



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT

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Date: 01/26/2021

To: Superintendent Guerrero

From: Dani Ledezma, Senior Advisor of Racial Equity and Social Justice
Shanice Brittany Clarke, Director of Community Engagement

CC: Jonathan García, Chief Engagement Officer
Elisa Schorr, Area Senior Director of High Schools
Dr. Shawn Bird, Chief of Schools

Subject: Wilson High School Naming and Defining Places Recommendation

BACKGROUND

At the July 14 Board of Education meeting, Portland Public Schools released a plan that lays out a procedure for updating the Administrative Directive for renaming its buildings and other spaces, with Wilson as a case study in the Naming and Defining Places Process. Utilizing this approach we hope to bring our community along to align our intentions and actions on the issue of renaming school buildings - a balanced approach that centers the voices and experiences of our students, especially Students of Color, and aligns with our racial equity and social justice framework and plan. The Superintendent's charge grounds this work with a focus on positive school climate, adult-student relationships, students' sense of belonging, cultural responsiveness, and student physical and emotional safety

This resolution provides a recommended name change for Wilson High School Ida B. Wells-Barnett High School. The recommendation is the culmination of years of student and community advocacy and an extensive student and community engagement process to reach consensus on the change.

For several years, students, families and staff at Wilson High School advocated for changing the name of Wilson because of the misalignment with our value and commitment to Racial Equity and Social Justice. Amidst a national and local racial reckoning, in the summer of 2020, more than 2,000 students, families and staff signed a petition asking to rename Woodrow Wilson High School. Utilizing the existing administrative directive for renaming, PPS staff from the Community Engagement Department, began supporting the Wilson Principal, students and community as they embarked on the community engagement and renaming process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with Portland Public Schools (PPS) Board Policy 2.20.010-P "Naming School Property," the Board of Education is responsible for the naming of all school district properties.

As the current version of the accompanying administrative directive, **2.20.011-AD** "Procedures for Naming School District Property describes the procedure to consider **"Naming and**

Renaming School facilities, focus options, programs, conversions, mergers, reconfigurations, mascots”, which is a two-part processing warranting a board approved name from a community engagement process, to be followed by a replicated community engagement process for the visual brand identity will be presented to the Superintendent for approval.

Following many years of advocacy, and the protests caused by the murder of George Floyd this spring, a name change process was initiated. In June 2020, an online petition created by students and staff gathered nearly 6000 signatures and comments. The Naming Committee recruitment process took place in the Summer of 2020 to select members for a formal committee. The committee met weekly in an effort to create a non-biased, transparent, and ethical community engagement process to choose a new school name, hearing from over 2,000 students and stakeholders within the high school community.

Task from AD 2.20.011	PPS Action
<p>At the direction of the Superintendent, the Community Engagement Department will establish a timeline for the naming process and will work with the school principal to form a naming committee.</p>	<p>At the July 14 Board of Education meeting, Portland Public Schools released a plan that lays out a procedure for renaming its buildings and other spaces, with Wilson as a case study in the Naming and Defining Places Process.</p>
<p>The committee will be facilitated by a member of the Community Engagement Department and shall include the school principal and representatives from the school’s community including current students, staff (at least one teacher and one classified employee), community partners, alumni, and any other key stakeholders. The Community Engagement Department will work with the principal to determine how representatives are selected for the committee.</p>	<p>In July 2020, the Department of Community Engagement began working with Principal Hristić, in effort to establish a naming committee and timeline. An application process was utilized to identify participants. The Department of Community Engagement provided technical support to the principal and students to facilitate the committee, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal ● Wilson Students and Parents ● Community Members ● Wilson Staff ● Department of Community Engagement
<p>The charge of the committee will be to solicit</p>	<p>The committee collected input from the</p>

<p>input from the greater school community and to make a recommendation to the Superintendent for consideration. This will be a two-part process, to first establish a name, followed by the development of brand identity elements. Both steps will follow the same process.</p>	<p>greater school community in Fall 2020 through committee meetings, surveys, group meeting visits, newsletters, engagement, and cluster-based outreach during Fall and Winter of 2020, making over 1,000 data points from stakeholders across the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Solicit input from the greater school, with the advisement of the Department of Community Engagement ✓ Conduct feedback at parent and community group meetings ✓ Outreach to community partners ✓ Community-based survey ✓ School community newsletters ✓ Clusterwide Outreach ✓ School social media pages
<p>The committee, working with the Community Engagement Department, will notify the staff, students, parents, and community groups of affected schools about the naming process. The committee will ensure a process for all interested parties to provide input. The committee will ensure that the name selected meets the criteria outlined in Board Policy 2.20.020-P. Consideration will be given to the historical background of the name to ensure that it is not associated with activities that are in conflict with the District's mission, goals, and policy of non-discrimination.</p>	<p>With the leadership of Principal Hristić in consultation with the Community Engagement Department, notification of the processes was delivered through newsletters, class visits, school group announcements, and events. The name that was determined, Ida B. Wells-Barnett High School, reinforces a school environment that is transformative, humanizing, and aspirational for every student.</p> <p>August 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wilson Renaming Process Kick-Off <p>September 2020 - January 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wilson Committee Community Engagement Design, and Development of Process Principles

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Online Survey ● Community Listening Sessions ● PTA Meeting Discussions ● School Assembly presentations <p>October 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creation of Website, Video, and Google Form to capture Feedback. ● Themes gathered from community listening sessions, surveys and other engagement effort <p>November 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Created rubric/guiding principles to aid in evaluation of suggestions ● Initiate Call for Nominations ● Community Listening Sessions ● PTA Meeting Discussions ● School Assembly presentations, etc.
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Community support for the name recommendation was determined by a student centered engagement process that aligns with PPS vision, values, RESJ framework and plan, and culturally responsive/sustaining pedagogy. As a result of engagement with over 250 stakeholders, core principles for the new school name were prioritized in the recommendation:

- Justice, Tolerance, and Compassion
- BIMPOC (Black, Indigenous, Mixed/Multiracial, People of Color) Inclusive
- Racial, Educational, and Social Equity
- Righteousness, Justice, and Morality
- Student Success Impact

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / EVALUATION

Formal implementation of name changes will begin in the following academic year. In order to have the name change be reflected officially by the Oregon Department Education, the Board of Education would need to take action by ODE September 15, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACT

After approval, the school and the district will set the timeline for fiscal impacts.

BOARD OPTION/STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the Board approve the recommended action to formally change the school name to Ida B. Wells-Barnett High School. Ida B. Wells-Barnett led the antilynching crusade of the 1890s and later founded several civil rights organizations, including the NAACP, and the first black women’s suffrage association. Wells-Barnett was taught from a young age that an education was important, and that spreading and sharing knowledge was the key to a more tolerant, and just society. The recommendation to rename Wilson High School to Ida B.

Wells-Barnett High School, will foster a lasting message of determination, valor, and tolerance among all students and staff.

After approval, the second component of the process will initiate to develop brand identity elements, as outlined in AD 2.20.011.

As a member of the PPS Executive Leadership Team, I have reviewed this staff report.

_____ *(Initials)*