



Wolcott Public Schools

Core Subject Rooms

6th Gr. 10 7th Gr. 10 8th Gr. 10 World Language 4 **Specials**

Art 1 Music 2 Specialty Labs 3 Other Specialty 2 **Districtwide Programs**

Self-Contained Special Ed. 2 **Other**

Teacher Work Room 1 Detention 1 Resource 1

Class Size Target 25

Special Program Target 12 Scheduling Factor 71% Planning Capacity 770 Enrollment (10/2024) 499 Utilization (2024) 65% 16



Projected Utilization

- Utilization compares current and projected enrollment to the Planning Capacity for each school.
- Enrollment at Tyrrell Middle School is projected to decrease over the next two years before rebounding, reaching a peak of 559 students in 2029-30 and 2033-34.
- Overall utilization is projected to average about 66% over the next five years and ranging from 61% to 73% over the next decade.
- **There is sufficient space within the Middle School to accommodate current and future enrollment for the foreseeable future.**



Wolcott Public Schools

Tyrrell Middle School Projected Enrollment and Utilization

2023-24	507	66%	2024-25	499	65%	2025-26	477	62%	2026-27	472	61%	2027-28	495	64%	2028-29	523	68%
2029-30	559	73%	2030-31	522	68%	2031-32	517	67%	2032-33	507	66%	2033-34	559	73%			

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HS Space Inventory & Capacity

- Similar capacity approach as the Middle School with core subject rooms and specials counting towards capacity.
- Class size target of 25 students per classroom and a scheduling factor of 71% (5 out of 7 periods) were applied.

- Currently 8 teachers for each core subject, with an additional science lab (9 total) and 5 world language classrooms.

- 11 Specialty labs includes Tech Ed, FACS, and Robotics.

- “Other Specialty” includes the Lecture Hall

- Special Programs are loaded at 12 students per classroom and include:

- STEPS

- Life Skills (2 classrooms)

- Phoenix

- 18-22 Program

- **Yields a Planning Capacity of 1,001 students.**

- **Based on October 2024 enrollment of 615 students,**



Projected Utilization

- Utilization compares current and projected enrollment to the Planning Capacity for each school.
- Enrollment at Wolcott High School is projected to decrease over the next two years before rebounding, reaching a peak of 642 students in 2032-33.

current HS utilization is 61%.



Wolcott Public Schools

Core Subject Rooms

Science 9 English 8 Math 8 Social Studies 8 World Language 5 **Specials**

Art 1 Music 2 Specialty Labs 11 Other Specialty 1 **Districtwide Programs**

Special Programs (18-22 & Spec. Ed) 5 **Other**

Teacher Work Room 1 Leadership Offices 1

Class Size Target 25

Special Program Target 12 Scheduling Factor 71% MP Planning Capacity 1,001

Enrollment (10/2024) 615

Utilization (2024-25) 61%18

- Overall utilization is projected to average about 60% over the next five years and ranging from 57% to 64% over the next decade.
- **There is sufficient space within the High School to accommodate current and future enrollment for the foreseeable future.**



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Wolcott High School Projected Enrollment and Utilization

2023-24	637	64%	2024-25	615	61%	2025-26	620	62%	2026-27	611	61%	2027-28	605	60%	2028-29	596	60%
2029-30	569	57%	2030-31	590	59%	2031-32	617	62%	2032-33	642	64%	2033-34	637	64%			



MS & HS Comparison of Capacity Approaches

State Space Standard is used for determining reimbursement rate for renovate-as-new projects.

Comparison of MS Capacity Approaches Comparison of HS Capacity Approaches

CT State Space Standard (Based on 168 SF per Student) **859**

MP Planning Capacity **770**
Current 6-8 Enrollment (2024-25) **499**
Peak Projected 6-8 Enrollment **559**

Building Square footage obtained from State ED050 reports.

