



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Faubion School Principal Jen McCalley and Concordia Dean of Education Sheryl Reinisch share one of the many spaces inside the new school which fosters and celebrates diversity and community.

# ‘From 3 to PhD’

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students will be interacting with Faubion students on a daily basis.

Retired PPS leader Dr. Harriet Adair, a prominent advocate for the importance of early learning from Portland’s African American community, played an instrumental role in bringing Faubion’s holistic educational approach to fruition.

“It really does take a village to raise a child, and this is that saying in action,” she told the Portland Observer, in describing the new Faubion in a recent interview.

To bring an all-encompassing educational atmosphere to the school, PPS worked extensively with community partners to supply a wide range of vital wraparound services. Students at Faubion will have access to a health clinic operated by Kaiser Permanente, a food club created in partnership with organic grocery store Basics and mental health care provided by Trillium Family Services.

“We even have partnerships with different community organizations that are going to be teaching nutritious cooking for our kids and families that are interested,” McCalley said.

She adds that the school emphasizes the importance of diversity, and is actively working to have minorities represented throughout the school’s teaching and administrative positions.

“The thing I’m most proud of at Faubion is actually the diversity of not only our students but our staff,” said McCalley. “We come from a very diverse part of Portland that has historically been an African American community. With gentrification, that could be something that is shifting, but it’s not.”

Throughout the process of re-imagining Faubion School, Mc-

Calley says that a tremendous amount of community input was weighed and considered. She says that voices from the community shaped the new institution into what it is today.

“It’s a community driven project,” she explained. “I could point to the parent in our school whose idea it was to have the food club.”

Other aspects of the new school’s design and programming were also inspired by the 29 parent meetings that PPS hosted throughout Faubion’s design phase.

“The families have such a deep involvement in the design of the school,” said McCalley. “The health clinic was something families asked for.”

Even the school’s students played a role in the building’s final outcome.

“All 500 students hand wrote letters to the architects about what they wanted,” McCalley said. “We were actually able to implement quite a bit of what they wanted. We did a lot of architectural features to make the building feel welcoming, and safe and inviting.”

Preserving Faubion School’s generational nature has been another important part of the institution’s rebuilding process, McCalley says.

“Grandparents, parents and kids go through this school,” said McCalley. “It’s that kind of a legacy that instills such a deep sense of pride within the community in a local school.”

By recycling parts of the old Faubion School into the new building, McCalley says that PPS has been able to preserve generational continuity for the school’s alumni and their children.

“We had a non-native sequoia tree on campus that had to come down,” said McCalley, “but instead of getting rid of it, we had

it manufactured into benches and tables.”

She adds that by incorporating community voices and involvement throughout the design and construction process, Faubion is a school that everyone in the community can be proud of.

“We want this school to be the heartbeat of the community, and that’s something that we’re really proud of,” McCalley said. “It’s a huge source of pride for our families and for our communities.”




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