

The former Roosevelt Elementary School, located at 253 Vinton Street, served a K-5 population of 256 students (December 2000). In May 1999, a demographics report was completed and boundary adjustments were made to the Melrose School districts by the Melrose School Committee.

The Roosevelt School was built in 1924, added to in 1954 and again in 1956. Prior to the start of construction of the new Roosevelt Elementary School, the school was the oldest school in the elementary school system. Like the former Lincoln School which recently reopened after extensive renovations and addition work, its original design was functionally different from what is required for today's elementary school programs. The building also suffered severe flooding problems in recent years which caused the building to be closed for several days. Plans for the new building call for complete demolition of the structure and construction of a new 65,500 square foot building.

In March of 2000, Tappe Associates of Boston was engaged as the architects for the project. Their first step was to begin discussions with the 12-member Melrose School Building Committee, the 53-member Roosevelt Elementary School Design Review Committee, school faculty and staff to assess the future needs of the school. From these discussions an educational program was developed and schematic design began. Upon completion of schematic design, preliminary plans and educational specifications were approved by the Melrose School Committee. The design development phase of design was then completed and a grant application was submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Education's (DOE) School Building Assistance (SBA) program. Under the DOE's-SBA program, the City of Melrose will receive 67% reimbursement from the State of total project costs. Construction plans were then finalized and the project was then placed out for public bid for construction.

The final plans called for a new school complex that includes classrooms for grades Pre-K - 5 and self-contained special needs. The new Roosevelt School will provide 19 general classrooms and 4 additional classrooms for music, art, and physical/occupational therapy. The new building also provides a library media center and a computer classroom. The new facility opened in September of 2002, state-of-the-art education technology was available to students, including computers and television monitors in each classroom with cable TV and Internet access. The building also has an internal LAN (local area network) and video network throughout the building.

The new school houses a cafetorium that will seat approximately 170 students for lunch and over 200 people when used as an auditorium. A platform stage will allow the school to present theatre productions and musical events. The cafetorium will be located adjacent to the new Brunswick Park main entry into the building. The new facility also includes a regulation, full-sized, 7,000 square foot gymnasium. The first level of the gymnasium is actually designed to be "built-into" the large slope that currently exists on the Vinton Street side of the building. There will be at-grade access into the second level of the building from Vinton Street.

The new building is being built to accommodate up to 413 students and includes two additional classrooms that will serve as flex classrooms in the event that a "bubble" in any particular grade should occur and additional classrooms are required.

There will be parking on the site for 52 cars with access to the parking lot from Brunswick Park. As well as the first floor of the building being raised to an elevation above the current floodplain, the parking lot will also be raised to prevent any future flooding of the parking area. A new rear playground and basketball court will be constructed and the adjoining Messengers Field, which is used for school and community activities, will be completely regraded. The current baseball field will be resurfaced to serve as a softball field.