- Comparing current enrollment to state space standard results in a current utilization of about 58% and a peak projected utilization of about 65%. The gap between the State Space Standard and MP Planning capacity is much lower at the middle school compared to the elementary schools.
- **Renovating the Middle School building could result in a significant reduction in reimbursement rate unless a space waiver or special legislation was obtained.**

MP Planning Capacity **1,001**
Current 9-12 Enrollment (2024-25) **615**
Peak Projected 9-12 Enrollment **642**

CT State Space Standard (Based on 186.5 SF per Student) **961**

Building Square footage obtained from State ED050 reports.

- Comparing current enrollment to state space standard results in a current utilization of about 64% and a peak projected utilization of about 67%. MP Planning Capacity is slightly higher than the capacity base on the State Space Standard.
- **Renovating the High School building would result in a significant reduction in reimbursement rate unless a space waiver or special legislation was obtained.**



Wolcott Public Schools



Takeaways



Takeaways and Next Steps

- Current buildings have adequate capacity to support current and projected enrollment for the foreseeable future.
- At all buildings, existing square footage is larger than the State’s allowable square footage calculated based on the peak projected enrollment.
 - Would result in lower reimbursement rate for renovation projects.
 - If district pursues new construction, buildings would need to be smaller in order to “right size” them to enrollment and maximize reimbursement
- As part of next steps, district should assess renovation versus new construction options related to costs, educational programming, and community use benefits.

Comparison of Existing Building Square

Footage and Allowable Square Footage based on Peak Projected Enrollment

Existing Square Footage	61,850	61,268	78,520	201,638	144,277	179,167	46,941	44,010	53,658			
(Excluding Central Office space at Alcott) Allowable Square Footage	144,609	94,851	120,930									
State Space Standard NGAA based on Peak Projected Enrollment												
Difference	14,909	17,258	24,862	57,029	49,426	58,237	Allowable SF to Existing SF Ratio (Eligibility Factor)	0.759	0.718	0.683	0.717	0.657

0.675 Existing building square footage obtained from State ED050 reports.

NGAA = net gross allowable area from CT Office of Grants Administration Space Standards Worksheet
 Allowable Square Footage excludes any potential construction bonuses or Pre-1950 construction area



