

Q & A: Berry Educational Support Center

Why was the Berry Center built? When? How much did it cost?

- The Berry Center was built in response to the 2001 Bond Steering Committee's evaluation of the district's need for a multi-purpose facility for instructional activities, convocations, staff trainings, graduations, etc.; a second athletic stadium; and a Food Distribution Center for the west-side of the district.
- The Berry Center was approved by 85% of the voters in the 2001 bond election.
- The building was opened in time for CFISD graduation ceremonies in May 2006.
- The bond authorization budget for the Berry Center, the second athletic stadium, and the Food Distribution Center was approximately \$84 million. However, the district saved \$4 million in parking lot costs by placing the educational support center and the second athletic stadium on one site. Thus, the five facilities included at the Berry Center – athletic stadium, arena, conference center, theater, food distribution center – cost \$80 million.

How has the center benefited the community?

- In addition to many large teacher and staff events, with a district of 104,000 students, there are no facilities in the area large enough to accommodate many student and parent activities such as graduations, College and Career Night, Horizons (G/T) Showcase, Prom and Project Prom activities, ten high school football game schedules, district leadership meetings, National Merit recognition ceremony, Name That Book and Music Memory competitions, as well as TAKS, math and science instructional camps.
- The proximity of the Berry Center increases attendance at student competitions and saves travel and parking expenses for the district parents and supporters.
- When events such as graduations are held within the district, area businesses (restaurants, stores, etc.) benefit.
- Parents and community members save approximately \$120,000 annually in parking for graduation ceremonies compared to the Reliant Center.
- Students save approximately \$92,000 annually on prom ticket prices compared to proms held at hotels.
- Patrons are able to attend other non-district events in their own community; saving on fuel costs and high parking fees, as well as avoiding traffic. The facility is used for graduation ceremonies for colleges/universities, private schools and other public school districts; concerts; theater productions; Cirque du Soleil performances; worship services; company meetings and trade shows

How has installing food service at the center helped the district?

- The Food Distribution Center was also approved by the voters in the 2001 bond election. The food distribution center provides a cost avoidance of approximately \$420,000 per year for the Food Service budget because fewer delivery trucks and staff are required to provide student/staff meals to the west side of the district.

- Over 8 million meals are provided to schools on the west side of the district from this facility.
- The catering kitchen has allowed us to maximize our revenue potential by offering a full-service food and beverage menu.

What is the average annual cost to operate and maintain the center?

- The operational cost for fiscal year 2008-2009 was \$3.3 million.
- Revenue for the same fiscal year was \$1.9 million.
- The net operational cost was \$1.4 million or .2% of the district's operating budget.
- In addition, we estimate that there was approximately \$517,000 in cost avoidance in 2008-09 for necessary rental of outside facilities. (Examples: staff events, student instructional activities, college nights and graduations)
- Parents and students saved \$212,000 on graduation parking fees and prom expenses alone.

Please break the overall number down into categories: electricity, water, a/c, etc.

- For the twelve-month period ended June 30, 2009
 - Staff Development - \$41,653
 - Health Services - \$9,713
 - These revenues help offset the cost for district events at the Berry Center.
 - General Administration - \$98,722
 - Building Maintenance Operations and Grounds - \$1,692,751
 - Utilities (electric, gas, telephone and water) - \$683,280
 - Security and Monitoring - \$6,431
 - Community Service - \$325,187
 - Food Service Operations - \$491,699

How much revenue does the Berry Center bring in for the district? Does that offset its cost? Does it supplement the budget?

- The revenue from rentals, catering, and concessions for outside events is \$1.9 million.
- The net operational cost is \$1.4 million plus the cost avoidance shown above.
- These revenues help offset the cost for district events at the Berry Center.

Does the district plan to expand the number of outside sources?

- The main purpose for the Berry Center is for student, staff, and parent use.
- When the Berry Center is not needed for district events, it is rented for outside use.
- Currently, the ratio of district to outside events is approximately 65%/35%.
- The district will be contracting with a consultant to perform a review of the Berry Center which will include recommendations related to additional revenue generation.