



# 2020 School Bond Renewal Community Engagement Summary and Overview

## PPS 2020 Bond Renewal Virtual Town Hall

### **Executive Summary**

On Thursday, June 25, 2020, PPS welcomed all community members to join a PPS 2020 Bond Renewal Virtual Town Hall to provide feedback, share their collective discoveries and explore the questions that matter for the future of our city's public school infrastructure.

**167 members of the community RSVP'd to attend this virtual town hall**, sharing their meaningful feedback to the PPS Board of Education as its members collectively considered a bond package referral to Portland voters in November.

### **Breakout Room Overview**

#### **Breakout Room 1: Educational Investments**

*Facilitator: Courtney Westling, Director of Government Relations*

#### Community Feedback Highlights:

- There was a lot of discussion about SPED classrooms, including support for increased funding, but also questions around whether investing more in those classrooms was just supporting contained classrooms vs. moving toward inclusivity in mainstream classrooms.
- Additionally, on the topic of SPED, there was a focus on professional development of teachers to support assisted device use by students.
- General support for technology investments.
- Focus on aligning curriculum and technology budgets since it's not just about books.
- There was also support for prioritizing the Jefferson modernization.
- Toward the end of the third breakout, the conversation shifted to reopening schools.

#### **Breakout Room 2: Health and Safety Projects**

*Facilitator: Shanice Clarke, Director of Community Engagement*

#### Community Feedback Highlights:

- One strong theme across the Health and Safety groups was a value for student voice and engagement in the process. This included prioritizing the modernization of Jefferson.
- An investment in health clinics, wraparound services, or infrastructure that reinforces the social and emotional support of students of color surfaced several times throughout the groups.
- The ADA investment category was named as a modest investment area. Participants also shared a high value for increasing the level of ADA improvements in K-8 schools, recognizing that modernizations will serve the needs of high schools.

### **Breakout Room 3: Modernization and Builds**

*Facilitator: Dan Jung, Chief Operating Office*

Community Feedback Highlights:

- The overwhelming theme and topic of all three sessions was the importance of prioritizing Jefferson's full modernization.
- The second-most common comment was Jefferson as currently envisioned may not be enough, leading to a conversation about "Jefferson plus."
- Other comments included prioritizing accessibility, academics and curriculum, planning for Cleveland and Wison, and utilizing the equity lens.

### **Breakout Room 4: Bond Options**

*Facilitator: Dani Ledezma, Senior Advisor, Racial Equity & Social Justice*

Community Feedback Highlights:

- Community members were overwhelmingly supportive of the largest bond, expressing a desire to see our Racial Equity and Social Justice commitment lived out in the bond renewal through the allocation of full funding for Jefferson.
- Community members expressed a desire to see PPS explore the idea of establishing the PreK-12 Center for Black Excellence, aligned to the Albina Vision.

## **PPS 2020 Bond Renewal Focus Groups**

### **Executive Summary**

To enact on our commitment to creating flexible, future-focused environments where Black, Native, and students of color can thrive, small focus groups were held for additional feedback. Between Monday, July 6th through July 8th, PPS invited Black, Native, multilingual, and diverse students and families to garner further priorities that inform the future of school communities.

**29 students and community members** provided additional thought partnership to the PPS Board of Education that is critical to highlight within 2020 Bond package considerations.

The following community partners and groups supported participation in additional opportunities:

- District Student Council
- Self Enhancement Inc.
- Latino Network
- NAYA
- Coalition of Black Men
- Open School

## **Focus Group Overview**

### **Spanish-Speaking Focus Groups**

#### Highlights:

- Technology and Instructional investments for students was seen as a top priority, especially in light of COVID-19.
- Enhancing campus safety through better security upgrades is a priority for parents who attended.
- Jefferson High School was mentioned by an attendee as needing upgrades and renovation, including the surrounding community (street lighting, sidewalks, etc.).

### **District Student Council**

#### Highlights:

- Strong support in the 3rd bond option, securing the most immediate support for Jefferson High School.
- Students shared that communities have raised a concern about earthquake readiness in schools, and suggest that seismic upgrades could have a larger investment
- Education investments and technology are areas of support, especially in the context of learning during the coronavirus pandemic

### **Black, Native, and Students of Color**

#### Highlights:

- A core theme from this group was also support in the 3rd bond option, recognizing the critical need to modernize Jefferson High School
- "Jeff is a school that everybody knows and it is falling apart, and so many politicians come to Jeff for photos but if you just go past the gym, you will see that there's holes and the school is falling apart, a lot of rodents/mice/mice poop in the school, it unreinforced masonry and so safety plays a huge part in rebuilding Jeff."
- General curriculum investments are important. Students feel a deficit on what they want to learn versus what is taught and would like a general restructure of learning. Coding and videography was expressed as options that should be available to students, and that there is a large inequality impacting students in the district.

### **Black Parents, Elders, and Leaders**

#### Highlights:

- Group participants strongly resonated with the Center for Black Excellence possibility in the bond package, and also showed a strong support for the highest investment possible, option 3.
- Education investments was a primary investment category raised in the group. Improving learning infrastructure was articulated as beneficial for improving literacy, math proficiency, and acquiring culturally-relevant licenses for teaching software
- An additional opportunity to discuss education investments that also reach beyond the bond package was requested, and is even more prevalent during times of coronavirus.