



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: March 18, 2020
FROM: Denise Juneau, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Fred Podesta, Chief Operations Officer
206-252-0636, fhpodesta@seattleschools.org

For Introduction: June 24, 2020

For Action: July 8, 2020

1. TITLE

BEX V: Resolution 2019/20-35 Oppose Landmark Nomination and Designation of Rainier Beach High School

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this action is to approve Resolution 2019/20-35 opposing nomination and designation of Rainier Beach High School as a city landmark. Board approval of this resolution will communicate the School District's position regarding nomination and designation of Rainier Beach High School to the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board adopt Resolution 2019/20-35 opposing nomination and designation of Rainier Beach High School as a city landmark, as attached to the Board action report.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

The Rainier Beach High School replacement project, located at 8815 Seward Park Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118, is funded through the BEX V levy passed by the voters in February 2019. The levy timeline includes that this project will be complete prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year. The project scope contemplated the replacement of the existing school building and the construction of a new building on the 21.5-acre site and received in excess of 73% approval by the voters within the City of Seattle.

The replacement of the Rainier Beach High School was selected as one of the major projects identified for inclusion in the BEX V levy after considering facility condition and receiving no recent significant investment of prior levy funds. Educational and racial equity was also heavily considered in the decision to recommend replacement of the school. Rainier Beach is a neighborhood high school that serves a highly diverse community – 97% students of color, 71% low income, 27% enrolled in English Language Learners program, over 17% with special education needs, and 6% homeless. These demographics resulted in an equity index showing that this school is one that needs additional resources and supports for the students to achieve their best educational

outcomes. Replacing the school will ensure access to high quality facilities and other educational resources as well as creating welcoming environment for students, staff, and the community.

Replacement of the Rainier Beach High School building is strongly supported by the students, families, and staff of the Rainier Beach community who expressed their support in multiple Board and other public meetings during the planning of the BEX V Levy. There is a strong desire to provide a 21st century learning environment for the talented and dedicated students and staff at Rainier Beach High school. A renovation and addition project that would be required if the building is landmarked, rather than a full replacement of the building, would hinder the ability to provide a school that reflects this diverse and committed school community.

Capital Projects and Planning, in coordination with a consultant, self-nominated the Rainier Beach High School as a City Landmark for the purposes of resolving the status of the building early in the project design phase. The building is more than 25 years old and therefore eligible to be nominated.

The Rainier Beach High School Landmark Nomination Report was prepared by The Johnson Partnership and edited by Seattle Public Schools Capital Projects and Planning Department staff and their agents. The nomination report was determined to be complete by the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods in February of 2020 and a nomination hearing is to be scheduled.

If Rainier Beach High School were to be nominated and designated as a city landmark the students, staff, and community will be negatively impacted. The construction project would change from a complete building replacement to a modernization of the existing school and construction of an addition. In researching the feasibility of a modernization/addition project the selected architect determined that while many older school buildings can be remodeled, upgraded, and added-on-to in a way that allows them to meet contemporary functional, pedagogical and technical needs, Rainier Beach High School has some unique issues and challenges that would severely limit the success of a remodel and addition strategy. The architect noted that a modernization/addition project would be a significant compromise for meeting the educational needs of the student population.

b. Alternatives

Do not adopt this resolution. This is not recommended as the City Landmarks Preservation Board should be made aware of the views of the School Board on this decision. Not approving this Board resolution will reduce the strength of the comments from other stakeholders that have been submitted to the Landmarks Preservation Board opposing nomination and designation of Rainier Beach High School as a city landmark.

c. Research

Information used for evaluating the potential impacts of a Landmarks Board nomination and designation of the Rainier Beach High School building was collected from multiple sources:

- Rainier Beach High School Landmark Nomination Report, prepared by The Johnson Partnership, dated December 2019
- School demographics, performance, and enrollment information, available from district departments (Research and Evaluation, Enrollment Planning), and from OSPI
- SPS Research and Evaluation Department Equity tier information
- Program information and community feedback gathered by the Project Manager from School Design Advisory Team (SDAT) and other meetings
- Rainier Beach Landmark Nomination Equity Analysis
- Landmarks Preservation Ordinance and Standards
- The BEX V master plan data for Rainier Beach High School

