



June 13, 2017

Project LEARN  
8 Kirk Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl  
Lowell, MA 01852

Subject: **New Lowell High School Input from Project LEARN**

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Executive Director  
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Dear Lowell City Council, Lowell School Building Committee, Lowell School Committee, and City Manager Murphy:

To those of you who are not aware the Lowell Education Alliance Resource Network (LEARN) was founded and funded in 2013 by the Lowell business community. Working hand in hand with the Lowell Public Schools, community partners, and local businesses, Project LEARN acquires funding, leverages resources and develops programs that enrich the educational system and prepares students with the skills and innovative thinking they need to succeed and become life-long learners.

The mission of Project LEARN is to foster the advancement of the Lowell Public Schools by increasing revenue streams and other resources to the school district. Project LEARN strives to create a culture of engagement and philanthropy for alumni, parents, friends, corporations, foundations, staff, and others in support of the Lowell Public Schools by building, cultivating, and stewarding long-lasting relationships to secure supplemental financial support to advance the mission of the Lowell Public Schools as we become a model of excellence in urban education.

We would like to provide the following input to the new Lowell High School building process. We are not taking a position on the location for the new school building as we believe all locations have the ability to meet the programming requirements for a world class education.

The Board wishes to bring attention to what we consider a lack of effective communication and consensus building that has impacted the project from the outset. We would like to provide input on how this project ultimately rolls out and how things are communicated to students, teachers, parents and the broader community going forward.

In addition the Board has the following long term and short term concerns it wishes to bring to the attention of the city administration, its consultants and all parties involved irrelevant of the chosen option:

- **Larger Financial impacts** this project will have on the City's other public buildings and the 25+ elementary and middle schools, which are all in need of significant building and maintenance updates.



- **Busing Plan** (irrelevant of the chosen option/site the City needs to review its plan for busing for the entire Lowell Public school system and its adequacy and if it fulfills the needs of the entire student population)
- **Learning Experience Impacts** to the students and teacher during construction (if the downtown site is chosen)
- **Environmental Impacts** to the students and teacher during construction (if the downtown site is chosen)

Project LEARN would like the city to create a detailed and an **Effective Communication Plan** and assign a senior individual with the authority and accountability to implement this plan. The purpose of this Plan is to insure concerns of all parties are addressed in a timely manner. This plan should be developed immediately following the vote by the city council. The first step would be to adequately address in writing and public forums all of the concerns that have been raised by members of the community. This would help bring our community together and provide information to all sides of the community debates and address and/or ease the fears of all sides.

A part of this **Effective Communication Plan** would be the creation of a diverse Board which includes students, teachers, parents and community members, that is associated with a division of the City and is allowed input and kept informed of all parts of the process. This would allow sharing of the issues raised in the process and the need to address unanswered questions in a more public way.

Lowell has a proud history and has made great progress over the past 50 years to revitalize the city and its public school system. That progress has been achieved through the combined efforts of our elected officials and people in the private sector for the common good. We are a city of immigrants, workers, innovation, equity and continuous improvement and growth.

There is no doubt that a much needed, new high school, no matter the location, is a long time coming and will give our children and students the best opportunity for personal and academic success. Everyone in Lowell deserves a seat at the table and the entire Lowell Public School System needs to be considered. We know that our elected officials, city administration and all parties involved will not disappoint the community by making sure all decisions are made in a transparent, well-communicated manner having the City's present and future children in mind.



Project LEARN was created to foster the advance of the Lowell Public School system. We would welcome the opportunity to be part of the solution and like to be involved in this aspect of the project as it moves forward.

Sincerely,

***Project LEARN Board of Directors***