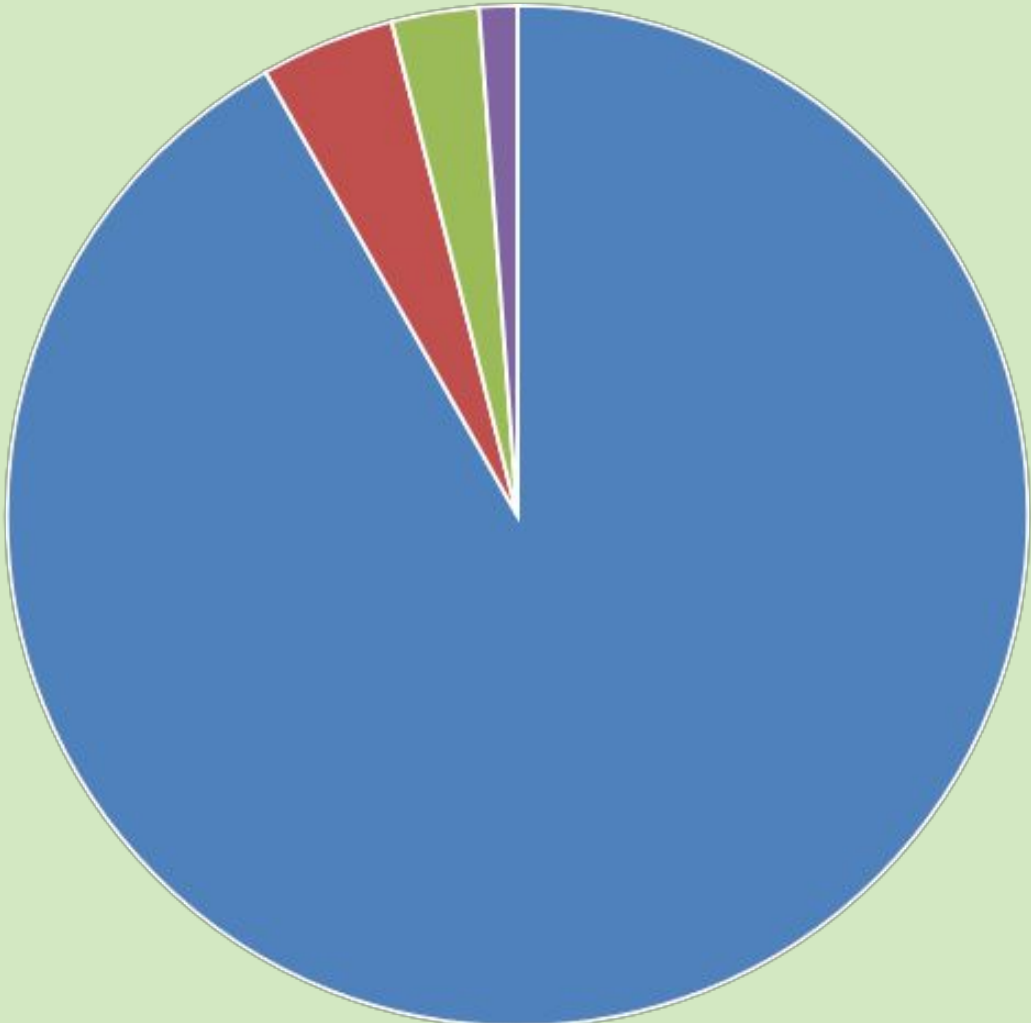


Worcester, Massachusetts Voting Rights Lawsuit



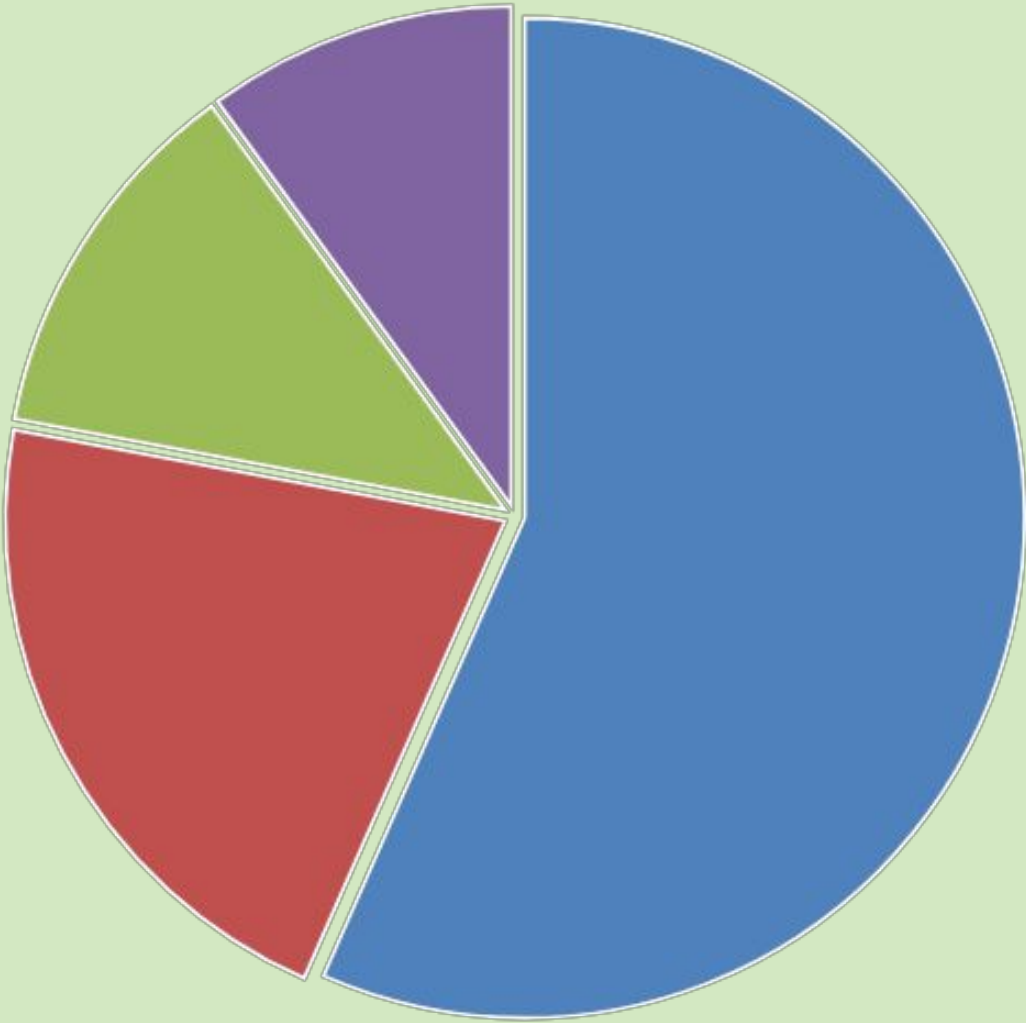
Worcester Demographics

Worcester Population - 1980



White Hispanic/Latino Black All Other/Mixed

Worcester Population - 2018



White Hispanic/Latino Black All Other/Mixed

Worcester Public Schools



Issues That Face Worcester Public Schools

- School Discipline Disparities
- Services for English Language Learners
- Closing the Achievement Gap

What power does Worcester School Committee have?

- Sets policy for Worcester Public Schools
- Hires Superintendent
- Reviews and approves budgets



