

School Board Briefing/Proposed Action Report

Informational (no action required by Board) **Action Report** (Board will be required to take action)



DATE: May 5, 2015
FROM: Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Dr. Flip Herndon, Assistant Superintendent Capital Projects and Planning, Facilities Operations and Enrollment Planning; Jon Halfaker, Executive Director of Schools, johalfaker@seattleschools.org,

I. TITLE

Formally change the name of the existing Wilson Pacific school building once it is replaced by a new middle school building as part of the BEX IV construction from Woodrow Wilson School to Robert Eaglestaff Middle School

For Introduction: June 3, 2015
For Action: June 17, 2015

II. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

This action is following the steps defined in Board Policy No. 6970, Naming of School District Buildings, and Board Procedure 6970BP, section 3. Per Board Policy No. 6970, Board approval is required to change the name of a building. Use of the new name will begin immediately upon School Board approval.

III. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

Fiscal Impact: The costs associated with naming the building are included in the BEX IV project costs.

Revenue Source: Capital Eligible from BEX IV
The revenue source for this motion is BEX IV.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Other Source

IV. POLICY IMPLICATION

Policy No. 6970 and Board Procedure 6970BP defines the process to be used when a new building is to be named or an existing building, or portion of a building, is to be renamed. In this case, District staff concluded that the new middle school was replacing an existing middle school building, and as such, section 3 of 6970BP was followed. As the name of Robert Eaglestaff was proposed for consideration in 2013, to then Superintendent José Banda, that name was moved forward during this process as the primary name for consideration. As a sitting school community does not currently exist for this school, input was collected from alternate data streams. These included: the Licton Springs K-8 Building Leadership Team, the K-3 community of students and family members who are designated to attend the new middle school when it opens, the surrounding school community, and a community meeting that included members of the community at large and members of the Native American communities. A final community meeting was held on May 4th to gather input, answer questions, and address concerns regarding the naming process or proposed names. That process confirmed the recommended name that is being put forward.

V. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move the School Board approve the Wilson Pacific Middle School building be renamed Robert Eaglestaff Middle School.

VI. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the Operations Committee meeting on May 21, 2015. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward to the full Board with a recommendation for approval.

VII. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

With the replacement of the existing Wilson Pacific building, community requests to change the building name from Woodrow Wilson School* have triggered this request. As part of BEX IV, the existing Wilson Pacific Middle School and support structures are being removed to allow the construction of two new school buildings and a shared field structure. The middle school/K-8 programs will occupy the new building to be constructed on the current site of the existing Wilson-Pacific (Woodrow Wilson School) building, which is being torn down as part of the project. In 2013, during the initial discussions of the Wilson Pacific project, many members of the community, and especially the Native American community, requested that the building be renamed as part of its opening as a new building. This was a continuation of requests and exchanges between the Native American community and Seattle Schools that goes back to then Superintendent John Stanford. In renewing this request, the Native American community has brought forward two significant reasons for requesting a name change. First, the land on which the school will be built, known as Licton Springs, has a significant place in the culture of the local tribal community. Second, at one point, the Wilson Pacific campus included the District's Native American education programs, which were under the leadership of the late Robert Eaglestaff. It is also of importance to note that the Native American murals that have decorated the outside walls of the Wilson Pacific building are being preserved prior to the construction projects starting, allowing them to be fully integrated into the new campuses at both schools.

* The Shoreline School Board originally named the building in 1953 and Seattle Public Schools annexed the building in 1954.

VIII. STATEMENT OF ISSUE

The decision to rename the building will allow the school and community to open a new chapter on a site that has been unused or neglected for a significant amount of time. The Native American community has been highly vocal about the need to name the building either for a specific person within the Native American community, or to capture something associated with Native American community life. There has been a limited amount of community support to keep the Woodrow Wilson School name originally designated for the building when it first opened as a Shoreline District school. As noted in documents attached, there is mixed support for a number of singular nominated names or locations. There is also limited support for one prior District building name, Dr. Caspar Sharples. This is reflected in documents submitted to Superintendent Nyland and in the notes from the most recent community meeting.

IX. ALTERNATIVES

The alternative to renaming the building is to retain the name Woodrow Wilson School as originally designated for the building when it was first constructed. While there has been some support for this idea, the overwhelming desire, as expressed during the gathering of community input, is to move to a new name.

X. RESEARCH AND DATA SOURCES / BENCHMARKS

District staff are applying Policy No. 6970 and Board Procedure 6970BP, section 3, "School Building Name Change." As part of this proposed change, District staff held community meetings in June 2014 and May 2015 to discuss the naming and nomination process, receive input and feedback, and answer questions. Staff contacted families of K-3 students who attend elementary schools in the new middle school attendance area, members of the greater community, the Licton Springs Community Council, the Native American community and neighbors of the Wilson Pacific site, asking for input and feedback about the possible new names nominated. Staff collected and recorded information: a total of 14 new names were nominated and biographical information was collected on the nominees and comments were received from 190 members of the public.

During the final community meeting held on May 4, 2015, the former wife of Robert Eaglestaff offered both her support and the support of the Eaglestaff family to the naming of the new building after Robert Eaglestaff. Family members of Caspar Sharples also were present at this meeting and offered support for the naming of the building after Caspar Sharples. Of those who spoke at the community meeting, three voiced support for naming the building after Caspar Sharples, while the remaining audience expressed unanimous support for naming the building after Robert Eaglestaff. The District has not contacted the descendants of Woodrow Wilson as he was a famous U.S. President and many schools across the country continue to carry his name.

Jon Halfaker, Executive Director of Schools for the NW region, is serving as the planning principal until the hiring of the actual principal takes place in 2016.

XI. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community input regarding the naming process has been gathered from multiple points. Input from the Native American community initiated this requested change. Email and letters to the school community, the Licton Springs K-8 community, and the K-3 designated feeder schools constituted the bulk of input solicited. Community meetings were held in 2014 and again in May of 2015, at the Lincoln High School auditorium. Per Board Procedure 6970BP, if the change of name is approved, the Superintendent will send a notification of the change to the appropriate offices, locations, and persons.

XII. ATTACHMENTS

- [Superintendent Naming Memo](#)
- [Naming Nominees and Biographies](#)
- [Speakers and comments as captured during May 5, 2015 Community Meeting](#)