

May 20, 2024

# Lexington High School Project

## School Building Committee Meeting No. 11

### May 20, 2024, 12:00 PM



1. Call to Order & Intro (12:00PM – 12:05PM)
2. Previous Meeting Minutes Approval (Vote Expected) (12:05PM – 12:10PM)
  - 4/22/24 Meeting Minutes
  - 4/29/24 Meeting Minutes
  - 05/06/24 Meeting Minutes
  - 05/13/24 Meeting Minutes
3. Review Thought Exchange Results (12:10PM to 12:35PM)
4. Review Draft PDP Submission (12:35PM – 1:35PM)
  - Approve with Vote Recommended
5. Upcoming Meetings (1:35PM – 1:40PM)
6. Other Topics not Reasonably Anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting (1:40PM – 1:45PM)
7. Public Comment (1:40PM – 2:00PM)
8. Adjourn

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## Previous Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes approval from

- 04/22/24
- 04/29/24
- 05/06/24
- 05/13/24

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# Engagement Summary

Christina Dell Angelo, Lexington Public Schools  
May 2, 2024

Based on the presentation/information shared,  
what thoughts and/or questions do you have?



## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



1,040  
Participants



857  
Thoughts



36,075  
Ratings



## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



What are your current role(s) in relation to Lexington Public Schools?



**983**

Responses

%	👤	Answer (Multiple select)
63%	(619)	Parent/Guardian with a student in LPS
8%	(77)	Staff
8%	(79)	Student
20%	(201)	Community Member without a student in LPS
7%	(64)	Other



## AI SUMMARY



The responses to the question about the presentation/information shared reveal a variety of concerns and suggestions. Many respondents' express concerns about the age and condition of the current building, suggesting that new construction may be more cost-effective and beneficial in the long run. They emphasize the need for climate-controlled classrooms and adequate space for growth. Some respondents question the cost of financing and the potential disruption to students' experiences. They also express concerns about the high tax rate and the perceived unfairness of spending more on certain facilities or sports. Several respondents suggest considering other town-owned properties for the project and stress the importance of shared spaces for conversation and organic communication. They also raise concerns about the environmental impact of construction and the potential for cost overruns. Some respondents suggest considering underground parking to save space and question why the cost is higher than in other towns. They also express a preference for a three-story building for walkability and stress the importance of preserving trees and green spaces.

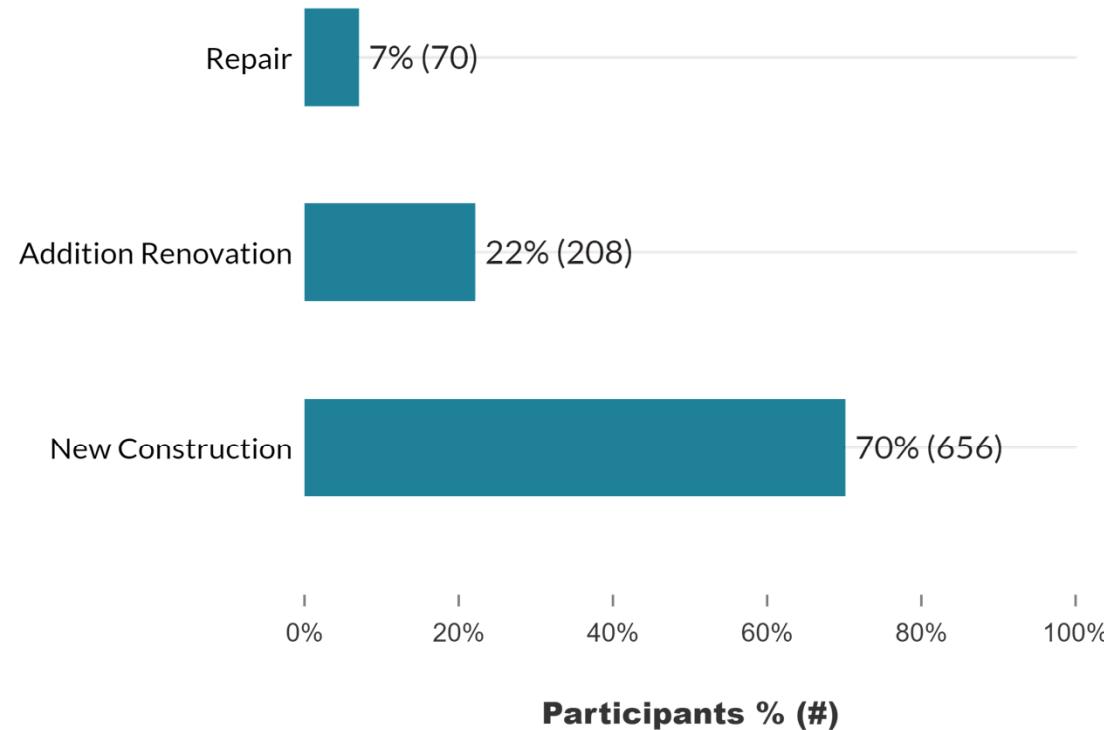


## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



Which of the 3 potential building solutions would you support?