Worcester School Committee
at the time the lawsuit was filed

Worcester Public School Student Population
> 70% Students of Color

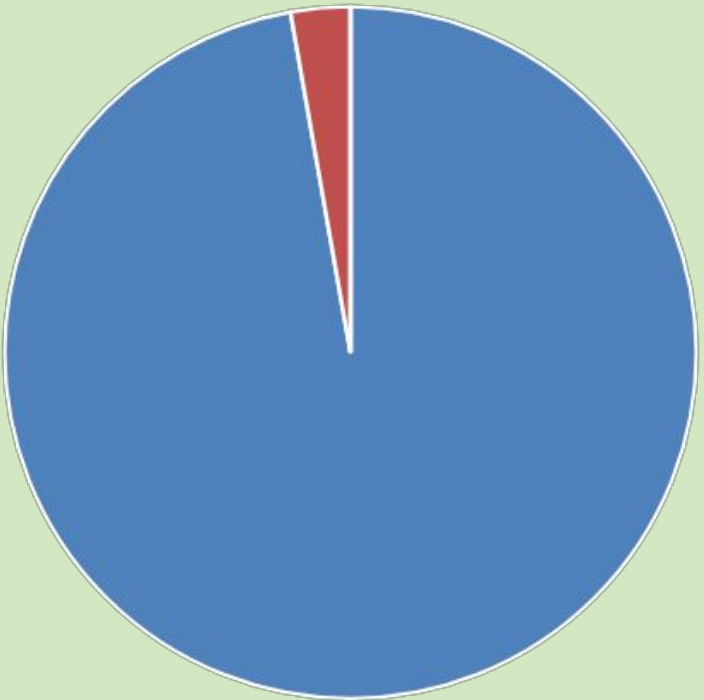


Worcester School Committee
0 Members of Color



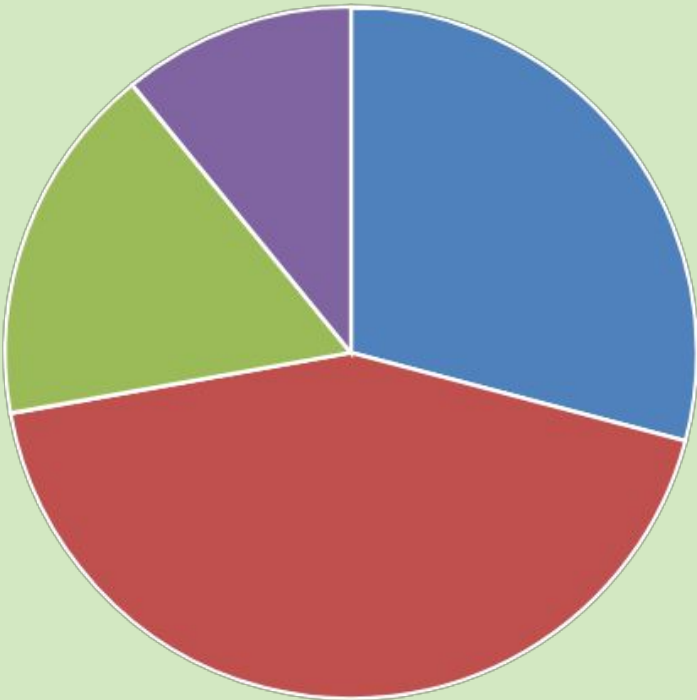
Lack of Minority Representation on Worcester School Committee

Worcester School Committee
Members
2009-2019



White Hispanic/Latino Black All Other/Mixed

Worcester Public Schools Student
Population
2019-20 School Year



White Hispanic/Latino Black All Other/Mixed

WHY?

- All 6 School Committee Members elected “at large” (city-wide)
- Contrast with districts
- In all “at large” systems, 51% of the voters can win 100% of the seats 100% of the time!

2019 School Committee Election

all	whitest	least white	year
Foley (50%)	Foley (53%)	Foley (42%)	2019
Monfredo (41%)	McCullough (43%)	Kamara* (41%)	2019
Biancheria (38%)	Monfredo (41%)	Bethea* (37%)	2019
Novick (38%)	Novick (41%)	Novick (35%)	2019
McCullough (37%)	Clancey (40%)	Berg-Powers (34%)	2019
Clancey (36%)	Biancheria (36%)	Biancheria (34%)	2019

2019 School Committee Election

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER (VOTE FOR) 6		
JACK L. FOLEY	8,708	12.44
JOHN F. MONFREDO	7,179	10.26
DIANNA L. BIANCHERIA.	6,700	9.57
TRACY O'CONNELL NOVICK	6,600	9.43
MOLLY O. MCCULLOUGH	6,576	9.39
LAURA CLANCEY	6,256	8.94
JERMOH V. KAMARA	5,840	8.34
JOHN A. TROBAUGH	5,271	7.53
CARA LISA BERG-POWERS	5,209	7.44
CHANTEL BETHEA.	4,522	6.46
BRIAN A. O'CONNELL	3,927	5.61
MARIAH LIZMARI MARTINEZ.	3,210	4.59
Total	69,998	
Blank Votes	35,404	

