

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: If the bond issue passes what will happen to the existing buildings?

A: The existing buildings would be either sold for an appropriate reuse that would be compatible with the neighborhoods that they are located in or the building would be demolished and the property sold for redevelopment for use compatible with the existing neighborhoods.

Q: If renovation is chosen how long will it take to complete construction?

A: Because of the scope of renovation and additions required at all four buildings, it would be required that students be relocated to other buildings or temporary classroom space, for the duration of the construction. This would allow only one building to be worked on at any given time, so construction would have to be phased out over a 3 – 4 year timeframe.

Q: How does extra children or space in a classroom affect student performance?

A: Research does show that class size does have a direct effect on student performance, however it is difficult to specifically quantify the exact impact. Planning for appropriately sized classrooms is just good educational decision making.

Q: If renovation is chosen what will happen to the 93 acre site?

A: The 93 acre site was purchased with the plan for long term school facility purposes. If the existing elementary schools were to be renovated, there is still a long term master plan to locate the middle school program on the site. That decision would be made at the appropriate time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What other school districts have you helped in consolidating multiple schools?

A: Most recently, Holdrege has consolidated three existing elementary schools, Ogallala has consolidated three elementary schools and their middle school and several years ago, York consolidated several elementary schools. Also the two school that were visited in Eudora, KS and Oskaloosa, IA, were schools that were the result of consolidation of several existing schools.

Q: What was the intended life span of the existing buildings?

A: The life span of the existing buildings is relative to the program requirements and the degree of maintenance and repair that are performed over the life of the building. The existing Beatrice elementary schools have been well maintained over the years, but building systems like heating, ventilation and air conditioning need to be updated every 25 – 30 years. Also, changes in educational program offerings required more and different space than what was required 60 years ago. A 60 year life span is a reasonable expectation, before major improvements are required for any building.

Q: Is it fair to say that the cost of renovating the existing buildings is approximately 70% of the cost of new construction?

A: The cost of renovating the existing school buildings is actually approximately 77% of the cost of new construction, but please keep in mind the cost is a direct reflection of the scope of renovation that was identified in the facility audit process.

Q: If renovation is the selected option, where would the students be housed while their building is being renovated?

A: Because of the scope of renovation and additions required at all four buildings, it would be required that students be relocated to other buildings or temporary classroom space, for the duration of the construction. This would allow only one building to be worked on at any given time, so construction would have to be phased out over a 3 – 4 year timeframe.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Have soil conditions on the proposed site been tested for suitability of constructing a new elementary school?

A: At this time the district has not authorized soils investigation, but if a new school option is recommended, there will be consideration given to proceeding with a geotechnical investigation to confirm the existing soil conditions. Because of the long term agricultural use of the site, there are no historical indicators that would raise a concern.

Q: How will safety and security be addressed in the new building options?

A: The new school options will be constructed to provide a storm shelter in each of the four classroom neighborhoods. The proximity of the storm shelter areas to the students and staff are important for quick and easy access. The building will also be designed to have a secure main entrance that will require all visitors to enter the building only after permission has been granted by the school office staff.

Q: When is the HS bond done?

A: The High School Bond will be paid off on 12/15/16

Q: Do we currently have a credit rating, and if so what is it?

A: Currently, the District does not have a credit rating. The District applied for Bond Insurance in 1996, 2001, 2008 instead of getting a stand alone rating. The AAA rating on those issues was a reflection of the Bond Insurance Company. In 2012 the District issued refunding bonds without a credit rating or bond insurance due to the size of the issue.

Q: How will this bond impact our credit rating?

A: The District currently does not have a credit rating.

Q: Is there a calculation of for bond capacity? Is it high, low, or manageable? Can we handle this as a city/district?

A: The voters of the District ultimately make the decision for these questions. The bond capacity is limited only by the amount the voters will approve.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Have traffic patterns been thought through? How are you going to control traffic flow?

A: A traffic study is in the process of being requested. It will be completed prior to any potential referendum vote.

Q: What would our overall / total levy be?

A: It will depend upon the final decision on the building options, project scope and timing.

Q: Does the facility have capacity for growth?

A: Yes all options have accommodations for some modest growth. The school board has recommended that the project include two additional classrooms so as to provide at least 7 classrooms per grade level and a total of 51 PK – 5 classrooms for all proposed options.

Q: Are the current buildings figures exact numbers / fixed amounts?

A: The numbers that have been provided to date are all conceptual cost estimates. The final proposed costs will be determined before a referendum is called for by the school board.

Q: Are the current plans final?

A: No, there will be many hours of design workshops and meetings with the district staff, administration and school board before any final plans are issued for bidding and construction.

Q: In the last 10 years, where did your projects come in at compared to your bond projection?

A: Typically, our projects fall within a 3% - 5%+ / - range of the anticipated total project cost. This is why we typically include a minimum of 3% contingency for the design and construction phase of the project. For renovation / remodeling projects the contingency is typically increased to a minimum of 8%.

Q: What percent is the escalation factor?

A: For estimating purposes, we have used an average inflation rate of 3% per year. Depending on the option there may be more than one year of inflation included in the cost projections.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do you know what the high school cost?

A: The original total project cost for the new high school, which was built in 1996, was \$12.5M. When adjusted for inflation, the total project cost for the new High School in 2017 would be \$34.5M.

Q: In other districts in our similar situation how many have chosen to renovate vs. build new?

A: Since every situation and school districts are different, it is often difficult to compare what one school district has determined what is best for their situation, compared to another. There are many example of districts similar to Beatrice that have moved to a central elementary school site configuration, but there are also examples, (i.e. Lincoln Public Schools) that have determined it best to remodel existing schools in certain situations where a replacement building just was not practical.