## WORDCLOUD

Top Rated



program disruption fieldhouse  
house high outside worthen  
cost construction current  
increase lhs  
education learning town  
important central future money  
pool seems  
tax project office design  
spend space facilities new impact  
building renovation options  
expensive parking  
track community team



## THOUGHTS

### Key Thoughts



**It is important that the high school be built with capacity for the town to grow.** More than 1,200 homes will be built here with the MBTA Act.

4.4 (31 people)

Ranked #1 of 857

**Whatever project moves forward should last as long as possible and be designed to support the future as well as todays needs.** School renovations and new buildings are costly and very impactful on students - let's try to do as much as we can now so we don't have to do it later

4.3 (57 people)

Ranked #2 of 857

**I think it's crucial to have a school building that is fundamentally capable of handling its student population while also maintaining a high standard** As it stands, the current buildings do not meet the needs of students physically and mentally, making it difficult to access many spaces.

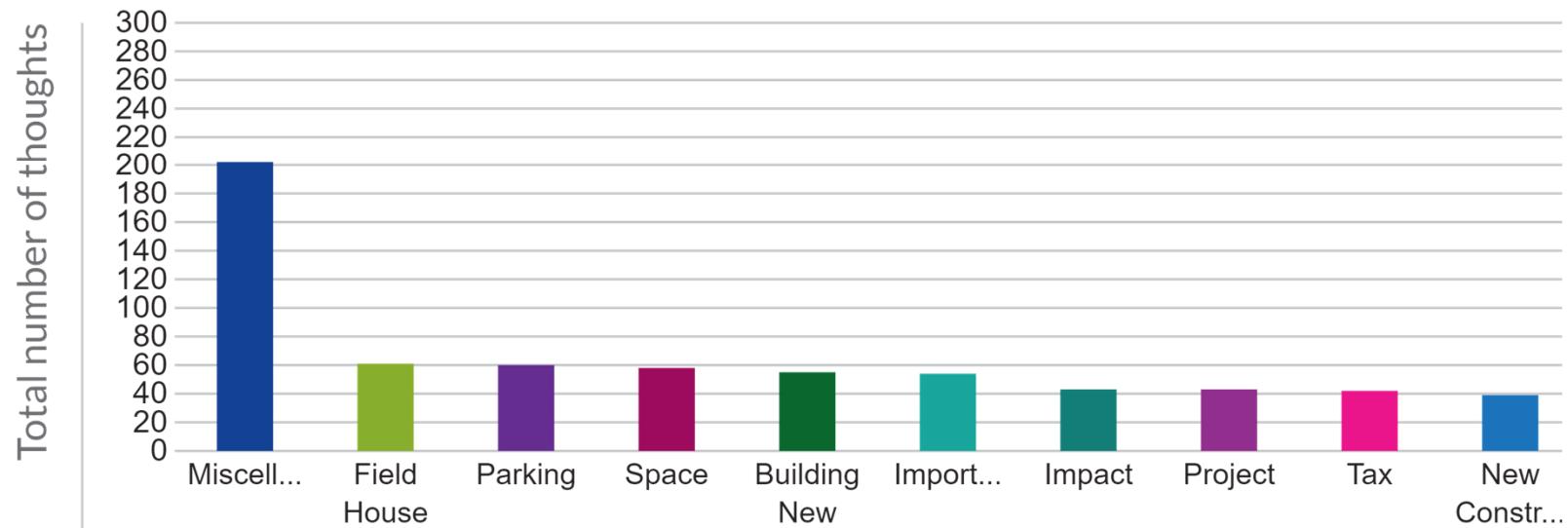
4.3 (42 people)