2015 School Committee Election

all	whitest	least white	year
O'Connell (51%) ←	O'Connell (54%)	Ramirez* (63%)	2015
Colorio (49%) ←	Colorio (50%)	Monfredo (46%)	2015
Monfredo (48%) ←	Foley (48%)	O'Connell (42%)	2015
Foley (46%) ←	McCullough (47%)	Biancheria (40%)	2015
Biancheria (42%) ←	Monfredo (46%)	Foley (39%)	2015
McCullough (39%) ←	Biancheria (40%)	Colorio (37%)	2015



Voting Rights Act of 1965

- Prohibits discriminatory voting practices
- Whether intentional or not
- Obstacles to voting (*e.g.*, Jim Crow laws)
- Structural barriers (*e.g.*, at-large electoral systems)

The Lowell Example

Similarities To Worcester



- Rapidly diversifying City
- Schools even more diverse than City as a whole
- All “at large” electoral system
- City Council and School Committee both virtually all white

The Lowell Example

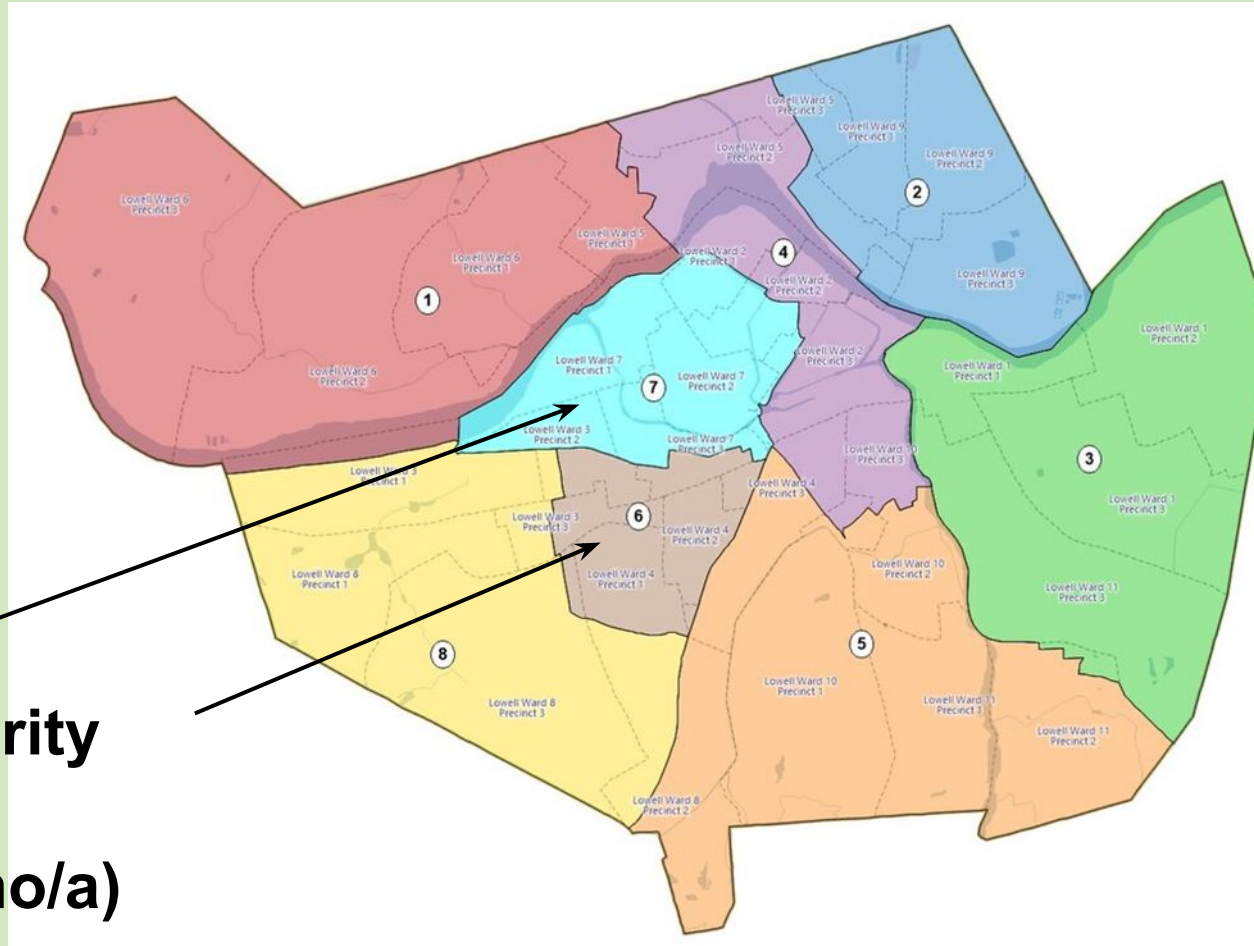
2017 –
Lawsuit
Filed

2021 –
Election Changes Take
Effect

2019 –
Lawsuit
Settled



The Lowell Example



**2 Majority-Minority
Districts
(Asian and Latino/a)**

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

WORCESTER INTERFAITH, INC.;
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE,
INC., WORCESTER BRANCH;
CASSANDRA BENSAHIH; JAMES
BERRY; MARITZA CRUZ; HOLLI HILL;
JESSENIA KOLACO; NELLY MEDINA;
RUTH RODRIGUEZ-FAY; and DELIA
VEGA,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CITY OF WORCESTER,
MASSACHUSETTS; EDWARD M.
AUGUSTUS, JR., in his official capacity as
Worcester City Manager; NIKOLIN
VANGJELI, in his official capacity as
