



From Woodrow Wilson to Ida B. Wells

January 15, 2021

Dear Wilson Community,

We, the Wilson High School Renaming Committee, are writing to share some exciting news. Over the last few months, our Committee engaged in numerous community outreach efforts, we gathered nearly 2,000 community comments, and we spent many hours in careful consideration of the most appropriate new name for our school. Earlier this week, we sent a formal request to Superintendent Guerrero that our school be renamed “Ida B. Wells-Barnett High School.”

Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1862-1931), a singular American journalist, activist, educator, and researcher, was born into enslavement during the Civil War in the state of Mississippi. As an investigative journalist, she used the power of truth to shed light on the unjust and violent conditions under which African-Americans lived throughout the South. She was a firm believer that an education was important, and that spreading and sharing knowledge was the key to a more tolerant and just society. Long recognized for her leadership in anti-lynching activism, Wells-Barnett marched on Washington in the name of women’s suffrage on the day of Woodrow Wilson’s inauguration, and she later wrote and spoke to President Wilson in protest of segregation and of his discriminatory hiring practices. Wells-Barnett helped found the National Association of Colored Women, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the first Black women’s suffrage association, the Alpha Suffrage Club. Remembered as one of the most lauded civil rights advocates of the 19th and 20th centuries, Wells-Barnett is an American hero. Ida B. Wells-Barnett will foster a lasting message of determination, valor, and tolerance among all students and staff.

Today we received [Superintendent Guerrero’s approval](#) to present our recommendation to the PPS School Board on January 26th. We are looking forward to sharing information on how our renaming process aligned with district [guidelines](#), how we solicited and processed community input, and why we ultimately decided that Ida B. Wells-Barnett is the most appropriate person to name our school after.

We want to thank all of you who participated in and helped guide this historic process. Please [see some of the community comments](#) that we received in appreciation of our new eponym, Ida B. Wells-Barnett.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Wilson High School Renaming Committee:

Ayesha Coning, Vice Principal

Filip Hristić, Principal

Hui Hui Hutchinson, Junior

Liliana McClain, Junior

Noreena McCleave, Alumni

Jonel Mondero, Junior

Aslan Newson, Junior
Martin Osborne, Community Representative
Nura Salah, Junior
Senya Scott, Junior
Mia Sedory, Senior
Katisyn Sweeney, Junior
Deborah Walsh, Parent Representative
Ellen Whatmore, Teacher Representative
Zachariah Winterspring, Teacher Representative