

To: Concord Community Preservation Committee
From: Robert Conry, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Operations
Cc: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools
Subj: Responses to Committee Questions Regarding the CCHS Amenities Building

Date: October 23, 2025

Dear Members of the Community Preservation Committee,

Thank you for the thoughtful questions raised regarding the proposed restroom and concession facility at Concord-Carlisle High School (CCHS). Below are our responses and updates based on the issues raised at the recent site visit and in follow up emails to the district.

1. DPW Support for Sewer Connection / Alternative Options

We recognize your request for a letter of support from Concord Public Works (DPW) regarding the proposed sewer connection. The District Administration has formally requested this support, and DPW is currently reviewing it. As part of their evaluation, DPW will be examining current CCHS sewer usage relative to the permitted capacity to inform their decision. We will keep the CPC Committee updated on this front over the next few weeks.

2. Estimated Cost of the Concession Area (Excluding Plumbing)

Gale Associates, has assigned an estimated cost of \$200,000 to the concessions space, using high level calculations, however, have noted that the overall design of the building would change if this space was removed, and subtracting this space will not result in a \$200,000 cost savings. Rather it will be essentially cost neutral. See their response below.

“Removing the Concessions Area alone while leaving the remainder of the current floor plan unchanged will result in an L-shaped building footprint. This footprint would result in significant redesign efforts relative to the MEP, structural, and architectural disciplines. It is our estimation the added cost of redesign will negate any reduction in construction costs and may result in a higher overall project cost (design plus construction) relative to the current building design.”

We recognize this as a key area for potential fundraising if concessions are not funded in a CPC grant award.

3. Other Funding Sources Pursued

In addition to the Concord CPC funding request, we have explored multiple avenues for funding support:

- **Carlisle CPC:** Funding had previously been secured at Carlisle's Spring 2025 Town Meeting but lapsed due to unmet contingency requirements (approval of the Town of Concord). We are confident of Carlisle CPC's continued support of this project and it will go forward for another vote at their next Town Meeting.
- **CCRSO District Funds:** Funded the cost of the feasibility study and building design, a total of \$155,000.
- **CCRSO Stabilization Funds:** \$350,000 has been set aside for the cost of potential sewer connection fees and/or cost overruns.
- **Municipal ADA Grant:** A municipal ADA grant will be submitted in May 2026. This project is aligned with the purposes of this grant, and we have connected with the state and confirmed that the regional district entity is able to apply directly for the grant.
- **Legislative Earmarks:** We are exploring opportunities through state representatives for capital support.
- **Concord Town Capital Article:** Passed at Spring 2025 Town Meeting but did not receive sufficient support at the ballot.
- **Private Foundations:** We are actively researching relevant Massachusetts foundations.

4. Use of the Existing Paved Pad

The current paved pad has minimal usage. It is occasionally used for game day concessions but otherwise remains inactive.

Importantly, this area will **not** be needed during future turf field replacement projects. The standard replacement process involves removing the fencing to allow for installation of the turf, and does not require the paved pad space.

5. Composting toilet system considerations

While some have talked with excitement about the possibility of compostable toilets, there are costs, risks, and drawbacks associated with these systems. It is critical for everyone to understand these issues to put the consideration of composting toilets into context, in particular, for this particular space.

In my professional opinion, as someone responsible for the district's facilities, the use of composting toilets at this busy location would present unnecessary risks that could be easily avoided with a conventional sewer connection. Composting toilets is not a sound option for this location. The consultants have provided similar feedback. Composting toilets are better suited to remote, low use locations.

The following are some of the significant risks and drawbacks — many of which are magnified in a high-traffic, public school setting adjacent to busy athletic fields:

Maintenance and management burden (and cost): Composting toilets require ongoing attention — adding bulking material (sawdust/peat/wood chips), monitoring the composting process (moisture, aeration), periodically emptying or replacing compost, ensuring proper ventilation, etc.

Odor / insect / nuisance risk: If the system is not consistently maintained over the long term, odors and insect/ventilation issues can emerge.

User acceptance / behavioral issues: Public users (students, visitors) may find a non-standard toilet experience unfamiliar, which could lead to misuse, complaints, hygiene issues. Some systems require different user behavior (e.g., covering with wood chips) or signage/explanation

High traffic capacity concerns: Many composting systems are designed for lower-use environments (cabins, parks, remote facilities). A high-volume public restroom may overwhelm composting capacity or complicate servicing/regulation of throughput.

Space, design, and cost tradeoffs: Composting units sometimes require larger or more complex dedicated composting chambers, access for service, ventilation fans, external space, and may cost more upfront (or cost more to maintain) than expected.

Pathogen / health risk: If composting does not achieve proper temperatures or is not maintained properly, there is risk of incomplete pathogen destruction.

Service logistics: For a public facility, you will need a reliable schedule for emptying, composting, perhaps hauling, staff training, signage, monitoring — far more operational

demands than a standard flush system.

Winter/climate issues: If the facility is in cold temperatures, it may slow down composting processes or require heated chambers or insulation to maintain proper function. Many composting systems are optimized for moderate climates or smaller scale.

5. Why Not Improve Portable Toilets Instead?

While we understand the desire for improved temporary solutions, enhancing portable toilets would not resolve the core issue: the lack of permanent, code-compliant restroom facilities. The current approach is a temporary workaround that falls short in terms of accessibility, compliance, and dignity for users. A permanent facility is necessary to meet both state code and community expectations.

The district currently spends approximately \$8,000 per year for portable toilets at CCHS's Memorial Field. Upgraded portable facilities would cost significantly more.

6. Accessibility During Graduation (Wheelchair Access)

During graduation and other large events, individuals using accessible parking do cross the field in wheelchairs. While efforts are made to accommodate this, the current situation is suboptimal and highlights the need for improved infrastructure.

7. ADA Compliance of the Ramp from School to Field

Yes, the winding ramp from the school down to the field is fully ADA compliant.

We hope this memo helps address your questions and provides the clarity needed as you continue to evaluate our request. We are grateful for your time and consideration and remain available to provide additional information as needed.

Sincerely,
Robert Conry
Asst. Superintendent, Finance and Operations
Concord-Carlisle Regional School District