

Brooklyn Public Schools HVAC Project Options  
Respectfully Submitted By: P. Buell 9/19/2022

Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and Office of School Construction Grants & Review (OSCG&R)

Brooklyn reimbursement rate: 72.86% The local portion is 27.14%

The Brooklyn Public Schools would like to apply for a School Construction Grant through the Office of Administrative Services. This project is a "general construction" project that requires approval from the Town of Brooklyn and if approved by DAS/OSCG&R would provide a reimbursement rate of 72.86%

**HVAC Grant Considerations:** We will look to meet the air quality needs of the district by making the schools healthier, more efficient, and accessible to the community during all seasons of the year. During the last five years, there have been days that the building has been too hot to effectively educate students, there has been an ongoing need to leave windows open to increase air exchange and by doing so, we have created concerns from many parents who believe the open windows create a safety risk on the ground level classrooms. We are also aware of the weight limits and implications of upgrading or adding air handlers to the "new roof" and solar systems on our roofs. The Director of Facilities has been reviewing the locations for air conditioning units both on the roof and on the side of the buildings, including in the courtyards at BMS or "interior" areas of the school at BES. We believe that there has never been a better time to apply for an HVAC grant as this is the first time that this type of project has been offered under the Office of School Construction Grants.

**ARP/ESSER Funding:** The Brooklyn Board of Education has directed the Superintendent to request funding through ARP/ESSER to offset the local portion of the construction grant. It has recently been determined that the Department of Administrative Services has determined that ARP/ESSER funds can NOT be used to cover the cost of the local, 27.14%, of our project. The ARP/ESSER funds are allowed to be spent on HVAC if it was funding the full project, but can NOT be used as an offset to this type of grant request. The ARP/ESSER Committee has been very responsive to the idea of using these funds for HVAC at the schools and this would be a project that would meet all of the requirements of committee. This project would benefit a very large percentage of the Brooklyn residents. Our current enrollment is over 900 students and we employ 175 people. The request was justified in the application and is sustainable as part of the Town's largest investment. This project has a positive impact on COVID related protocols as it will increase the air exchange without having to open windows. Open windows creates inefficient heating of our buildings and poses a safety risk as this could allow a breach. The original request of the ARP/ESSER Committee was for \$495,000.

**HVAC Estimates for BES and BMS:** The Brooklyn Public Schools will need to get permission to create a building committee, create a RFQ to determine what specific requirements are needed and see approval from the Town of Brooklyn through a Town Meeting in order to move forward. The "rough estimate" for upgrading the HVAC for both buildings would be \$2,000,000.

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**Funding Considerations:**

**Option 1: Apply for the Office of School Construction Grant with Brooklyn Funding 27.17%.**

\$2,000,000 Project would require approval by Brooklyn for the full cost

- 72.86% or \$1,457,200 reimbursement from DAS
- 27.14% or \$ 542,800 to be paid for by the Town of Brooklyn Tax/Bond

**Option 2: Split the project into two projects.**

Use the Town's ARP/ESSER funds to pay for \$500,000 of the HVAC Project. This portion of the project would not be part of the larger project submitted to DAS for the grant.

Apply for the Office of School Construction for \$1,500,000 HVAC grant.

- The Town approval of \$1,500,000 for the grant project would need to be approved.
- 72.86% or \$1,092,900 reimbursement from DAS
- 27.14% or \$ 407,100 to be paid for by the Town of Brooklyn Tax/Bond

**Option 3: Scale back the project and NOT complete a full renovation of the system.**

Pros: to not completing the full project

Cons: to not completing the full project

-We could reduce the amount of money being requested for the project if we were to leave some of the older units in place. They are less efficient and would need continued maintenance.

-There are older AC units in both buildings that use R-22, a refrigerant product that began to be phased out of use in US in 2010 because it is depleting the ozone

-There are portions of the buildings that are really unbearable when the temperatures get very high or stay high for multiple days.

-Systems would not run off of one controls system and would be more difficult to manage.

-If the whole system was upgraded, we would have classrooms with Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) which offered increased flexibility to heat and cool areas of the buildings that are hot or cold. By adding this type of system we would be able to reduce fuel usage for chilly mornings when we just need to warm up the buildings, but do not need to run the full furnaces. The higher efficiency VRF would result in cost savings over running the furnaces.

-Costs would be higher including the engineering and additional work to complete the job at a later date.

-We would need to target specific areas in buildings making it less efficient and would result in some rooms not receiving AC, and would be difficult to explain.

-Some windows would need to be left open to enhance air exchange resulting in the continued concern about school safety.