

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Building to excess (3 of 4)

Here's a pricey building the Pottstown School District never needed.

The one-time administrative annex building, across the street from Franklin Elementary School, is one of the loveliest offices in Pottstown, located in one of the borough's best neighborhoods.

The neo-colonial structure was built in 1959 as the Irene Boyer retirement home for elderly women.



Commentary by  
Tom Hylton

But after the home closed, the Northstar Property Group purchased an option on the building in 2001 with plans to convert it into a home for 36 troubled girls.

To avoid that possibility, the school district paid Northstar \$250,000 to abandon its plans and bought the building itself for \$400,000.

In 2002, the district spent \$1.3 million to convert it into offices — the administrative annex — for the district's pupil services staff.

But there was always plenty of room for pupil services in the central administration building at Beech and Penn streets. In 2011, pupil services moved back to the main administration building.

The school district then had the building appraised for sale as an office building. The appraisal came back at \$400,000, far below what the district invested.

For several years, the district rented out about 20 percent of the space to Bux-Mont Academy, a private alternative education provider.

Now Bux-Mont is gone and about half the space is being used for four pre-school classes.

As the adjacent chart shows, the Pottstown School District is already nearly \$64 million in debt and spends an additional \$600,000 to \$800,000 annually on major maintenance.

We cannot afford any more costly building projects, such as renovating the former Edgewood Elementary School for \$6 million into a fifth grade center. We don't need it and can't afford it.

*Tom Hylton is a member of the Pottstown School Board. However, the views expressed are his alone and not the board's.*

Pottstown School District Bond Payment Schedule	
2019	\$3,737,523
2020	\$3,808,437
2021	\$3,807,729
2022	\$3,806,818
2023	\$3,802,886
2024	\$3,803,797
2025	\$3,804,001
2026	\$3,805,884
2027	\$3,806,535
2028	\$3,803,598
2029	\$3,727,200
2030	\$3,726,655
2031	\$3,723,808
2032	\$3,834,808
2033	\$3,835,753
2034	\$3,868,398
2035	\$3,174,413
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$63,878,240</b>



The Pottstown School District annex building at Franklin and Grace streets