



Kentucky Board of Education
300 Sower Boulevard
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Board Members:

Scott County Schools (SCS) is pleased to see that the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) is considering waivers related to aspects of the 2008 Kentucky School Facilities Planning Manual. As such, the information below provides details in support of a waiver request that the Scott County Board of Education (SCBOE) is submitting for the April meeting of the KBE.

The SCBOE held a meeting on Thursday, March 10, 2022 at 6:30 pm. In this meeting, the SCBOE approved submitting a waiver request to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the KBE regarding the 2008 Kentucky School Facilities Planning Manual, incorporated by reference in 702 KAR 4:180 which defines discretionary projects, in part, as “Extracurricular Facilities – Construction of field houses; stadiums; sports field facilities; or any athletic facility.” ***This act demonstrates the support of the SCBOE.***

This waiver request is specifically for the new Scott County High School (new SCHS) which will replace the existing Scott County High School. The current Scott County High School will then function as Scott County Middle School. ***It is our request to be able to waive the portion of the aforementioned regulation and therefore use restricted funds for the construction of the athletic portion of the new SCHS project.***

The new SCHS is located about one mile from the current Scott County High School. Existing county-owned athletic facilities are across the street from the current SCHS, but not the new SCHS. There is also a football field and track owned by the school district that is on the same campus as the current SCHS, but not the new SCHS. Additionally, all of these facilities are shared with Scott County Middle School as well as local youth sports teams. As such, there are numerous conflicts each sports season. We have also encountered issues where the county-owned facilities required upgrades to meet KHSAA standards when the county had no need for the upgrades otherwise. Navigating these issues between county and school officials was challenging and time-consuming, sometimes resulting in the county being forced to spend funds due to needs that were only created by our use.

By having facilities that are intended primarily for the use of SCHS, it will relieve the strain of the current facilities. Additionally, we have other middle school athletic programs that do not have facilities and adding these facilities, while taking away from the strain on the other facilities, creates opportunities for more use by our middle school programs. The new high school site is not within safe walking proximity to any outdoor athletic facilities and, even pre-pandemic, we have not had enough bus drivers to shuttle athletes to off-site facilities after school because all of our drivers are needed just to get students home from school.

In May of 2017, SCS district leaders met with members of the KDE Facilities Branch to discuss the inclusion of athletic fields in the Great Crossing High School project. In this discussion, it was the desire of the district to utilize restricted funds for the completion of the athletic phase of this project. This request was granted, resulting in a historic first. It was the first time in over 50 years that sufficient outdoor athletic facilities were built for high school athletic programs in our

district. Great Crossing High School opened in the fall of 2019 and our community has witnessed the use of these facilities since that time. We have also had the opportunity to permit the use of these facilities to local community sports organizations when this use would not interfere with the use of the school. ***I share this to provide context that SCS is asking for something that was granted the last time a new high school was built in our district in 2017.***

The Local Planning Committee (LPC) was reconvened in the summer of 2020 in order to amend the current DFP. The draft DFP was submitted to KDE Facilities Branch on behalf of the LPC for review and approval prior to SCBOE approval. That draft DFP clearly demonstrated the desire of the LPC to include athletic facilities in the new Scott County High School. ***I share this fact as evidence that our community has already demonstrated their support through a unanimous vote of the LPC and no public objection throughout the process.***

To disallow the use of restricted funds for a high school project in our district less than three years from the completion of a different high school project in our district, that was permitted to use restricted funds, creates a situation that the average community member cannot comprehend. As a result, the district has been met with skepticism, distrust, and confusion by some in the community. Regrettably, due to this confusion, some in the community have even suggested that district leaders favor one high school over the other.

Perhaps part of the confusion from the community is the result of the inequity that such a disallowance would create. Great Crossing High School is operating with a full complement of athletic facilities at their disposal, where students can stay on campus and walk to practice, while the currently approved BG1 for the new Scott County High School does not permit the use of restricted funds for the typical outdoor athletic components of a high school.

As evidenced by our recent completion of Great Crossing High School, Creekside Elementary School, the Georgetown Middle School addition, the Stamping Ground Elementary renovation, and a comprehensive energy-savings project, Scott County Schools has worked diligently to improve the educational facilities of our district in the last five years. We ask that you grant this waiver to help us continue in this work.

Respectfully,


Billy Parker, Superintendent