



**EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65**

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

TO: Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent
CC: District 65 Cabinet Team
FROM: Kirby Callam, Director of Strategic Project Management
DATE: July 15, 2024
RE: Naming of the new school in the Fifth Ward

Objective: X Information Discussion Follow-up Decision

With the construction of the new school in the Fifth Ward beginning this month, District 65 staff have followed Board Policy 4:150 to lead a process to name the new school. Committee members included representation from the community including:

- Ms. JoAnn Avery, Family Focus
- Ms. Vanessa Allen, Family Focus
- Rep. Bobby Burns, 5th Ward Councilmember
- Pastor Ken Cherry, Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center
- Tracy Hubbard, Bessie Rhodes Librarian
- Alanna Williams, 5th Ward Resident
- Charlise Berkel, Bessie Rhodes Principal

Following the Open Meetings Act guidelines, the school name committee met on June 28, 2024 to review the following:

- results from the 5th Ward Amplifying Voices survey that was administered in 2023 and included a question asking for school name suggestions,
- feedback provided by the Foster Senior Club from a September 2023 meeting, where more than 50 members reviewed survey outcomes and prioritized the four following names:
 - i. 5th Ward Foster School
 - ii. Foster School
 - iii. New Foster School
 - iv. 5th Ward School
- survey results from Ms. JoAnn's class of 3rd - 5th graders at Family Focus (54 students), who voted on a school name and a name for the school mascot,
- survey results from the 5th Ward and Bessie Rhodes School Community Name Survey, which was administered in May 2024 and had 189 respondents.

After review of the survey results, the Committee nominated “Foster School” as the name for the new school planned to be opened in the Fifth Ward in the fall of 2026. Foster School is also intended as a verb to signify the importance of promoting the growth and encouraging the development of our students, such as fostering a community of learners and leaders, and fostering collaboration and joy.

The committee also supported the naming of the school mascot as the Phoenix, in its singular and plural form. Lastly, Tracy Hubbard noted the importance of keeping the legacy of Dr. Bessie Rhodes alive by honoring her in the new school as she was a foundational leader in Evanston and District 65, helping to build the former Timber Ridge and current Dr. Bessie Rhodes school into an important and successful school. She was also a well-respected long-time teacher in District 65, which included time in the former Foster School building.