



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

CONCORD - CARLISLE

Concord Special Town Meeting, November 5, 2007

Shawna Reid
28 Ridgewood Road
Co-Chair League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle
Speaking for the League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle

The League of Women Voters of Concord and Carlisle urges support of Article 5 and the re-build of the Willard Elementary School. The League points to its long held position on Education . . . we support a school organization that encourages stability, low pupil-teacher ratios, a diverse range of teaching styles and we support sound fiscal management of our schools.

There is no question that as a community we need to re-build the Willard Elementary School now. The League is aware, as all taxpayers must be, that the cost of replacing the Willard School is substantial. The existing building needs major repairs that cannot be delayed if the school is to remain in use. The cost estimate for renovations exceeds the cost of rebuilding the school, and identified short term repairs fail to address the fact that the present building does not meet current state mandates for safety, adequate instructional space and educational diversity.

The proposed new Willard will be far more flexible as a community resource and the green building design should be much less expensive to operate. A new Willard will provide the town with three new school buildings and allow the school department the flexibility to deal with future changes in enrollment patterns. Ensuring good options if enrollments remain steady and good options if they should decline.

The League of Women Voters has always supported sound fiscal planning as a basis for decisions on town issues. We believe that passage of Article 5 will be in the best long term financial interest for the town of Concord. Again, we urge your support.