



Updates on the Jefferson Modernization Project

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Dear Jefferson High School & Jefferson Cluster Families,

We want to share the latest updates on the Jefferson modernization project related to upcoming construction and its impact on the community. Based on community preferences gathered through an extensive engagement effort, the Jefferson Project Team has been designing a modernized school that preserves the historic four-story 1909 building and integrates new buildings and facilities around it. Honoring the community's preferences to preserve and fully upgrade the historic 1909 building was at the heart of the ongoing work.

The project team was also making every effort to keep the school community on site during the four-year construction process that would last from 2024 to 2028. However, it has now become clear that to safely keep students and staff on the Jefferson site, and move them around as the phased construction progressed, was going to be prohibitively expensive, take an extra year, and is impractical.

Students and staff will now need to move off site during construction

In light of the most recent cost estimates, the only realistic option is to move the entire school community to a new site during construction, as we have done during several other modernization projects. This will reduce both project costs (bringing it closer to the original budget) and the time needed for construction, so a newly modernized Jefferson can now reopen in the fall of 2027. Moving students off-site during construction is not an outcome we had hoped for or anticipated. We know this news will be especially concerning to every community member who engaged with us in the modernization process over the last year and heard commitments from PPS about keeping students on campus.

Why are we figuring this out now?

As Jefferson's design progressed over several months, cost estimates were being compiled. At the same time, we were in the process of engaging a general contractor. The selected general contractor brought a level of expertise which revealed that, due to structural and safety requirements, the cost of keeping students on campus would greatly exceed earlier estimates. As soon as we learned the extent of the additional costs, in June 2023, we convened a working group including community members to look at what we needed to do to bring the project back to the budget. That work over the last several weeks has made it clear we would need to move students off-site during construction.

Jefferson swing site options

Our priority now is to create the best experience for all within this new set of circumstances. The project team, working with Jefferson's administration and the Office of Teaching & Learning, recently completed a detailed review of available schools and facilities to determine the best site to temporarily house the Jefferson school community. The location of the swing site needed to take into consideration the complexities of the PCC Middle College program, community partnerships including SEI and Latino Network, the Jefferson Dancers, Career Technical Education (CTE), athletics, and other important aspects of Jefferson.

The three best options were:

- **Sharing the PCC Cascade Campus**
- **Kenton in N. Portland (small elementary school)**
- **The Marshall Campus in SE Portland**

PCC would have been the closest option and is already familiar to many Jefferson students. Unfortunately, it is not permitted to be used exclusively as a high school, according to City of Portland zoning. Changing this could take years, so it is not a realistic option.

Kenton, although it is close to Jefferson, is a former elementary school and is too small to fit the needs of Jefferson students, staff and partners. It could only meet the general education classroom needs and lacks the spaces needed to support robust programming for high school science, visual arts, dance and CTE for Jefferson's full student body. Kenton also does not have the required space available for athletic programming; therefore all athletics would have to move elsewhere.

The Marshall Campus is the best option

The remaining option is to move to the former Marshall High School campus. Marshall has served as the temporary home for Franklin, Grant, McDaniel and Benson during their construction periods. It has been significantly upgraded and has all of the facilities Jefferson students will need.

The Marshall Campus will provide:

- All of the spaces for a full high school academic and athletic program, including general education classrooms, science classrooms, visual and performing arts classrooms including ceramics, dance, choir, band, and theater, a large auditorium, kitchen, library, cafeteria and administration space.
- Gymnasium and athletic fields for full athletic programming, including football, soccer, track & field, cross country, baseball, wrestling, volleyball, basketball and

cheerleading. The seating capacity at the stadium is over 1,500, which is larger than Jefferson's current capacity and consistent with other PPS high schools.

- A newly constructed CTE construction shop that will allow for the growth of Jefferson's new Construction CTE program and provide access to a MakerSpace.
- Space for existing partners at Jefferson, including Indian Education, SEI, SUN, Latino Network, and the Student Health Clinic.
- Space for child care, which is currently unavailable at Jefferson.
- Updates to support Jefferson needs, such as dance studios.

The downside to Marshall is the distance and commute times involved in getting to and from the school.

With these many considerations in mind, PPS has made the difficult decision to move forward with the Marshall Campus as the temporary home of the Demos from the fall of 2024 until the new school reopens in the fall of 2027. We recognize the logistical and cultural impacts this move away from the historic Albina area will have on the Jeff community and are committed to supporting students and families in every way possible during this transition.

Transportation options will be provided to the Marshall Campus

Although many details still need to be worked out, Jefferson students will be provided transportation to and from the Marshall campus during their time there. PPS has extensive experience transporting students from other neighborhoods to the campus over the last 8 years, and we will be able to fully accommodate Jefferson students as well. Transportation to after-school activities at SEI also will be provided.

The PCC Middle College partnership will continue at Marshall

We are in conversation now with PCC to determine the best way to integrate the Middle College program under these new circumstances. We are committed to continuing students' access to PCC courses and experiences at Marshall.

Support for Students Impacted by Jefferson Modernization Temporary Relocation

We realize this is not what the community was expecting and that some families chose to attend Jefferson based on the assumption that the school would remain on site during construction. We ask that families and students with concerns about the relocation talk with a Jefferson administrator directly. Our hope is that these conversations will help us identify any additional support we can offer Jefferson students to be successful on the Marshall campus.

More details available at the Aug 23rd community meeting

Principal Shelton and the Office of School Modernization will be hosting a meeting at the school on **Wednesday, August 23rd, from 6:00pm - 7:00pm, in the Jefferson library** to directly answer questions and address community concerns about the revised plan.

In the coming days we will be sharing an FAQ with additional details about these changes and the Marshall swing site. If you have questions, please reach out to the Jefferson Modernization team at schoolmodernization@pps.net, or call the School Modernization line at 503-916-3009.

A New Jefferson is coming in 2027

Throughout the next four years, we will work tirelessly to ensure that when Jefferson reopens it will be more than a beautiful, state of the art campus with capacity for a full 1700 students. From the history and culture that is preserved in bricks of the original building, to the stories that are yet to be told by future generations of scholars, athletes, performers, and entrepreneurs, our entire project team is focused on delivering a school that reflects its community as the "School of Champions."

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