Ranked #3 of 857



## KEYWORD THEMES

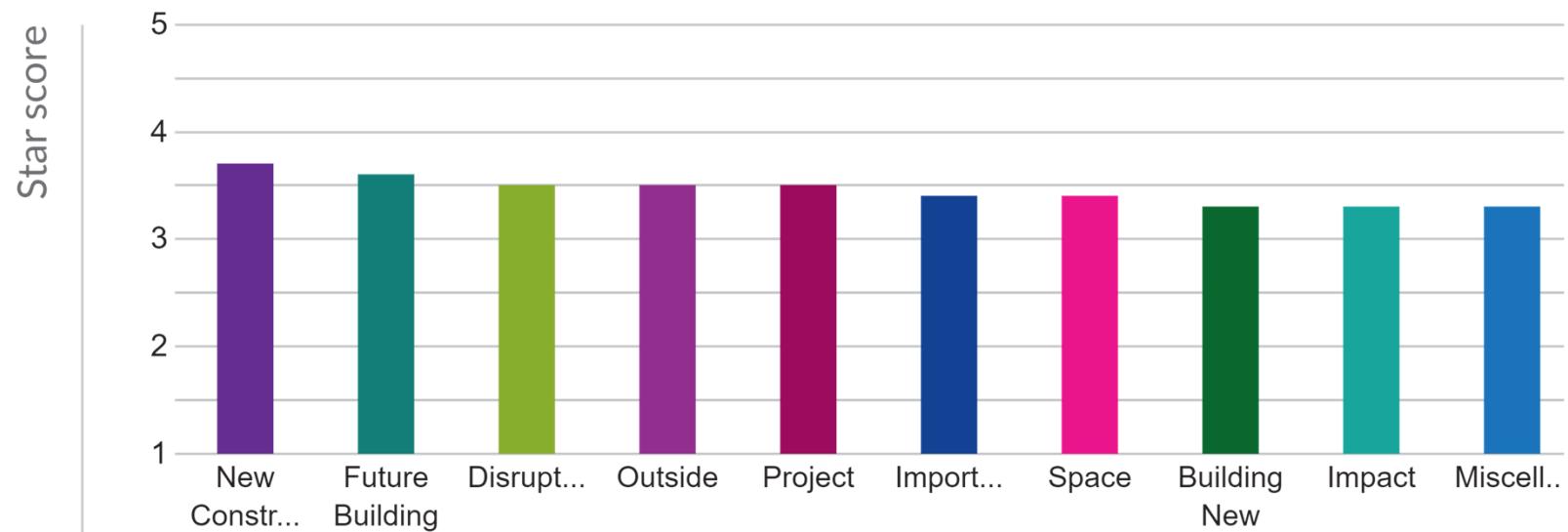
### Top Themes by total thoughts





## KEYWORD THEMES

### Top Themes by star score





## THOUGHTS

### New Construction



**need new construction school** to meet needs of students

4.2 (27 people)

**The building is too old (built in 1951) to be renovated without doing a level a work equivalent to a new construction** Teachers and students need properly climate controlled classes no 30-/90+ temps , and shouldn't have to share rooms with 3 other classes

4.1 (59 people)

**New construction** The current high school is too crowded.

4.1 (30 people)



## THOUGHTS

### Future Building



Whatever project moves forward should last as long as possible and be designed to support the future as well as todays needs. School renovations and new buildings are costly and very impactful on students - let's try to do as much as we can now so we don't have to do it later

4.3  (57 people)

We need to Make sure we build it for the future, so we are good for next 35 years.

4.2  (42 people)

Is the school considering future needs Our town is expanding and we shouldn't be having this discussion again in 5 or 10 years. Future proof school is important

4.1  (43 people)



## THOUGHTS

### Disruption



All new construction will reduce disruption to the existing school during construction and should result in a better final product. Since construction will take years, reducing disruption to students living through it is important.

4.0  (48 people)

I worry about the impact of phased construction, both in terms of morale and disruption to education Some options require phasing and we need to be honest about what that will feel like

3.8  (61 people)

New construction is less disruptive to the ongoing learning during the process. Fewer adjustments for students and staff to make as spaces become more or less available during a renovation. Less disruption is better for learning.

3.8  (47 people)



## THOUGHTS

### Outside



While a courtyard may not be necessary, the students love having places to eat outside. 4.0  (29 people)

The more lunch options the better.

Natural light (in the buildings) and access to the outdoors are important for mental health 4.0  (24 people)  
and quality of life. The best plans consider these.

It is important that the students get as much natural light during the day as possible. 3.9  (32 people)



## THOUGHTS

### Project



It is important that any design be able to handle long term population growth for the next 50 years, especially as Lexington increases housing density. A project of this scale needs to consider very long term projections so that we are not faced with significant upgrades in the near future.

4.2 (51 people)

If you're going to do this project, do it right. Make it a long term investment.

4.1 (42 people)

A new build is critical for this project. This is a 50-75 year solution, so let's do it right.

3.9 (63 people)



## THOUGHTS

### Important



Being able to see the high school from Lexington Center down Muzzey street should NOT 4.3 ★★★★☆ (38 people)  
be a priority The ability for HS kids to walk downtown is important, but having site lines  
down Muzzey street is not at all.

All learning as a substitute to in-person school is NOT the direction our district should be 4.1 ★★★★☆ (57 people)  
going. School buildings matter! Please disregard community feedback that suggests we  
don't need space for good in-person learning. Our kids need social learning in the real  
world.

Yes, good teaching is more important than a nice building, but high class sizes due to 4.1 ★★★★☆ (34 people)  
overcrowding, insufficient lab spaces, etc. hurt teaching. We need both good teaching  
and appropriate facilities.



## THOUGHTS Space



**Why do we need new central offices at the high school?** The LHS property is precious community resource and shouldn't be given to administrative buildings

4.1 ★★★★☆ (57 ⚓)

**The central office should not be at the high school. All space on site should be used for students. Focus on building a big enough school!** maximize space for students and expansion.

4.1 ★★★★☆ (56 ⚓)

**The new Bedford road office is more than adequate office space for the Superintendent and her staff. No need to build another new facility.** Building a new facility for the Superintendent and her staff is a wasteful use of town resources when adequate space already exists.

4.1 ★★★★☆ (52 ⚓)



## THOUGHTS

### Building New



I think it's crucial to have a school building that is fundamentally capable of handling its student population while also maintaining a high standard. As it stands, the current buildings do not meet the needs of students physically and mentally, making it difficult to access many spaces.

