



**Jefferson High School Modernization
Frequently Asked Questions
FALL 2022**

The Jefferson High School Modernization project was made possible thanks to the support of Portland voters and community members who helped to pass the 2020 School Improvement Bond.

What is currently happening with the Modernization project?

The comprehensive planning process for the modernization of the historic Jefferson High School Middle College for Advanced Studies is now underway. Comprehensive planning is the first step in determining the shape of the new school. PPS is seeking input from the Jefferson community about the design through the citizen-led Jefferson Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) and through upcoming Town Halls and Public Design Workshops. For more information about future meeting dates, please visit:

<https://www.pps.net/JeffersonBond>

What work has been done so far?

In late 2019, after a series of public meetings over a four-month period, a [Jefferson High School Conceptual Comprehensive Plan](#) was completed as part of the planning effort for the 2020 Bond. This conceptual plan will be used as the starting point for the new Jefferson Modernization Comprehensive Plan, but the new Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) will not be restricted by those earlier plans.

What is the project timeline?

A Jefferson Comprehensive Planning Committee was formed in the spring of 2022 and began work with the design team on the Comprehensive planning of the new school. That work is expected to last for several months. In addition, several public design workshops will be held to allow the greater community an opportunity to weigh in on the design process as it develops. After a Comprehensive plan is finalized, the project moves into design followed by construction starting in 2024.

How do I learn more about the project?

For more information and the latest updates visit the project website:

<https://www.pps.net/JeffersonBond> Please join the Jefferson project mailing list at JHSBond@pps.net

How will the project offer community members an opportunity for input?

PPS is seeking a diverse range of engaged citizens who can positively contribute to the process of creating a next generation high school in your community. The Jefferson Comprehensive Planning Committee (MPC) will include students, parents, teachers, alumni, administrators, PPS staff, partners, community representatives and a school board member. They will be involved in developing the Comprehensive plan for a modernized Jefferson High School.

For those unable to join the MPC, they will still have opportunities to participate in a Jefferson Public Design Workshop and Open Houses and attend Town Hall Meetings during the planning process.

Throughout this process you are talking to many different people. How are decisions about the school's design actually made?

The high school modernization process includes many people and factors that influence it, including engagement through the CPC, District stakeholders, school & community partners, PPS educational & design guidelines, site & neighborhood context, and City land use & building code requirements. At the same time, while community & District stakeholders will advise the project team on the school design, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Board of Education to approve the final comprehensive plan as part of the high school modernization process.

What is being done to get Student input from kids that attend the school in the future? What are you doing to get Student comments or involvement?

Our engagement team began connecting with current and future Jefferson students during the 2022 summer break, and has continued the work now that students are back in school. We have also set up tables at Jefferson to speak with students over lunch breaks. Throughout the fall/winter of 2022, we will be leading in-class and after school workshops with the Leadership class, Latino Network, SEI/SUN, Design class, and student clubs.

Working with current Jefferson students is important for our team because it helps us understand how young people are experiencing the school as it currently is, including what kinds of spaces and programs they find successful, what they would like to see change, and what they believe is missing that would support their social, cultural, and academic growth.

We will also continue to create opportunities for engagement with middle schoolers in the coming months to understand their visions and concerns about their future high school experience.

Are you meeting with the Jefferson Teachers and Administrators?

Yes, as the process moves forward the design team will meet regularly with Jefferson teachers and administrators. Additionally, there are Jefferson teachers on the CPC and all staff and students are encouraged to attend the Town Halls and Design Workshop.

Will people who are commenting on the design have an opportunity to see the other modernized schools?

Yes, CPC members will be touring recently modernized schools as part of this process.

Why are some school buildings modernized while others are 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 and equally important, how the community feels about it.

PPS has many historic neighborhood schools. Other PPS historic high school buildings (Benson, Franklin, Grant, McDaniel and Roosevelt) have been modernized and rehabilitated through the Bond Program 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.

Other schools chose to completely rebuild (Faubion, Kellogg, Lincoln). The rebuild process allows for a more program-specific solution to be developed, often with a more space efficient layout on the site for both building and field components. Like the modernization process, the rebuild process provides up-to-date learning environments, while also allowing for materials from the prior historic building to be repurposed in the new building.

Where will the Jefferson students go during construction?

The project team is prioritizing keeping students on site, but away from construction, during the construction phase in order to foster continuity of Jefferson programs such as the Middle College, performing and visual arts, and community partnerships. A more detailed review of opportunities and constraints for this option and others will occur during the Comprehensive planning process.

What is the timeline for construction and reopening the new Jefferson. What kids currently in Elementary will be there first to attend? What are the details of the schedule?

