



Arlington High School Project Overview

Arlington needs a new high school because of increasing enrollment and an outdated facility that no longer meets today's educational needs. We have an opportunity right now to access state funding for up to one-third of the project cost, thereby significantly reducing the cost to Arlington taxpayers.

Why we need a new high school

Over the past decade, the district's enrollment has grown from 4,700 students to about 6,000. This is the equivalent of adding 3 elementary school populations since 2009. The current high school is reaching capacity and cannot accommodate this enrollment growth.

In addition, the school's deteriorating facility is an obstacle to teaching and learning. The New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) placed AHS on 'warning' status in 2013 citing inadequate classrooms, science labs, and technology infrastructure, which affect the overall learning environment for the students.

The new AHS

The new school is the product of over two years of planning and community input and is designed for 1,755 students. Embodying Arlington's educational vision, it will allow educators to deliver 21st century instruction in a safe, welcoming environment. The selected design concept is the best combination of cost-effectiveness, educational design, and construction timeline.

Features of the new school:

- ✓ Upgraded science labs & classroom layout to deliver modern instruction
- ✓ Expanded library and makerspace enhance collaborative, hands-on learning
- ✓ New Discourse Lab for debate and dialogue
- ✓ Upgraded Auditorium & performing arts spaces support the award-winning program
- ✓ Improved athletic facilities and direct access to the Minuteman bikeway
- ✓ Sustainable design will reduce lifecycle costs



Cost factors

As dictated by the state's process, Arlington's reimbursement from the MSBA cannot be increased and the total cost of the building cannot exceed the total overall budget of \$290.8M without local approval. There are three primary cost factors that contribute to the overall cost of the project:

- High Schools are costly because they are large and require many specialized spaces.
- The Boston area construction market is expensive, with 4% annual construction cost escalation.
- AHS has specific factors that increase its cost above typical high school projects.

The AHS educational program is strong and broad and the new building needs to provide the costly specialized spaces required in a modern high school. In addition, education-related offices and programs currently residing in the facility will be included in the new school (Menotomy Preschool, School District Administration and Payroll, Arlington Community Education offices, and the LABBB Special Education Collaborative). Finally, the AHS site is complex and phased building on a compact, contaminated site with an operating school is more costly.

During the Schematic Design phase, the Building Committee removed non-education related offices from the new building (IT, Facilities and Comptroller) to reduce the scope and cost of the project. Additionally, sustainability is an inherent part of the new design to not only reduce lifecycle costs of the Town's largest facility, but also to help Arlington reach its goal of being carbon neutral by 2050.

Renovation is not adequate

Renovating the existing AHS facility is not adequate. A completely renovated building (with no additions) would not accommodate enrollment growth nor provide space for all programs at AHS. It also would not support current educational needs. Renovation/addition options were found to be significantly more expensive than the selected design.

Construction timeline

Construction could begin as early as July 2020. The new Performing Arts and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math) wings are estimated to be open to students in 2022, with construction of the new school fully completed in 2024.

All children in 3rd grade or younger
will attend a new, completed school.

Today's Freshmen (class of 2022)
will benefit from half of the new building.

Next Steps

In order for the project to move forward, Arlington voters must pass a debt exclusion to pay for the new building. The town-wide election is scheduled for June 11.

For more information about the design, educational vision, and cost, visit our website (www.ahsbuilding.org) or Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ahsbuilding).