The new building needs to accommodate learning needs for the next 50 years. We expect the building to last; students' learning habits and engagement will continue to evolve.

A new building or an overhaul of all buildings is necessary. Most of the buildings are literally falling apart (first-hand)

4.3 (42 people)

4.2 (55 people)

4.0 (64 people)



## THOUGHTS

### Impact



**How can we minimize impact to students who will be in HS during the construction.** These kids need a great learning environment.

4.1 (48 people)

**I'm concerned about impact to current students during the construction, particularly access to athletic facilities and the ability to attend class.** My child will be there for four years of construction. I want him to have a good high school experience, with quiet productive classrooms.

3.7 (61 people)

**Please consider current students experience in the decision and try to minimize impact on them.** The students going through the construction also went through Covid in schools. Their school experience has been highly impacted already.

3.7 (58 people)



## THOUGHTS

### Miscellaneous



**Don't repeat the Hastings mistake and go too small** Hastings, we were told, would be built 4.3  (32 people) to be able to fit all students and parents in the cafe and gym, but they are too small. Size it right!

**School is old** Poor ventilation, unhealthily 4.3  (20 people)

**LHS is too small for the current count of students** students need a bigger and better facility 4.2  (39 people)



## DIFFERENCES

### New Building | High Cost [213 | 168]



▲▲ A and B rated high

The responses to the presentation raised several concerns and suggestions. The main issues revolved around the need for new central offices at the high school, with many arguing that the space should be used for students instead. There was a strong emphasis on future-proofing any new projects, with calls for designs that can accommodate future growth and alleviate current overcrowding. The potential for separate votes on a new pool and field house was also highlighted. Some respondents expressed curiosity about a town fund that could offset anticipated tax increases. Lastly, there was a clear opposition to

▲▼ A rated high, B rated low

The responses indicate a strong consensus in favor of constructing a new school building. Respondents believe that the current building does not reflect the high quality of education provided and that a new building is necessary to accommodate the growing student population.

They acknowledge that construction may disrupt classes and increase taxes, but they view these as necessary sacrifices for long-term benefits. They also express confidence that the cost of new construction will be worth it, as it will provide a safe, functional space for students and help maintain the town's reputation for world-class



## DIFFERENCES

### Field House | Track And Field [166 | 161]



A and B rated high

The responses indicate a general consensus on the need for a new construction rather than renovation due to the high costs associated with the latter. There is a strong emphasis on future-proofing the project to accommodate growth and changing needs, with specific suggestions such as air conditioning and space maximization for students. Concerns were raised about the potential misuse of funds for rebuilding the central office and the need for fiscal planning to mitigate tax increases. Overcrowding was highlighted as a major issue that needs to be addressed in the new design.

A rated high, B rated low

The responses indicate a general consensus that the proposed pool and field house are seen as unnecessary luxuries, contributing significantly to the project's cost. Respondents suggest prioritizing the academic aspects of the school over athletics, with some questioning the need for a field house at all. Concerns were raised about the financial burden on taxpayers, particularly those without children in the school system. Suggestions included reusing the current field house to save money and speed up construction, thereby minimizing disruption to education. The proposed swimming pool was also viewed as an



## DIFFERENCES

Cost and Tax | High [216 | 129]



A and B rated high

The responses indicate a strong consensus on the need for a long-term, future-oriented approach to school renovations or new constructions. Concerns were raised about the high costs of bringing buildings up to code, with some suggesting that these funds could be better utilized for new constructions. Overcrowding was identified as a significant issue, with calls for designs that alleviate this problem. There were also calls for proper climate control in classrooms and a focus on maximizing space for students. The idea of locating the central office at the high school was met with resistance, with respondents

A rated high, B rated low

The responses indicate a shared concern about the high costs associated with the proposed project, with many suggesting the need for cost-cutting measures and questioning the impact on taxes. There is a call for a detailed cost/benefit analysis due to the significant price differences among the construction options. Some respondents express worry about the potential for the town's character to change due to increased taxes and the removal of trees. There is also a desire for the project to prioritize learning facilities over aesthetic elements, with a focus on practicality and affordability to avoid pricing out



## WRAP UP

### Next Steps



## Thanks for participating

We'll be carefully considering what we learned and sharing our actions back with you.