Worcester City Clerk; WORCESTER
SCHOOL COMMITTEE; JOSEPH M.
PETTY, in his official capacity as Mayor of
the City of Worcester, City Councilor, and
Chairman of the Worcester School
Committee; DIANNA L. BIANCHERIA,
LAURA CLANCEY, JOHN L. FOLEY,
MOLLY O. MCCULLOUGH, JOHN F.
MONFREDO, and TRACY O'CONNELL
NOVICK, in their official capacities as
members of the Worcester School
Committee; WORCESTER BOARD OF
ELECTION COMMISSIONERS;
RICHARD DUFFY, KIMBERLY
VANDERSPEK, WINIFRED OCTAVE,
DANA AH MCCALLUM, and JOHN
STEWART, in their official capacities as
members of the Worcester Board of Election
Commissioners; WORCESTER CITY
COUNCIL; MORRIS A. BERGMAN,
DONNA M. COLORIO, KHRYSTIAN E.
KING, CANDY MERO-CARLSON, SARAI
RIVERA, SEAN M. ROSE, GARY ROSEN,
GEORGE J. RUSSELL, KATHLEEN M.
TOOMEY, and MATTHEW E. WALLY, in
their official capacities as City Councilors,

Defendants.

Case No. _____

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE AND
DECLARATORY RELIEF

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

In February 2021, Lawyers for Civil Rights filed a lawsuit against the City of Worcester, with NAACP, Worcester Interfaith, and several residents as plaintiffs.

Worcester City Council voted 8-3 to enter a Consent Decree, or a negotiated agreement as a court order.

The consent decree required the creation of two districts where a majority of eligible voters are Black or Latino/a.

The Committee on Legislative and Municipal Operations held public sessions explaining the situation and presenting three options.

