



PHOTO BY DANNY PETERSON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER Portland Public Schools wanted to reopen Harriet Tubman Middle School to expand options and build a stronger program to serve more students, especially from the African American community, but those plans are now on hold pending a review of the physical condition of the school and from environmental impacts like air pollution.

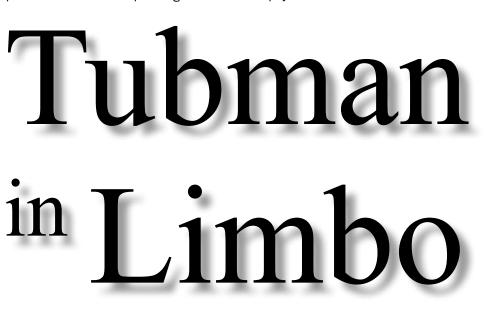
School board wants more study; not sure on re-opening

BY DANNY PETERSON

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Long awaited plans to reopen a middle school with deep ties to the African American community and one that can expand options and build a stronger program to serve more students are once again put in limbo, drawing opposition from community advocates.

The Portland School Board voted last week to defer action on the opening of Harriet Tubman Middle School as part of



a plan to bring equal access and quality academic programs to schools across the district.

Board members indicated they wanted more time to study pollution and other environmental safety concerns at the former school site, and also give more attention to proposed boundary changes that would impact several east side schools that feed students into the Grant and Madison High School attendance areas.

The district will now conduct safety tests to evaluate potential pollutants and toxins both inside and outside of the Tubman school site, located at 2231 N. Flint Ave., items such as lead, radon, asbestos,