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# Upcoming Meetings

- **4/29 SBC Coordination Meeting – Review PDP alternatives (design options), review cost estimates/alternatives, taxpayer impact update**
- **5/2 Community Meeting #4 – SSBC Job shadowing update, focus group report out, massing studies, alternatives/options review, cost estimate review, public survey and discussion**
- **5/6 SBC Coordination Meeting – SBC discussion of the options using criteria matrix=**
- **5/8 Abutters Meeting – Schedule review, options review, next steps**
- **5/13 SBC Coordination Meeting – Accept PDP alternatives, select 3 alternatives to move into PSR**
- **5/20 SBC Meeting No. 11 – Review Draft PDP submission**
- **5/28 SBC Coordination Meeting – Vote to approve PDP**

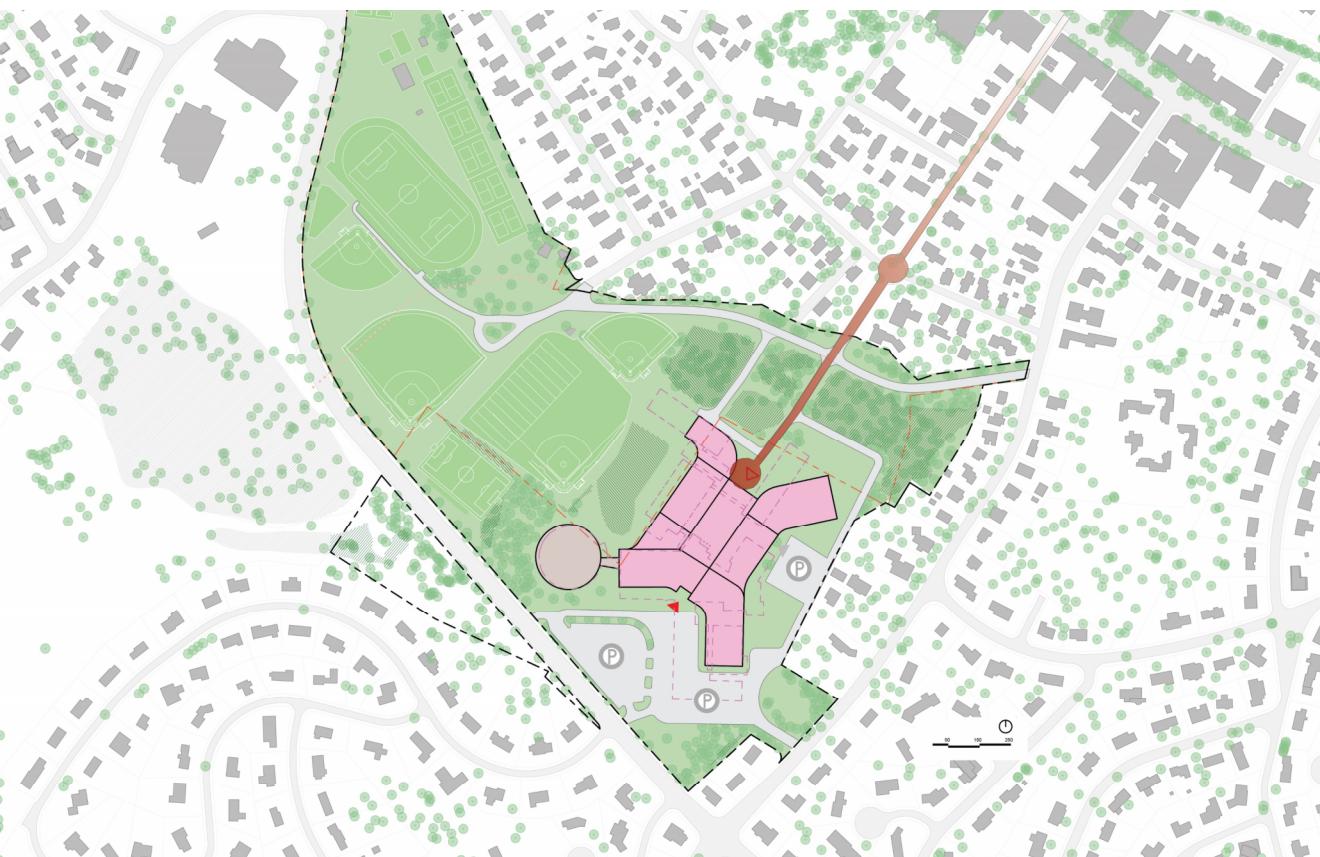
# Upcoming Meetings

- 6/24/24 – SBC Meeting – Review MSBA PDP comments, review education adjacency diagrams
- 7/8/24 – SBC Meeting (if needed due to not receiving MSBA comments by 6/24/24).
- 7/22/24 – SBC Meeting – Review architectural and site conceptual drawings (5 options), **3 or 4 floor vote**
- 8/19/24 – SBC Meeting – Discussion of **CM at Risk vs Design Bid Build**
- 9/16/24 – SBC Meeting – Approving CMR; Review FG feedback; Review updated Site and Building concepts, **parking decision and vote, expansion of building decision and vote**
- 10/21/24 – SBC Meeting – Present **concept plans with costs and schedule**, Rank the 5 options , **other program (Field House, Pool, Central offices) decision and vote**
- 11/11/24 – SBC Meeting – **Vote on preferred schematic option/roundtable discussion**
- 12/2/24 – SBC Meeting – Review Draft PSR Submission
- 12/16/24 – SBC Meeting – Vote to submit PSR to MSBA

