

Frequently Asked Questions Proposed School District Central Office Building

1. Why are the school board and building committee seeking approval to build a new school district central office?

The current school district office buildings house the district administration and student services (special education) in two separate buildings. Both buildings are unable to adequately support the district administrative functions and are deficient with respect to entrance security, accessibility, confidentiality, space for meeting, and life safety.

2. Were the existing central office and student services facilities built for the school administrative functions?

No. The two buildings currently housing the district administrators and student services were both originally constructed as two small 3-bedroom ranch houses 50 years ago.

3. Does the current central office meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for access to the mobility within the office?

No. Neither of the two district central office buildings meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities act (ADA). Entrance ways, doorways and hallways do not meet accessibility requirements. Additionally, many departments are located in the former cellar of the “green house/central office” with no handicap accessibility.

4. When was a new central office originally proposed and what was the estimated construction cost at the time?

A new central office was originally proposed 11 years ago. At that time, it was not passed by voters. The building proposal in 2013 was of similar size and scope.

5. What is the impact of the cost of a new central office on the operating budget?

The principal and interest cost for paying the bond on the central office will be in the school district's operating budget. The bond payments on the middle school have been appropriately \$800,000 annually. This bond has been completely paid. The annual cost of the bond for a new central office will be less than the cost was for the middle school.

6. By waiting to construct a new central office, has the cost increased?

Yes. Construction costs have increased substantially over the last 20 years. The estimate to build a single functional central office (with no inefficient or extravagant design features) is now \$6.9 Million. The cost of construction will continue to increase in the future if this proposal does not pass in 2024.

7. Will a new school district central office be available for use by other town departments for meetings, training, etc.

Yes. The conference room proposed for the new school district central office will be available for all town departments to use for important meetings and employee training sessions. In the school district, we will use the conference room for leadership team meetings, curriculum training, professional development opportunities and school safety table-top exercises. It will also be used for conducting community forums. It is important that scarce and valuable meeting space be shared with all town departments.

8. Does the school district have to purchase land for the site of a new central office?

No. The school district already owns the land upon which to build a new central office. The land is across the street from the current central office (the site of the former Brentwood School building (aka "red building) and has all utilities available at the site.

9. Have other alternatives been explored for a central office (current police department, vacant commercial space, etc.)?

Yes. Over the last two years the school administration has explored other alternatives for housing the school district central office staff and functions. We have looked into space within our schools, the current police station and privately-owned leased office space. None of the alternatives have provided the necessary space needed.

10. Is there a budget (financial) advantage/opportunity at this time with the payoff of the middle school bond?

The 20-year bond for the middle school has just been retired. We would replace the principal and interest payments for the middle school with funds for paying the principal and interest costs on the bond for a new central office. The cost will be **less** than the cost that has been paid for the middle school bond. The current bond rate is 3.25%.

11. Is there space in the current school district central office for all administrative staff to meet?

Not adequately. The small offices (a former bedroom) in the current central office do not allow for more than 5 people to meet at one time. More importantly, there is no confidentiality in such a small, confined office building. Offices in the basement are only separated by partitions that do not measure floor to ceiling.

12. Are there employee safety issues in the current central office building?

There is no security at the entrance and no alternate means of emergency exit for anyone working downstairs (former cellar).

13. What happens operationally and financially if we have to vacate the current building due to health and safety conditions?

If we are forced to vacate the two district office buildings, we have no location to house our staff. Emergency actions (from experience) can be very costly compared to a responsible well planned construction strategy.

14. What does the payment schedule look like assuming a 15-year bond at the current interest rate?

The bond payment schedule for a new central office building is noted below. The annual bond payment will be less than the appropriation needed to pay the middle school bond.

New Central Office Budget Impact

\$6.9 million 3.25%

**Less: Retired
Middle School
Bond**

**Net Budget
Impact - First
Payment**

Year	Amount		
Interest Payment 24-25	\$172,500.00	\$ (793,000.00)	\$ (620,500.00)
1	\$676,775.00		
2	\$661,825.00		
3	\$646,875.00		
4	\$631,925.00		
5	\$616,975.00		
6	\$602,025.00		
7	\$587,075.00		
8	\$572,125.00		
9	\$557,175.00		
10	\$542,225.00		
11	\$527,275.00		
12	\$512,325.00		
13	\$497,375.00		
14	\$482,425.00		
15	\$467,475.00		