The timeline for the Jefferson project includes the start of construction in 2024 and reopening of a portion of the school in 2026, with final site & building construction to be completed over the following year or two, depending on the final modernization or rebuild option selected. The first students to attend the reopened school will be current (2022-23 school year) 5th grade elementary students.

What is being done to change the school's name? Many members of the community would like to change the name to something they can feel better about.

There is a PPS process for changing the name of a school. It is a separate process than what is happening through the modernization effort but the two will have an influence on each other.

During the August 24 Town Hall, Dani Ledezma, Sr. Advisor RESJ, spoke about the renaming process as part of that meeting's agenda (see video at <https://youtu.be/ik57e7Dy9r0>). During that meeting, she discussed the District's policy and administrative directive around the renaming process, which focuses on student experience around school identity (see more information at <https://www.pps.net/Page/15710>).

In addition, here is a link to the PPS Racial Equity & Social Justice department that manages the name changing process. <https://www.pps.net/Page/95>

Recognizing there is a strong interest in changing the school's name, are you still going to call it the Jefferson Modernization Project?

Yes, for the time being the name will remain the same.

Will the new school be designed to be safe in an earthquake?

All modernized and rebuilt schools are designed to meet or exceed current seismic safety code and will be built to withstand a major earthquake. The Jefferson Modernization was specifically funded in the 2020 Bond to be designed as a school & community emergency center for immediate access after an earthquake.

Tell us how Sustainability is considered in the design? Will the new building provide greater resilience for students and staff as the climate changes?

*Sustainable design is embedded in the new PPS Climate Justice Policy, including overall emissions reductions, energy efficiency and solar PV on new buildings. The new, energy efficient building will be able to stay cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter with much less energy used, providing greater resilience for students and staff as the climate changes. The Design team has developed a presentation about sustainability options and ideas for a new Jefferson and information can be found here: [JHS Sustainability/Climate Presentation 9-14-22](#)
[JHS Sustainability/Climate Meeting Minutes 9-14-22](#)*

Jefferson is now a magnet school. Will it be rebuilt to be a comprehensive high school and how will it change the program into a neighborhood school?

Jefferson HS will remain a magnet/focus option school. Comprehensive Educational Specifications are in reference to how the physical spaces are allocated in a school program (classrooms, admin spaces, CTE spaces, etc.) The specifications can be found here:

www.pps.net/cms/lib8/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/58/PPS_Comp_HS_Ed_Spec_V_2.pdf

What is the budget for the Jefferson High School modernization project?

The budget for the Jefferson High School Modernization project is \$311 million.

Are all high school modernizations on comparable budgets?

During the 2019 Conceptual Master Planning process, the three final high schools to be modernized, Jefferson, Cleveland & Ida B Wells, went through a community engagement and planning process to determine the overall scope and budget for these schools. All of the budgets for these schools were prepared with the same assumptions and historical cost data.

What is the status of the Center for Black Student Excellence (CBSE) and how will it relate to the Jefferson project?

The CBSE is currently working on community engagement to help define educational strategies and physical facility improvements to support those strategies. That work may help inform Comprehensive planning and design for the Jefferson project, depending on final outcomes of the CBSE Comprehensive plan. [For more information please visit the CBSE website](#)

Could you share more information on the plans to potentially include a new Tubman middle school on the Jefferson property in conjunction with the Jefferson Modernization project.

Both of these projects are important to the community but they are on separate tracks and very distinct timelines. The idea of placing a new Harriet Tubman Middle School on the Jefferson campus is one of several options but no decisions have been made at this time.

PPS is planning a series of meetings in the coming months with the communities involved. After those engagement sessions take place, a decision on Tubman's placement would be made by the PPS School Board in the spring of 2023.

Below is a link to the (9-22-22) BOE Facilities & Operations Committee meeting and at time stamp 1:32:02 staff and Board members talk about the Tubman project:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1DZ3hXX5OSw>

Why was Jefferson chosen to be last in the order of school modernizations?

Jefferson will not be the last high school modernization completed by PPS. With the first PPS Improvement Bond in 2012 Roosevelt, Franklin, and Grant were selected to be modernized. In May 2017 Bond, Benson, Lincoln and McDaniel (formerly Madison) were selected. That same 2017 Bond funded basic Conceptual Master Planning for Jefferson, Cleveland and Ida B Wells (formerly Wilson) to establish budgets for inclusion on the 2020 Bond. On the November 2020 Bond, only Jefferson High was included for full design and construction funding. Cleveland and Ida B Wells were not funded for construction but received funding for Comprehensive planning and design. A future bond would be needed to fund the construction of those two remaining high schools.