



## **Benson Polytechnic High School Modernization**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

October 2021

The Benson Polytechnic High School Modernization project was made possible thanks to the support of Portland voters and through significant public engagement with staff, students, alumni, and community members.

#### **Why is Benson Polytechnic getting a modernization?**

More than 100 years after the school was originally built, Benson Tech's full modernization renovates this historically significant school creating a healthy, resilient and modern environment for learning. The fully modernized school will deliver highly efficient building systems; sustainable, clean and maintainable interior finishes; bright and healthy classrooms, shops and public spaces: and be fully accessible (ADA) and compliant with all applicable building and safety codes. It will also be flexible, functional and focused on educational needs that support student achievement while accommodating desired community activities.

#### **What are the highlights of the new design?**

- A historically significant, universally accessible main entry with an enclosed vestibule.
- New 2-story wings featuring Career Technical Education (CTE) and core academic learning spaces.
- A centrally located student commons/cafeteria connected to an internal courtyard that serves as the heart of the new school.
- Student flex areas for collaboration, small group work and social interaction.
- Benson's KBPS radio station, tower and building will be updated.

#### **What happens to Benson Polytechnic school during Construction?**

Because of the size and scope of construction, Benson Polytechnic is closed during the three-year construction period. The entire Benson Polytechnic community, staff and students have relocated to other sites during the construction period.

#### **Where will Benson Tech & Multiple Pathways to Graduation (MPG) schools & programs relocate to during construction?**

To increase safety and project efficiency, all students and staff have been relocated during construction: Benson staff and students have moved to the Marshall campus on SE 91st Avenue. Alliance High School, Reconnection and DART/Clinton have moved to the Kenton campus. Portland Evening & Summer Scholars are operating at Grant High School. PISA services (for newcomers to the District) has relocated to both Roosevelt and Leodis V. McDaniel (formerly Madison) High Schools starting this school year.

#### **Why was Marshall High selected as the temporary home for Benson Polytechnic?**

During prior modernization projects, Franklin, Grant and McDaniel (formerly Madison) all relocated to the previously closed Marshall Campus during their 2 year construction periods. Due to Benson's CTE focus option program and 3 year construction period, additional shop space has been added to the Marshall Campus to support and enable Benson's CTE educational programs Funding from the 2012 & 2017 Bond Programs was specifically allocated to upgrade the Marshall Campus.

### **How long will Benson Polytechnic students be at the Marshall Campus?**

Benson Polytechnic High School staff and students will be at Marshall High School for the 2021-22 school year until the end of 2023-24 school year. Students are expected to return to the fully modernized Benson Polytechnic High School at the beginning of the 2024-25 school year in fall of 2024.

### **How are Benson Polytechnic students getting to the Marshall Campus?**

Like Madison/McDaniel students before them, Benson students will have a variety of transportation options to reach the Marshall campus at 3905 SE 91st Ave. As part of a PPS transportation study, the Benson attendance boundary was divided into two zones, GREEN and RED, to determine how students would use different transportation options to get to the Marshall Campus.

Students who live within the Roosevelt, Jefferson, McDaniel (formerly Madison), Lincoln and Ida B. Wells (formerly Wilson) clusters will be served by yellow school buses. Students in the Cleveland and Franklin cluster and most of the Grant cluster will use TriMet buses and/or MAX transportation or their own personal transportation. To learn about your student's options and view a map showing the transportation zones please

[View the Transportation to Marshall Family Advisory](#) | [Español](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [Русский](#) | [Soomaali](#) | [中文](#)

**Also, please visit the Transportation Department website for any information on COVID related impacts at <https://www.pps.net/Page/115>**

### **How is the bus driver shortage impacting transportation to Marshall?**

PPS is experiencing an ongoing shortage of licensed bus drivers. As a result, we have had, and will continue to have, some routes that have had to be canceled and others that have seen pick-up or drop-off times altered. We acknowledge that this shortage is having a significant impact on our community's ability to get to and from school. We thank our parents, families and students for their grace and patience as we navigate this challenging situation. For more details, please see these recent communications to families: [Sept 17](#), [Sept 9](#).

For Benson and Lincoln families impacted by the cancellation of 13 bus routes, PPS is offering a \$300 monthly stipend to help support alternative modes of transportation to and from school. Here is a link to our Family Transportation Support webpage with more details: <https://www.pps.net/Page/18193>

### **How will students use TriMet to get to the Marshall Campus?**

All Benson Polytechnic students are eligible for a free Portland Public Schools High School Student Transit Pass. The MAX Green line offers a very direct and efficient option to reach the temporary campus. To learn more about MAX and bus routes for your trip to the Marshall Campus check out the TriMet schedule page: <http://trimet.org/schedules/index.htm> or, if you're looking for the right TriMet app for your mobile device, go here: <http://trimet.org/apps/index.htm> The Student Transit Pass program is a partnership among TriMet, PPS and the City of Portland.