Appendix: Floor Plan Mark Ups



Alcott ES

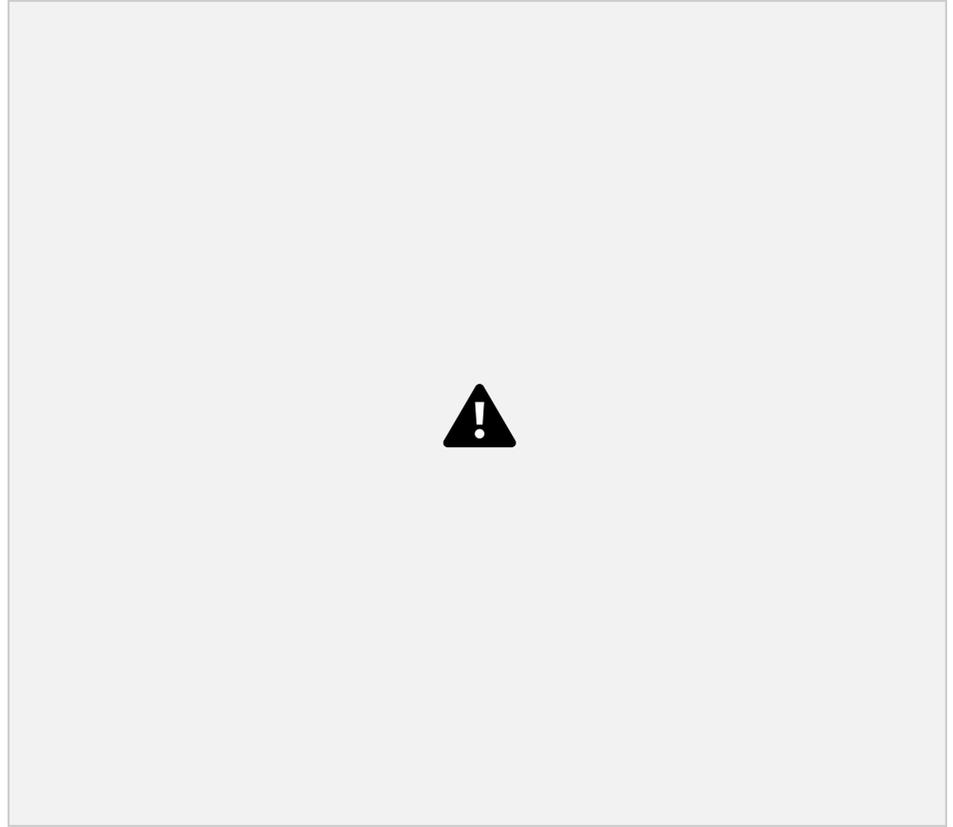
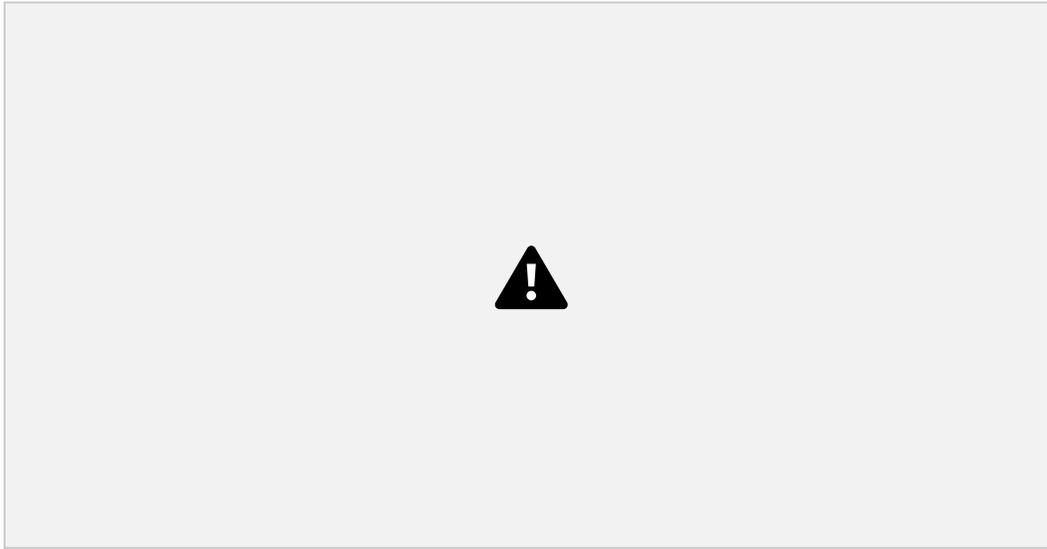
Upper Floor Lower Level



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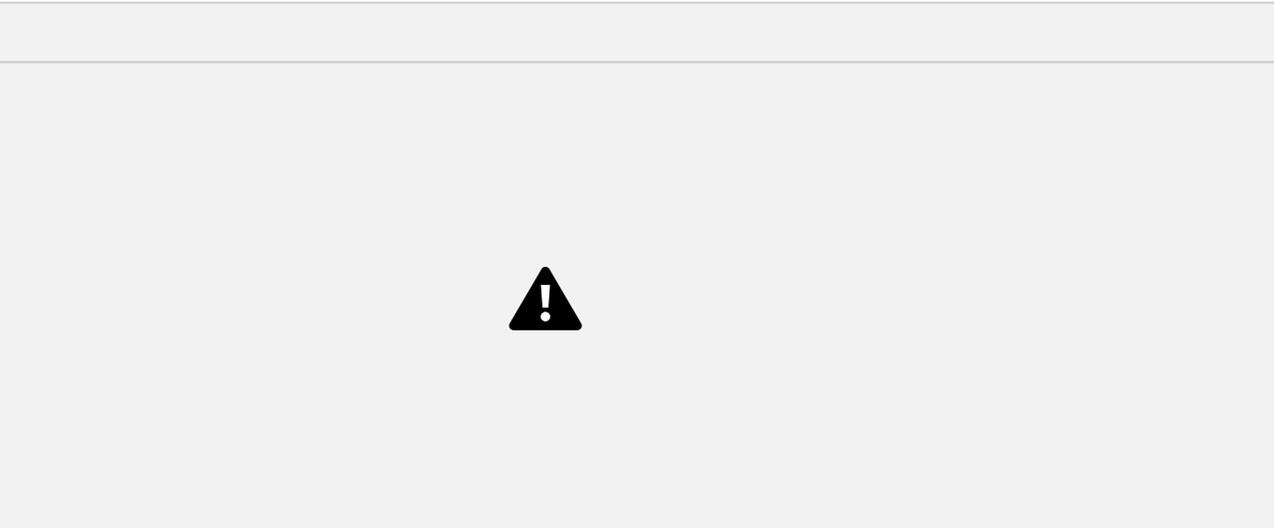
Frisbie ES



