

# PPS ES & MS Capacity Planning



**Live to Learn, Learn to Live**

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

## Ongoing Community Engagement



Committee\* Process



Workshop & School Community Meetings



Soliciting input



Informational Meetings

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