



Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the school district focused on facility needs at our high school?

In 2011, the school district completed a comprehensive analysis of all district facilities. The analysis identified tier one, two, and three needs throughout the school district. Tier one needs totaling \$10 million were addressed spanning all schools since the study was completed, leaving only tier one needs remaining at the high school. The school district made the decision in 2014 to complete a comprehensive analysis of those tier one needs at our high school. The district is now focused on how to address the substantial needs at our high school. Both the 2011 and 2014 studies are located on our website at <http://goo.gl/whlmYh>.

Will other schools receive facility upgrades from a possible referendum?

In 2014, the school district completed a safety audit of all schools in the district. All schools need upgraded entrance systems that meet 2016 safety requirements. Our school entrances are currently not safe. Safe school entrances allow building staff to “buzz” a visitor into a secure office area, complete a background check, and then allow the visitor access to the rest of the school. We will distribute a community survey in April/May that will ask if the community supports a project that would update all building entrances.

Why aren’t we looking at building a brand new high school?

The comprehensive cost of a new high school that is built to serve 1,100 students is in excess of \$110 million dollars. Current needs at our high school equal \$40 to \$50 million. There is approximately \$60 to \$70 million of structural value in our current school. Our high school is land rich and is conveniently located near a major highway. The architectural firm the school district has contracted with does not recommend building a new school.

Will the district propose a “quick fix” or address all needs at the high school?

Ultimately, the community will decide the level of investment that is made in our current high school. We will distribute a community survey to all addresses in the Beaver Dam Unified School District. The final question on the survey will ask if the residents of our school district support a rebuild of our current high school that will address all needs.

How can the public give input?

The school district is seeking input through community tours scheduled the first Monday of each month at 6:00 pm, starting in our high-school cafeteria (no meeting in June). The school district hosts a call-in radio show the third Thursday of the month from 11:10 am to Noon on WBEV. The school board hosts a drop-in coffee discussion at Edith’s Café, 103 Front Street, the first Thursday morning of each month from 7:30 am to 8:30 am. The district answers all questions presented on the district’s Facebook page or Twitter account. Lastly, the school district’s web site has an open comment and question page under the facilities tab that offers anyone in the community an opportunity to ask questions or give input.

How old is the high school?

Our current high school was built in 1958 to house 800 students and approximately 85 staff. The building currently holds 1,100 students and 110 staff members. The technology education wing was built in 1976.

Will the district remove all asbestos from the school as part of a major project?

Yes. All asbestos will be abated if a rebuild of the high school is suggested and supported by our community.

Is the school district currently working with MPTC, and how can they help with our needs?

MPTC and BDUSD have an excellent working relationship. Superintendent Steve Vessey meets with representatives from MPTC no less than four times a year. BDHS offers more than 15 courses where students can earn both high school and MPTC credit for their work. On average, more than twenty high-school students spend a portion of their school day at MPTC.

What is the process the school district will use to decide if a referendum is needed and for what amount?

The school board and administration will share information and listen to input regarding whether a referendum is needed to address facility needs at the high school. We will distribute a community survey to all residents of the school district between the second week of April and the end of May, asking residents if they support a referendum. The school board has explained they will follow the direction of the community survey when making a decision regarding referendum. The district will share the results of the community survey on the district's website and will discuss the results at the school board's June Planning Committee meeting and July business meeting.

How does our high school compare to other area high schools?

BDHS does not compare well with area high schools. BDHS is at a competitive disadvantage attracting students and families when comparing facilities:

- Waupun High School is newly built
- Dodge Land High School is newly built
- Randolph High School is currently being built
- Watertown High School is newly built
- Sun Prairie High School is newly built
- Ripon High School is being built
- Fond du Lac High School is newly built
- Lomira High School is being built
- Slinger High School is newly built
- Oconomowoc High School is newly built

Why can't the district pay for the facility needs at the high school within its current yearly budget?

Comprehensive needs at the high school exceed \$40 million; this is more than the total budget for the school district. While city, county, and state government can increase taxes for building needs, a school district cannot. A school district can only present the public with a referendum to raise funds for major building projects.

What facility work has the district completed over the past five years?

The school district has completed more than \$10 million of facility work since 2011:

- \$3 million addition to Prairie View Elementary School when Trenton Elementary School closed.

- \$1 million electrical upgrade at the Middle School.
- \$1 million rebuild of high school science labs.
- \$2 million district-wide technology rebuild.
- \$3 million of upgrades to roofs, parking lots, classrooms, and heating-and-cooling systems throughout district schools.

Does the public have access to our high school for non-school related activities?

Our high school was utilized 360 of 365 days last year by community groups for various reasons and activities. Our high school is the most used public facility in the City of Beaver Dam.

How long will a major rebuild of the high school take? What impact from the construction will students experience?

A complete rebuild of the high school would take approximately 15 months, spanning two summers and one school year. A successful November 2016 referendum would result in a completed high school by fall, 2018. Students would remain in the school during construction. This is a common project in the State of Wisconsin. This type of rebuild is currently underway at Ripon High School by the construction firm that is consulting with BDUSD.

How do I know the school district is fiscally responsible?

BDUSD has the lowest tax mill rate in a five (5) county area and has the lowest spending per student in the county.

How does the achievement of our students at BDHS compare to area high schools?

Beaver Dam High School was recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* as one of the top high schools in the country (Silver Award Winner: top 10% of all high schools). BDHS is an Advanced Placement Pacesetter School in the State of Wisconsin and a member of the 6th Annual Advanced Placement National Honor Roll. BDHS has the highest ACT score in the area, out pacing Oconomowoc, Sun Prairie, Fond du Lac, and West Bend.