Wolcott Public Schools



Wakelee ES



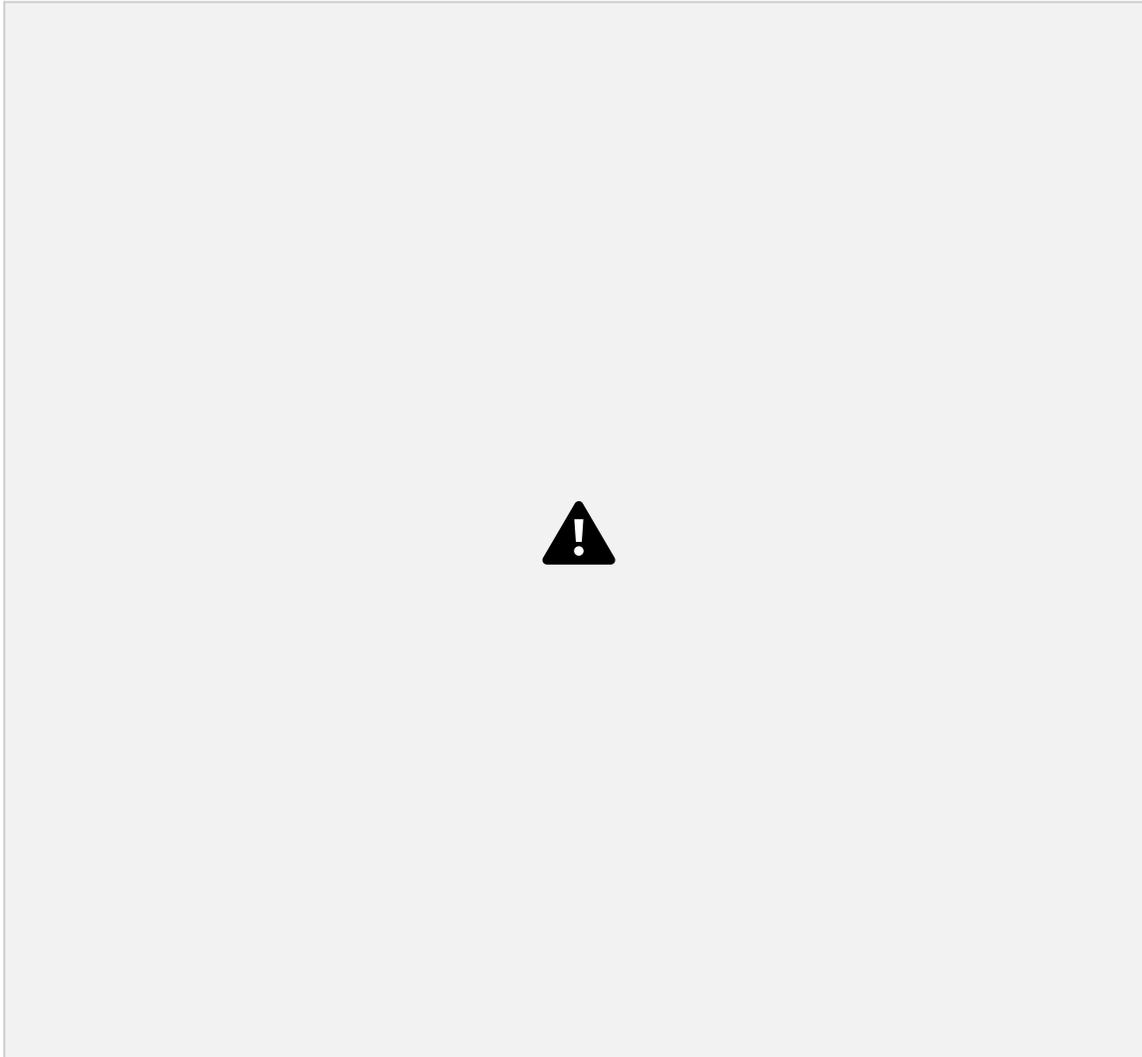
**First
Floor**

**Second
Floor**





