

To Whom It May Concern:

As the five school librarians for the Amherst Public Schools and Amherst Regional Public Schools, we are writing in support of the proposed renovation and expansion of the Jones Library. We know that libraries have a significant and measurable impact on student learning and achievement. Since the public libraries offer our students critical print, digital, and community resources after school, on weekends, during school breaks, and over the summer, the Jones Library supports our own students' learning and achievement. We believe that the proposed renovation and expansion will have an impact on our students and their families in the following ways:

- The proposed expansion of the Children's Room will allow the entire collection to be easily accessed in one space and will provide adequate room for family programming such as story times. Currently, the space cannot support the increasingly high demand for circulation and programming and the staff cannot properly supervise children using computers.
- The proposed expansion creates a safe, inviting, and supportive environment for teens to work individually or collaboratively on academic or extracurricular projects of interest. The current "teen corner" in the basement of the library is small, unappealing, and not visible for supervision. At this time there are no computers dedicated for young adult access and demand exceeds the need.
- Many of our children come from families that speak English as a second language. The proposed expansion and renovation will create a space to serve those families with an ESL program that supports our work in the schools. The current space in the basement is cramped, not easily accessed, and cannot meet the demand for English language learner services.
- Many of our families do not have access to computers and/or the internet at home. The proposed expansion of computer workstations will help to address this gap in our families' digital access.
- The current layout of the Jones Library is confusing and difficult to navigate, with two elevators and staircases that individually do not access every floor. People with disabilities, parents using the library with young children, and new patrons are especially challenged in navigating the library's resources efficiently. The renovation will allow all users to feel welcome and access all areas of the collection more easily.

For these reasons, we support the renovation and expansion of the Jones Library.

Susan McQuaid, Crocker Farm librarian

Leslie Lomassan, Amherst Regional High School librarian

Fran Ludington, Fort River librarian

Peter Riedel, Amherst Regional Middle School librarian

Susan Wells, Wildwood librarian