### **Will buses be provided for some evening and extracurricular activities?**

The Student Transportation Department is working with Benson's administration to provide limited bus service to certain neighborhoods after the conclusion of activities and sports in the evenings.

### **Why would some school buildings be modernized rather than replaced?**

The decision to fully modernize or completely replace a school building depends on its age, historic significance, condition, deficiencies and size and programmatic space needs. PPS has many historic

neighborhood schools. Historic buildings are being rehabilitated through the School Building Improvement Bond in a way that is consistent with the building's historical designations and building components, while providing up-to-date teaching and learning environments and more durable, sustainable finishes. Teachers, staff and families are involved in planning to help preserve the unique aspects of each school and its integration into the surrounding community. In addition, Benson Polytechnic High School is a designated Portland Historic Landmark, which required Portland Historic Landmark Commission Design Review and Approval.

### **What is the impact of construction on the surrounding neighborhood?**

To learn more about the impacts of construction on the Benson site please [View the Benson Construction Impact fact sheet](#)

### **How did community members, students, teachers and families have input on the new design?**

Benson Polytechnic High School was designed through extensive community engagement processes that included obtaining input from district, teachers and school staff stakeholders, the Benson Polytechnic Master Planning Committee (MPC) and Design Advisory Group (DAG) as well as students, families, neighbors, and service providers.

Although the school district has common educational goals, specifications and design guidelines, Benson Tech is a CTE focus option school with unique educational program needs. Portland evening and summer scholars are also included in the Benson Tech design planning.

A Design Advisory Group (DAG) was formed for the Benson Polytechnic High School modernization project. The Design Advisory Group consisted of parents, teachers, students, alumni, and the community. The DAG was engaged in the design phases providing feedback to the design team while representing a wide range of stakeholders.

In addition to the DAG, teachers, District operations staff, Benson school staff and community partners were a targeted resource for the design process. They provided unique insights since they know both the operations of the school and the opportunities that exist for improvement.

### **How did project outreach offer community members an opportunity for input?**

In addition to the public master planning design workshops at Benson Tech, there were regular visitors to both Master Planning Committee (MPC) and DAG meetings. Public comment was accepted verbally and written comments were included in the meeting notes. The design and project team also attended and presented at the annual Benson Tech Shows during design, gathering comments and feedback during these all school open houses, which typically see hundreds of community members, parents, visitors and alumni each night.

### **Who are the Design and Construction Teams?**

[Bassetti Architects](#) is the architecture firm selected for the modernization of Benson Polytechnic High School. Since 1947, Bassetti Architects has designed places where people learn, work, play, and connect. They believe that architecture is most successful when it reflects client goals and thoughtfully interacts with the surroundings. The firm approach is to share their creative synergy and to join with clients and the community in a truly inclusive process with a commitment to excellence.

[Andersen Construction](#) is a Portland based, family owned general contractor that was founded in 1950. The company has grown steadily over the past 70 years, building many Portland landmarks including

the OHSU Knight Cancer Research Building , Grant High School and the (renovated) St. Vincent Hospital patient tower. The Andersen Construction Foundation is an active philanthropic partner with many local community give back programs.

### **Benson Modernization Project Summary**

Construction has begun to fully modernize Benson Polytechnic. The remodel will include a seismic retrofit of historically significant buildings and complete health and safety upgrades. A few of the design highlights include updated Career and Technical Education(CTE) learning spaces and shops, a centrally located student commons/cafeteria connected to an internal courtyard, and remodels of the gym and auditorium. [Click here to view the latest architectural drawings of the new school.](#)

### **Benson Modernization Project Summary**

The entire campus is designed with sustainability in mind; many elements will be reused, over 40 new trees will be planted, and a solar energy array will provide at least 400 kilowatts of renewable energy. This modernized campus will continue to inspire and engage future generations of diverse Portland students.

[Click here to view the new project info-flyer.](#) | [Español](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [Русский](#) | [Soomaali](#) | [中文](#)

[To see an animated fly through of the modernized campus, click here](#)

### **Multiple Pathways to Graduation (MPG) Building Summary**

The modernization process includes the construction of a new Multiple Pathways to Graduation (MPG) building on the Benson parking lot. It will house Alliance at Benson and Meek, DART/Clinton, Teen Parent Childcare & office, Reconnection Services & Program. Construction will start in 2022 and the new facilities will open in the fall of 2024. For more information please visit the [MPG Building at Benson website](#).

### **How do I learn more about the project?**

For additional project information and ongoing Benson updates visit the [Benson Tech Modernization webpage](#). If you have additional questions or would like to join the Benson project mailing list, please contact the Office of School Modernization at [schoolmodernization@pps.net](mailto:schoolmodernization@pps.net).