Tyrrell MS



Main Floor

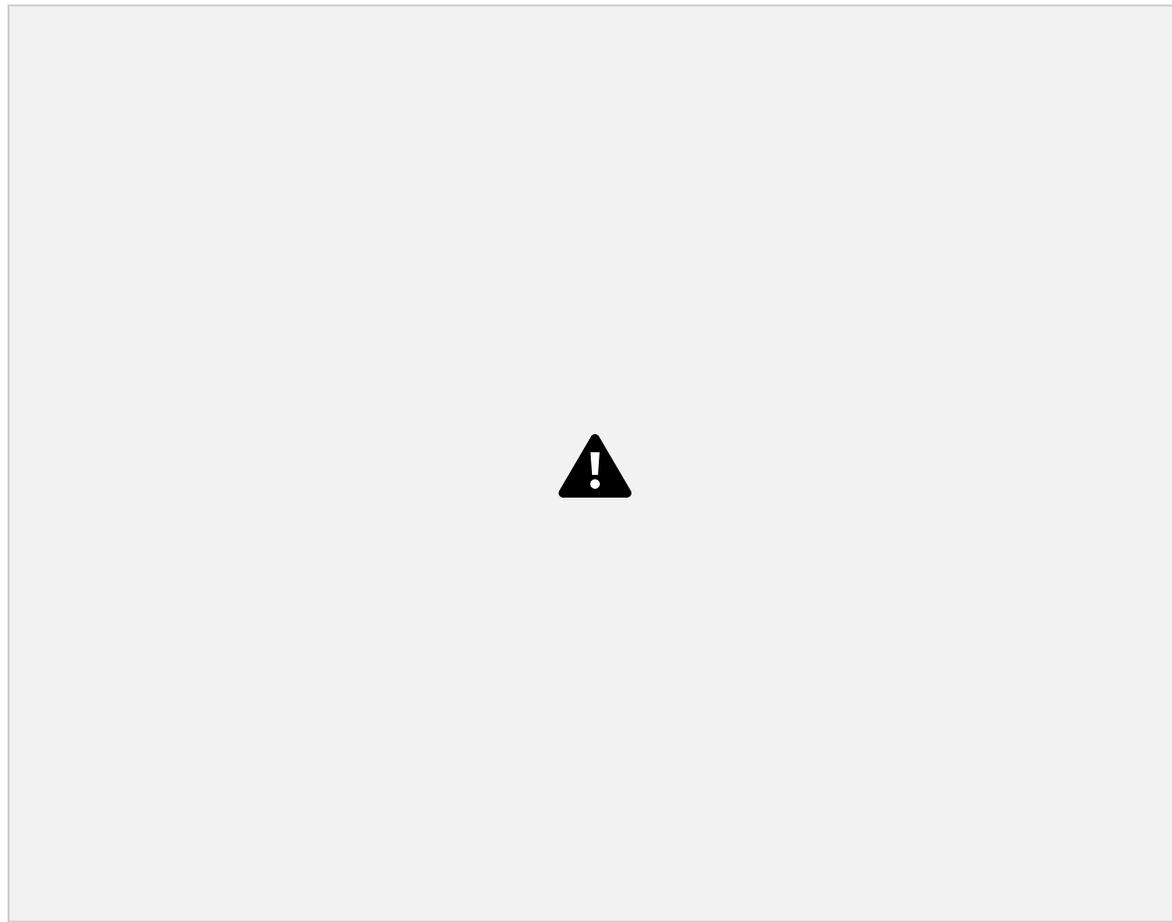
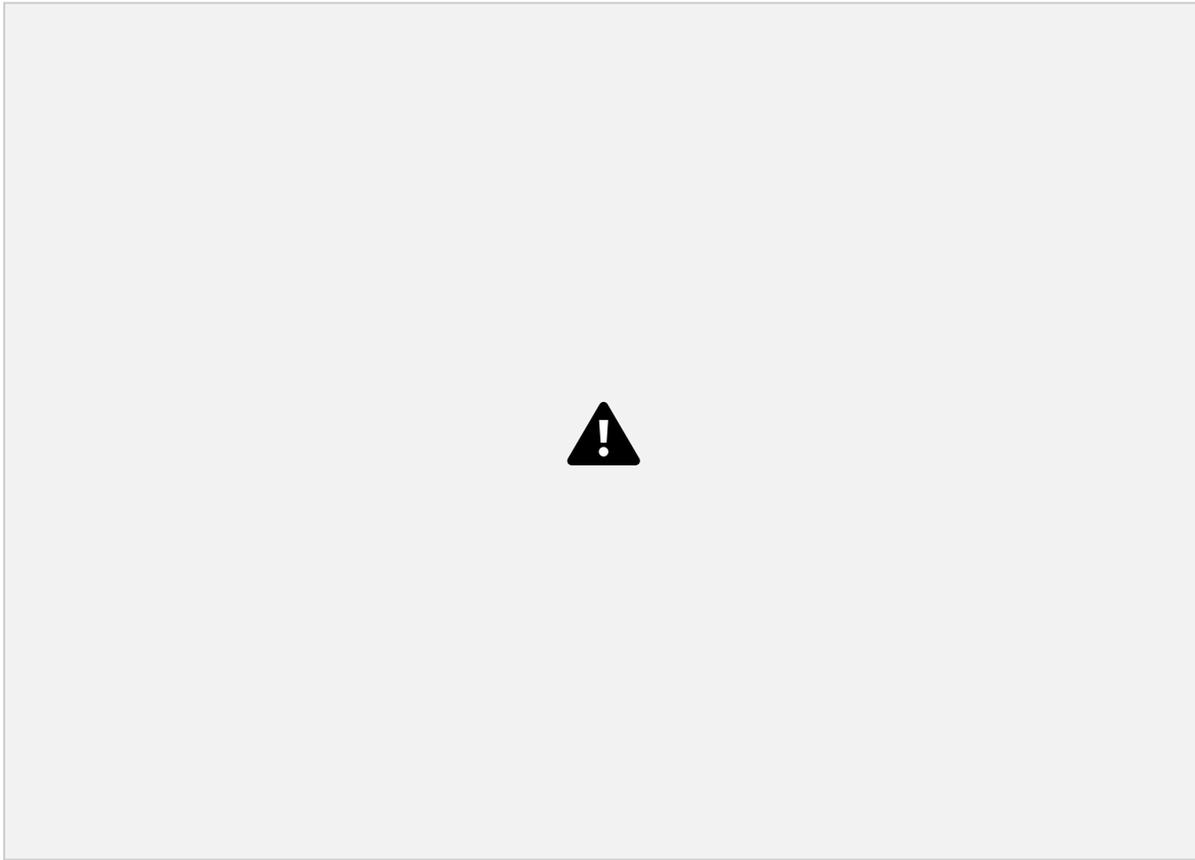
Lower Level

Wolcott Public Schools



Wolcott HS

First Floor Second Floor



 Wolcott Public Schools