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## CONCEPT MASSING STUDIES

### D.2 New Construction - Phased



*Site Plan*

Building Footprint: 179,000 sf

Floors: 4

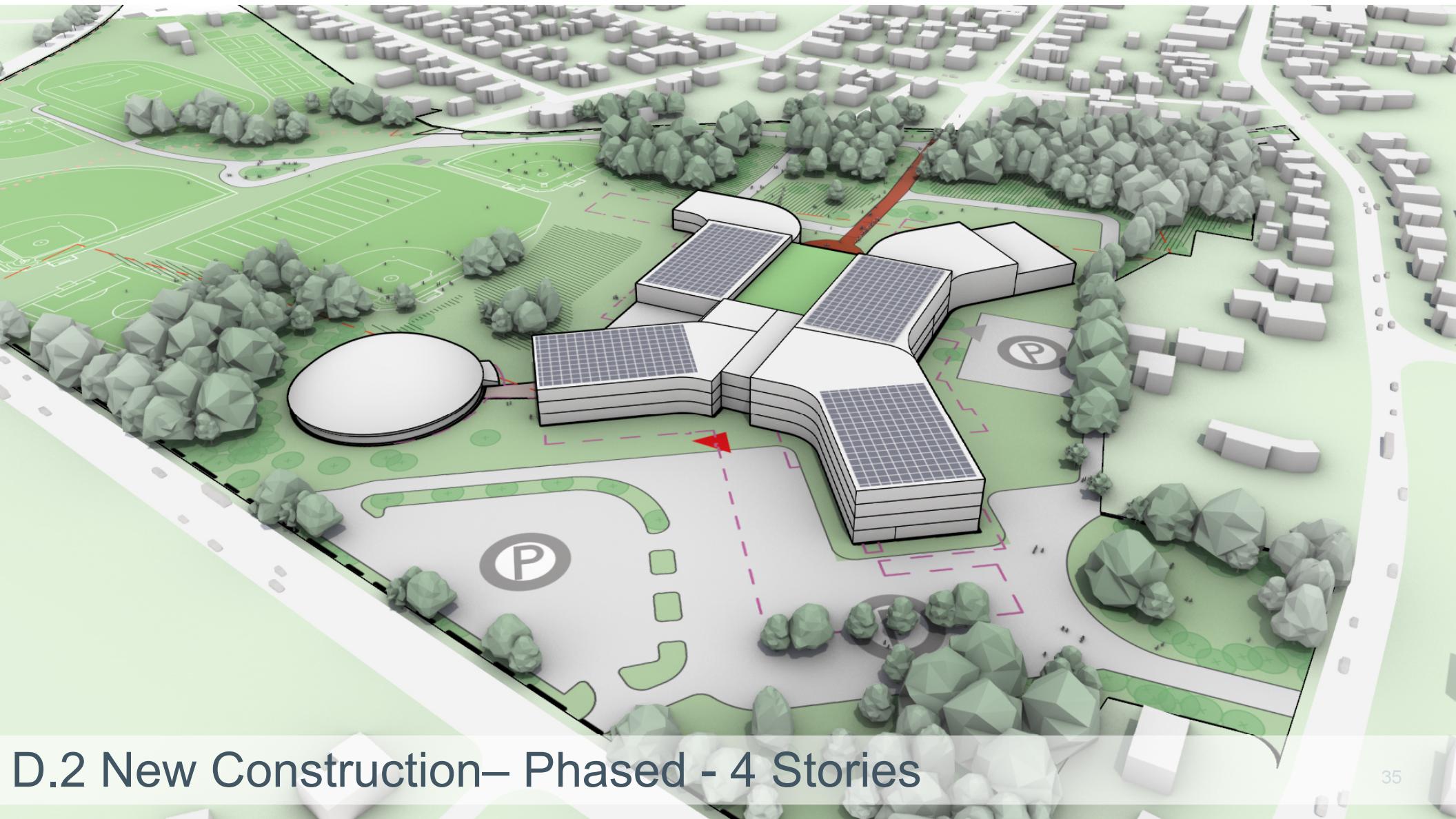
Renovated Field House

#### Pros:

- No direct impact to wetlands
- No direct impact to Park Land
- No permanent changes to existing field locations
- Nice pedestrian connection to Muzey Street

#### Cons:

- Added cost and inconvenience due to longer construction duration and need for modular classrooms.
- Requires Multi-Phased Construction, causing extended
- Temporary disruption and displacement of some existing fields



D.2 New Construction– Phased - 4 Stories



**Julie L. Hackett, Ed.D.**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

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[jhackett@lexingtonma.org](mailto:jhackett@lexingtonma.org)  
Fax: (781) 861-2560

**RE: CENTRAL OFFICE IN THE NEW LHS**  
**DATE: MAY 15, 2024**

Dear LPS School Community:

Some community members have expressed interest in learning more about designating square footage for the Central Office in the plans for a new or renovated high school. Town boards and committees engaged in a lengthy 2+ yearlong process, carefully weighing the pros and cons before finalizing plans to integrate the Central Office into a new or renovated high school. This memo aims to clarify our decision-making process and address community members' questions and concerns.

