

Education & Careers

Remodels of Portland Schools Proposed

continued ▲ from front

The rebuild list includes Cleveland, Jefferson and Roosevelt high schools and five elementary and K-8 schools, Faubion, Laurelhurst, Markham, Marysville and Rigler, with full design for a fourth high school, Lincoln.

The levy would also pay interim updates to classroom learning environments and school facilities, including teaching technology, science labs, outdoor PE and recreation spaces and other classroom improvements; and bring accountability and financial management measures, including paying off capital improvement debt.

"This is the right time to be doing this," said Board Director David

Wynde. "It's an opportunity to invest in our students, it's an opportunity to invest in our schools, and it's an opportunity to invest in our neighborhoods and in our city."

Director Bobbie Regan said that the district's school buildings are wearing out structurally and out-of-date educationally.

"Our buildings aren't keeping up with our needs to provide the best education possible for our students," she said, "... not just so our kids can compete globally, but so they can compete with students from new schools in the suburbs."

The proposed school modernization bond would also include safety, structural and educational improvements at all of the district's schools.

Young Women's Academy Saved

Classes will continue for grades 6-12

Portland schools superintendent Carole Smith has reversed her previous proposal to make the Harriet Tubman Leadership Academy for Young Women a stand-alone middle school program serving just students in grades 6-8.

For the 2011 and 2012 school year, the Young Women's Academy will continue to serve students 6-12 with a science and engineering focus, as a component of Jefferson High School. Officials with the school district believe that keeping the high school intact will have little impact on the strength of the system as a whole.

However, in the future, the board may bring forward a recommendation for change if and when, "the Young Women's Academy has matured to a size and scope that merits a fully initiated school," said school board staff.

In addition, though the school board approved Smith's proposal

to establish a middle college focus program at the Jefferson campus earlier in October, students will have to wait until staff agrees which community comprehensive schools in the surrounding area they would have option to attend as an alternative to Jefferson. Thus, the dual assignment decisions are as of now, postponed.

Also on the agenda, the Portland School Board will vote Nov. 30 on new boundaries for Madison, Franklin and Cleveland high schools, to redirect the community of students from the recent Marshall High school closure into neighboring schools.

The school board will hear from the ad-hoc committee, Student Assignment Program Initiation and Reconfiguration, which will review proposed Marshall-area boundary resolutions for the 2011-2012 school year.

Parents and students at elementary and middle grade schools in the Marshall neighborhood will get a chance to meet with school district staff to discuss the boundary options, as well as have opportunity to give feedback at the end of the month meeting.

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