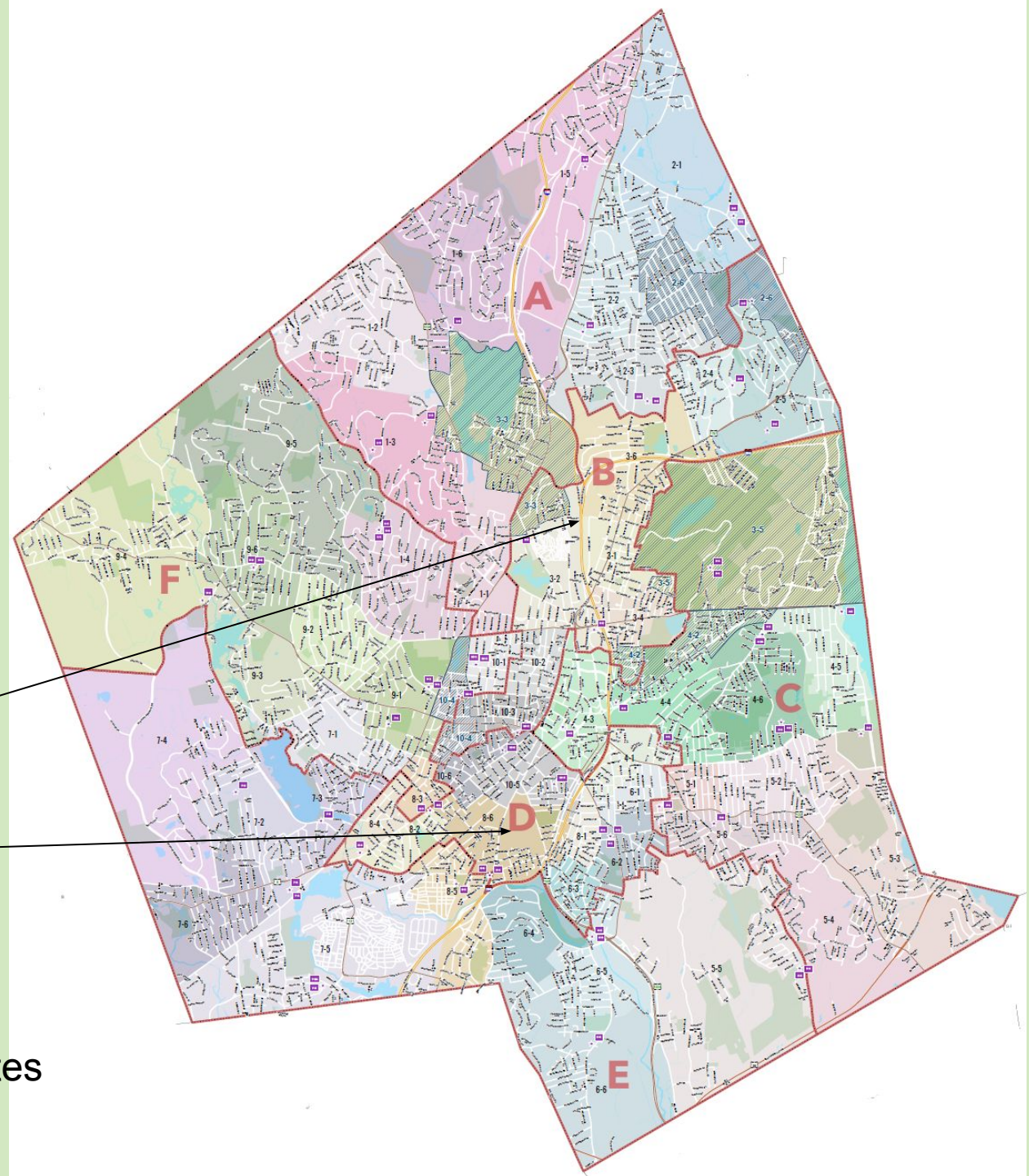
#1: Mayor and 6 District seats (0 At-Large seats)

#2: Mayor and 7 District seats + 1 At-large seat

#3: Mayor and 6 District seats + 2 At-Large seats

The City hired an expert to draw a map in accordance with the consent decree.

There are six districts, designated with letters A-F, two of them (B and D) majority Black and Latino/a.



Detailed maps can be found on this page:
<https://www.worcesterma.gov/elections/candidates>



Thank you!

*to our legal team
and our courageous
plaintiffs who made this
change possible.*