1. **Problem**—*Why is the Central Office considered in plans for a new or renovated high school?*
2. **Process**—*What decision-making led to including the Central Office in the plans for a new or renovated high school?*
3. **Overcrowding**—*If the high school faces future overcrowding, could the square footage designated for the Central Office be converted into classroom space for students?*
4. **Athletics**—*How will the relocation of the Central Office minimize the project's impact on student-athletes and residents who utilize the Center Recreation Complex outdoor facilities?*
5. **Cost**—*Will adding square footage for the Central Office in a new or renovated high school cost more than renovating the current building at 146 Maple Street?*

On behalf of the School Building Committee, I hope this communication is helpful. Much time, effort, and thought went into devising the best and most cost-effective solutions for the Central Office to meet the needs of our students and the community. I want to thank everyone who participated in this collaborative effort, which we believe will lead to the best possible outcomes for all involved.

Sincerely,

*Julie L. Hackett*

Julie L. Hackett  
Superintendent of Schools

## Central Office Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. Problem—Why is Central Office considered in plans for a new or renovated high school?**

The Old Harrington building at 146 Maple Street currently houses the Lexington Public Schools Central Office. In 2022-2023, the Town finalized a 10-year Capital Plan. [The LPS Central Office building has been rated an 'F' in the Town's Capital Plan.](#)

Asset Group	Replacement Value of Group		# of Assets	FCI of Group	Letter Grade of Group
	\$	FCI Cost of Group Assets			
HIGH SCHOOL	\$ 168,623,718	\$ 50,227,439	6	0.298	D
SCHOOLS - Except High School	\$ 359,746,713	\$ 38,530,216	10	0.107	B
Bowman Elementary School	\$ 24,460,549	\$ 4,027,277	1	0.165	B
Bridge Elementary School	\$ 23,890,746	\$ 3,854,106	1	0.161	B
Clarke Middle School	\$ 55,150,360	\$ 6,936,317	1	0.126	B
Diamond Middle School	\$ 72,119,137	\$ 5,530,949	1	0.077	B
Estabrook Elementary School	\$ 31,498,829	\$ 6,576	1	0.000	A
Fiske Elementary School	\$ 36,190,851	\$ 3,207,934	1	0.089	B
Harrington Elementary School	\$ 35,213,305	\$ 3,062,462	1	0.087	B
Hastings Elementary School	\$ 45,812,553	\$ -	1	-	A
Lexington Childrens Place	\$ 13,092,492	\$ 915	1	0.000	A
LPS Central Administration	\$ 22,317,890	\$ 11,903,680	1	0.533	F
Other Town Buildings	\$ 131,851,376	\$ 16,997,935	9	0.129	B
HIGH SCHOOL Modular	\$ 8,341,593	\$ -	2	-	A
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 668,563,400</b>	<b>\$ 105,755,590</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0.158</b>	<b>B</b>

Chart 2: School buildings

[Moreover, the cost to remediate many structural and mechanical problems is estimated at \\$15 - \\$19 million, approximately the same as building new.](#) The structural and mechanical failures include a failing roof, poor HVAC systems, the need for window replacement, etc. LDA Architects and Accruent, LLC developed the Facilities Conditions Assessment estimate, indicating that the repairs to remediate these structural and mechanical failures would be at least \$15 million.<sup>1</sup> This \$15 million investment does not address other needs like moving walls or realigning interior spaces for better working conditions, which would increase the price tag to approximately \$15 - \$19 million. Given the hefty price tag of renovating an older building and the documented need for more athletic fields (addressed in question #3), Town staff and various boards and committees began exploring options. We engaged in a lengthy process to determine the best path forward; ultimately, the preferred solution is to include additional square footage for Central Office in the plans for a new or renovated high school.

### **2. Process—What decision-making led to including the Central Office in the plans for a new or renovated high school?**

The Town engaged in a lengthy, 2+ yearlong collaborative decision-making process to consider the merits of including the Central Office in plans for a new or renovated high school. Those involved in the decision-making included Town (municipal and school) staff members, Select Board and School Committee members, Appropriation, Capital Expenditures, and Recreation Committee members, the LPS Master Planning Committee, and various school and community members. Below is a list of important documents representing our community's effort in determining the best path forward.

#### **2021**

- [Facilities Conditions Assessment](#)

#### **2022**

- [Comprehensive Study of Athletic & Outdoor Recreation Facilities \(2022\)](#)

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<sup>1</sup> The table above is intended to show the condition of the school facilities and the letter grade each received. The LPS Central Administration building is an 'F' building and the amounts listed above are assets and not costs associated with remediating structural and mechanical failures.

