

PPS ES & MS Capacity Planning



December 12, 2023

Planning Background

- Our community is growing (more than 1,100 new residential units planned)
- Future PPS students need appropriate school facilities, reflecting community values (e.g. inclusive learning environment & flexible, collaborative spaces)
- Current planning conversation began in 2019
 - 2019/20 - community meetings, planner presentations, then COVID (enrollment dips)
 - 2021 - planner recommendations to Board, no action
 - Spring 2023 - Board restarts planning
- Spring 2023, Board directed administration to prioritize elementary and middle school capacity solutions, sufficient for next 5-10 years
 - *“Solution” means sufficient classrooms, specialized spaces (special education, STEM labs and spaces, fine arts and athletics) and core spaces (gymnasium, cafeteria)*
 - *See [princetonk12.org](https://www.princetonk12.org), “Board,” “Future Planning,” for past planning documents.*
<https://www.princetonk12.org/district/planning-our-schools-future>

2023 High-Level Master Planning Considerations

▪ Value-based Planning

- Mission statement
- Prudent stewardship
- Facilities that support Mission/District Goals

▪ Taxpayer Affordability

- What will the community support?
- Princeton's property taxes are high
 - School tax levies = 50% of property taxes
- Taxpayers vote via referendum
- A large majority of taxpayers do not have students enrolled in PPS

▪ Financial Sustainability

- PPS operating budget has a significant imbalance (at least \$500K per year)
- Reason – 2% levy cap; fixed and other costs rising faster
 - Transportation, salaries & benefits, charter school, inflation, etc.
 - Need to find new savings every year
- Solution must consider operating budget impact

▪ Minimize student, staff and family disruption

Princeton's ES & MS Plan Parameters

- Accommodate future enrollment growth at elementary schools & middle school
- Develop financially prudent construction program
- Support cost-effective and financially sustainable facility operations
- Improve transportation (ride times/cost) & walkability
- Maintain DLI at 2 sections/grade through enrollment policy; paired with at least 2 traditional tracks for viable facility use
- Align enrollment with facility capacity for the foreseeable future through redistricting and DLI enrollment policy

Planning Approaches Studied

**Status
Quo – Do Nothing**

Dual Track School

**5-6 School
(PK-4/5-6/7-8/9-12)**

**Sister School
(PK-2/3-5)**

- Four different approaches were evaluated through an iterative process, assessing each one through the following lenses:
 - Educational impact
 - Operational costs
 - Construction costs
 - Enrollment balancing & future growth
 - Community disruption
 - Walkability

ES & MS Plan Status – December 2023

- In October 2023, a dual-track model at CP, with 5 sections/grade was favored approach (“**CP5**”)
- Since then, ES/MS planning has evolved, reflecting further study and input from community & district educators, new architect, and planner
- “**CP5**” vs. “**CP4/LB4**” (Build Where Growth) ES models were further evaluated
- As a result, **the recommended planning “path” is “CP4/LB4” with PMS update/expansion**
 - Expansion/updates at three schools better satisfies planning parameters and balances objectives
 - Approach would be further refined to better define project scope and costs
 - Project details would evolve; recommended “path” would not
 - Joint recommendation of Administration/LTFP Committee

Recommended ES & MS Path

- **Recommended Path: Addition and renovation at CP, LB and PMS**

- New/updated classroom and core spaces
- CP/LB each to support 4 sections/grade, with comparable facilities and enrollment
- CP a dual-track school, with both DLI and traditional sections
- Preserve future opportunity to expand RS and possibly JP

- **Advantages:**

- Support parity of experience and increase school capacity where growth is occurring
- Align enrollment with facility capacity for the foreseeable future through redistricting and DLI enrollment policy
- Improve transportation (ride times/cost) & walkability
- Update three older schools, using existing spaces more effectively for current/future needs
- Support cost-effective and financially sustainable facility operations
- Maintain DLI at 2 sections/grade; paired with 2 traditional tracks for viable facility use

Recommended ES & MS Path

- **Facilities planning is a continuous process**

- The recommended approach aims to address space needs at the elementary and middle school for the foreseeable future (5-7 years)
- If approved by voters in 2024, the projects should be complete, with “students in seats,” by **September of 2027**
- Future Boards will need to continue facilities planning as new data becomes available
- Master planning will impact future planning, but only modestly in foreseeable (5-7 year) timeframe
- Continually assessing capacity in light of enrollment drivers, demographics, housing development and land use policy and initiatives, will ensure school facilities are meeting the needs of the community

“Big Picture” Timeline & Process

Spring - Summer 2023	Fall 2023 -Winter 2024	Spring- Fall 2024	2025-26 to 2026-27	2027-28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Planning Re-Start, building off 2020-21 Master Planning Process • Community Meetings & Conversations • Explore range of planning options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred Option(s) planning refinement, • Feasibility, concept design and estimating, • Enrollment projection update • Schematic design, estimating • Deliver project schematic plans and drawings to Planning Board. • BOE Resolution Authorizing Project • BOE approves process to develop enrollment policy for DLI program. • Submit Project to NJDOE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NJDOE Approvals - Determination of Preliminary Eligible Cost (PEC) & Ed. Specs • BOE adopts Resolution for Bond Referendum • Notice, postings, filings (Local & County) • Fall 2024 Referendum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, Bidding and Construction for approved projects • Fall of 2025, BOE undertakes redistricting process, option development and community outreach. • If swing space planning is needed, it should be in alignment with redistricting or phased redistricting plan • BOE adopts redistricting plan Fall 2026. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redistricting Implementation Planning • Staffing Considerations • Transportation Routing • Mobilization • CP construction fully completed – Dual Track School opens for 2027-28 school year.



*Long Term Facilities Planning Committee - advising on data, technical information, and option development