

THE CAMPAIGN FOR AN AFFORDABLE, SUSTAINABLE and EXCELLENT LHS

For the last few months of 2024, members of LHS4ALL have appealed to the Lexington School Building Committee to develop alternative designs for the new LHS that were

1. more cost-conscious;
2. leverage the existing school location and preserve our town fields;
3. reserve space (and budget) for a field-house;
4. sufficiently plan for future changes in enrollment due to MBTA zoning change, and
5. remove the Central Office from LHS.

Unfortunately the appeals of LHS4ALL have not been addressed. Below are the challenges associated with current designs. If you would prefer to jump ahead and read about a proposed solution - just click here.

Current challenges with new LHS Project and Designs:

1. NEVER DESIGNED TO A BUDGET - Unfortunately this project has been plagued due to the lack of consideration one simple criteria - a budget. This project was never given a budget - a 'not-to-exceed' cost. This is a critical financial failure and is the primary reason for the dissension amongst residents today.
2. TOO EXPENSIVE - Current designs will raise property taxes by 10-14% for 30 years. An increase of at least \$1700-\$2,400 per year for the average \$1.3M home.
3. CUTS TOWN CENTER FIELDS IN HALF - Building new LHS on the fields destroys one of the largest open spaces in our town; will permanently damage our recreation asset and negatively impact traffic, noise and light patterns.
4. STILL MORE MONEY FOR A FIELD HOUSE - Current designs do not account for the rebuild of the LHS Field House, even though it is leveraged by the High School and others. A field house will require STILL MORE MONEY from town residents. Any LHS design must account for the Field House rebuild, which means other budgetary compromises need to be made in the overall LHS design.
5. DESIGN CAPACITY IS TOO SMALL - More concerning is that current designs supported by the SBC can only support an increase in enrollment by exceeding space utilization guidelines of the MSBA (this is the situation we are in today).
 - a. Today, LHS enrollment is 2425 students, and space utilization is 98%.
 - b. The planned new LHS is targeted for 2395 students and space utilization of 85% (MSBA max. space utilization target). As soon as it opens, the New LHS will
6. INCLUSION OF LPS Central Office *within LHS is a costly, unneeded luxury* - The purpose of the New LHS is to provide the best education for our students. Building our school administration offices into LHS provides no economic or educational benefit. Since the new housing due to MBTA zoning might require another elementary/middle school, the old Harrington should remain functional for 2-4 more years till we can get a better handle on future enrollments at all levels. This will allow the Centra Office remain in place for at least that time. In the current proposal we are paying

a premium to build in an additional 20,000 square feet of space, and 60 parking spaces, which could be leased/purchased for much, much less elsewhere.