- [LPS Master Planning Committee Agenda, Minutes & Recording \(09-29-2022\)](#)
- [Space Utilization Study \(10-13-2022\)](#)
- [Review of FY2024 Capital Plan \(11-14-2022\)](#)
- [Master Planning Committee Agenda, Minutes & Recording \(11-15-2022\)](#)
- [MPC Relocation of Central Office \(11-15-2022\)](#)

## **2023**

- [Final MSBA Design Enrollment \(01-05-2023\)](#)
- [Central Office Relocation Recommendation to School Committee \(03-14-2023\)](#)
- [Central Office Requirement Forecast Report \(03-23-2023\)](#)
- [Central Office Land Memo \(05-15-2023\)](#)
- [Budget Summit #2 \(11-15-2023\)](#)

## **2024**

- [Master Planning Committee Agenda, Minutes & Recording \(02-15-2023\)](#)
- [Master Planning Agenda, Minutes & Recording \(03-09-2023\)](#)

- 3. Overcrowding—If the high school faces future overcrowding, could the square footage designated for the Central Office be converted into classroom space for students?**

Yes. The current massing concepts designate approximately 17,000 net square feet for the Central Office that can be used as classroom space if needed. The typical size of a new classroom will be approximately 850 square feet. **If future overcrowding becomes an issue, the 17,000 net square feet designated for the Central Office could be converted to approximately 15-20 additional classrooms.**

In March 2022, the Massachusetts School Building Authority accepted our Statement of Interest, inviting us into the capital pipeline. The MSBA then hired an independent demographer who started a dialogue with the district and negotiated with Town staff. Through this process, we increased our enrollment by 275 additional students, bringing the total to 2,395.

The MSBA has authorized a final design enrollment of 2,395 students for Lexington High School students, which some community members feel is too low to accommodate the potential for future growth. There are several reasons for this concern:

- Lexington's upsurge in enrollment history, once tripling in size from 1950-1960;
- The unreliability of 10-year projections;
- The trend of substantial overcrowding at the high school in the past several years;
- The uncertainty of enrollment rebounds related to the pandemic;
- The Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA communities (resulting in Lexington's new zoning ordinance that exceeds State requirements)

In our LHS Educational Plan, we asked our Project Team to consider these community concerns, ensuring that the Schematic Design incorporates a plan to build up and/or out should Lexington encounter another significant, unanticipated influx of students.

**4. Athletics—How will the relocation of the Central Office minimize the project's impact on student-athletes and residents who utilize the Center Recreation Complex outdoor facilities?**

**The Recreation and Community Programs Department's unmet need for playing time on athletic fields operates at a 2,500-hour deficit, and students are the primary users of athletic fields and facilities in Town. A high school building project without alternative solutions would mean more potential disruption for students post-pandemic.**

As we examined the financial challenges and opportunities related to a Central Office renovation or relocation, we also considered the likely impact a high school project would have on athletics. The Recreation Committee had just participated in a study to review the Town's athletic and outdoor recreation facilities, concluding that the demand for outdoor recreational space exceeds the space available. The Recreation Committee commissioned a study to determine facility and space needs. In addition to the 2,500 hours per year of unmet recreation needs in the Town, many of the Town's athletic fields lack lights and parking, and the three fields at Lincoln Park are at end-of-life, with replacements anticipated in 2025, 2026, and 2027.

Many years ago, there was discussion about demolishing the Central Office building and constructing new ballfields, but no firm plans were implemented to ensure this happened. The Lexington community, Recreation programs and services, and the many high school students they serve would be significantly impacted during the construction of a new or renovated high school. The plan to demolish the Central Office building at 146 Maple Street and construct new athletic fields will address a significant portion of Lexington's 2,500 hours per year of unmet recreation needs.

**5. Cost—Will adding square footage for the Central Office in a new or renovated high school cost more than renovating the current building at 146 Maple Street?**

**No. It will cost approximately the same amount to renovate 146 Maple Street or build new, adding square footage into the plans for a new or renovated high school.**

As previously noted, the structural and mechanical failures at the Central Office (Old Harrington) will cost approximately \$15 - \$19 million. This is approximately the same amount the cost estimators identified (\$20 million) for adding additional square footage.

At the Annual Town Meeting, Town Meeting Members overwhelmingly approved the total costs for the renovation of 173 Bedford Street (\$6M). Please note: the renovation of 173 Bedford Street would have taken place with or without the temporary relocation of the LPS Central Office to this location. The Lexington Police Department is housed in this space now, and the amount approved for the renovation is a typical expense each time a swing space is newly inhabited. Additional items awaiting Town Meeting Members' approval in FY26 include the demolition of the Central Office building at 146 Maple Street (\$1.65M) and the construction and installation of new athletic fields (\$6.18M).

**6. Ballot—Will the Central Office require a separate ballot and vote from the school project?**

**No, the Central Office will not require a separate ballot and vote from the school project.**

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2. Previous Meeting Minutes Approval (Vote Expected) (12:05PM – 12:10PM)
  - 4/22/24 Meeting Minutes
  - 4/29/24 Meeting Minutes
  - 05/06/24 Meeting Minutes
  - 05/13/24 Meeting Minutes
3. Review Thought Exchange Results (12:10PM to 12:35PM)
4. Review Draft PDP Submission (12:35PM – 1:35PM)
  - Approve with Vote Recommended
5. Upcoming Meetings (1:35PM – 1:40PM)
6. Other Topics not Reasonably Anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting (1:40PM – 1:45PM)
7. **Public Comment (1:40PM – 2:00PM)**
8. Adjourn

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