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

There is no fiscal impact for this action.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

The district’s Racial Equity Analysis toolkit was utilized to guide the planning process for the BEX V Capital Levy, influencing community engagement methods, preparation of the 2018 update to the Facilities Master Plan, and ultimately the final proposed levy package. The Board’s guiding principles stated that racial and educational equity should be an overarching principle for the BEX V Capital Levy planning in accordance with Board Policy 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity. Projects identified for inclusion in the BEX V levy will ultimately improve conditions for all students in the affected schools. Improved building conditions create a better environment for learning and can provide facilities to better position students for academic success.

Additionally, a separate equity analysis was completed to evaluate the impacts of the nomination and designation of the Rainier Beach High School as a city landmark. This analysis showed that landmarking this building would have a negative impact on the students, staff and community.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

It is the goal of the district to continue the process of implementing the BTA and BEX Capital Levy programs and provide students with safe and secure school buildings. Ensuring that Rainier Beach High School receives a new school would greatly benefit the Rainier Beach students.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy No. _____, [TITLE], provides the Board shall approve this item
- Other: _____Board action is required to adopt a resolution_____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

This resolution is in alignment with Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the Operations Committee meeting on June 4, 2020. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward with a recommendation for approval by the full Board.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, copies of this resolution shall promptly be presented to the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution 2019/20-35 (for approval)

Seattle School District No. 1

Board Resolution

Resolution No. 2019/20-35

A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1, King County, Washington opposing nomination and designation of Rainier Beach High School as a city landmark.

WHEREAS, the existing Rainier Beach High School fails to meet any of the six criteria for designation outlined in the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Ordinance SMC 25.12.350. In addition, the school does not possess integrity or the ability to convey its significance; and

WHEREAS, School Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity begins by stating:

“The district shall provide every student with equitable access to a high-quality curriculum, support, **facilities** and other educational resources, even when this means differentiating resource allocation;” and

“The district shall ensure that each school creates a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the diversity of the School District’s student population, their families and communities;” and

WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools set priorities and goals in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan. The plan declares the District’s intent to ensure racial equity in our educational system with an unapologetic focus on students of color who are furthest from educational justice in order to work to undo the legacies of racism in our educational system; and

WHEREAS, studies have found that school facilities have a profound impact on teaching, learning and student outcomes. School facilities affect health, behavior, engagement in learning, and academic achievement. Without adequate facilities and resources, it is difficult to serve many students with high needs; and

WHEREAS, Rainier Beach is one of the few schools in the District with the highest equity measures. It serves 97% students of color, 71% who qualify for free or reduced-priced meals, 27% enrolled in English Language Learner program, over 17% with special education needs, 6% homeless, and nearly 30% students moving in or out of Rainier Beach during the school year. The existing Rainier Beach building not only fails to help students overcome these equity barriers, rather it works against the students with highest needs and furthest from educational justice; and

WHEREAS, Building Excellence V (BEX V) Capital Levy funds major school construction and renovation projects, classroom additions, and building system improvements as well as technology upgrades throughout the District. As part of the BEX V capital levy, Rainier Beach

High School was proposed to be replaced with a new facility that meets the District’s High School Educational Specifications, the latest International Building Code and upcoming City of Seattle seismic requirements. The new school building provides Rainier Beach High School students, staff and community with equitable access to a 21st century learning environment for academic success; and

WHEREAS the voters within the City of Seattle supported passage of the BEX V capital levy in excess of 73% in February 2019.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Seattle School Board of Directors opposes both the nomination and designation of Rainier Beach High School as a city landmark; and therefore, be it further

RESOLVED, that Seattle School Board of Directors requests that the City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board neither nominate nor designate Rainier Beach High School as a city landmark.

ADOPTED July 8, 2020

Director Zachary DeWolf, President

Director Chandra N. Hampson, Vice President

Director Leslie Harris, Member-at-Large

Director Brandon K. Hersey

Director Eden Mack

Director Liza Rankin

Director Lisa Rivera-Smith

ATTEST: _____
Denise Juneau, Superintendent
Secretary, Board of Directors
Seattle School District No. 1
King County, Washington