



New High School Update

Board Meeting | August 27, 2026

Heather Tow-Yick, Superintendent
Jacqueline Downey, Chief of Schools, Leadership & Learning
Julia Bamba, Principal on Special Assignment

Purpose

- Review current decisions
- Preview the year ahead and highlight key milestones
- Provide an overview for communications plan

Pathways & Enrollment

Who Can Attend, Fall 2027

Engineering & Robotics - Grades 9–11 - Full-time or part-time	Entrepreneurship - Grades 9–11 - Full-time or part-time	Health Sciences (pilot pathway) - Grade 11: full-time or part-time - Grade 12: part-time only
Full-Time vs. Part-Time - Part-time students remain enrolled at, and graduate from, their home high school - Full-time students graduate from the New High School — the first class is the Class of 2029	Clubs, Activities & Athletics - All students participate in clubs, activities, and athletics at their home high school - Some clubs and activities will also form at the New High School once the first school year begins	

First Graduating Class: Class of 2029 — students who attend full-time starting in 11th grade in Fall 2027

The Year Ahead

Timeline to Opening, Fall 2027

	August – October 2026	November 2026 – March 2027	April – May 2027	June – August 2027
Core Team	Design the student journey: vision & mission, day in the life, pathway progressions, dual credit & college partner opportunities	Design curriculum: interdisciplinary, team teaching, CTE frameworks written and submitted for approval	Design learning and assessment: competencies, portfolios, transfer options, Portrait of a Graduate implementation	Design opening: final staffing complete; new staff training and onboarding Student and family engagement
Advisory Team	Core Advisory Team selected: students, families, community members and industry partners Advisory Team participates in Community event	Advisory Team provides input and insight on the student experience and curriculum design. Pathway partnership outreach & collaboration	Advisory Team provides input and insight on learning and assessment design Pathway partnership outreach & collaboration continues	Advisory shifts to opening-year support and guidance
Operational	School naming and branding process with community input and Board vote Technology integration designed	Construction continues, staffing preparation, transportation routes planned Special Services planning (IEP, MLL, 504)	Opening logistics planned: daily schedules, transportation, staffing, food services	Building prepares for opening; schedules and transportation shared with students and families, systems implemented, safety plans finalized
Engagement & Enrollment	Community event held in October Middle school visits City and Community Organization meetings Digital Advertising begins Meet the core team reels	Student recruitment and enrollment continues Students invited to tour new school site in Feb/March Digital Advertising and pop-up info sessions	Enrollment confirmed; School community building begins	Founding student and family welcome events, onboarding and engagement

Key Upcoming Milestones

Fall 2026

- Aug 31 – September 13 — New High School Advisory Team - Applications Open**
We are inviting students of all grade levels, Issaquah School District Alumni, family members, community members, and industry partners to apply for the New High School Advisory Team. This advisory team will meet monthly throughout the design process to provide feedback, review plans, and represent the voices of students, families, and the broader community. Members will meet monthly through June 2027, with a few additional opportunities to engage in community events and design work.
- Week of September 21 — Advisory Team Announced**
- October 6— First Advisory Team Meeting 5:00-7:00 PM**
- September 28 – October 14 — School Name, Mascot & Color Recommendations from community**
Submit recommendations through an online submission process on the new high school website.
- October 21 — Community Engagement Event — Pickering Barn — 5:30-7:30 PM**
Open to the Issaquah community: students, families, community members, and interested industry partners. Attendees will experience an inspiring and interactive exploration of the future of education in the Issaquah School District. This event is open to all ages. Attendees can meet the core team of teachers, vote on colors and mascot; high school students can apply to the new school; and much more.
- November 12 — Board Selects Name, Mascot & Colors**
Furniture and equipment orders are also finalized this month.

Dates reflect current planning and are subject to change.

Overview of Communications Plan

Positioning

Build awareness, understanding and enrollment for the new high school opening in Fall 2027 by helping students and families navigate the district's varied high school experiences and choose the learning environment that best aligns with their interests, strengths and future aspirations. Communications efforts will prioritize current ISD students and families while supporting high school capacity needs, expanding learning opportunities and promoting equitable access to enrollment information.

Tactics

Phase I Awareness

- Launch High School Experiences Campaign
- Introduce the Core Team, Pathways & School Vision
- Engage the Community in School Naming & Branding
- Promote Future Events, Info-sessions & Tours
- Generate Interest Through Storytelling, Social Media & Podcast Content
- Increase Visibility Through Direct Marketing, Signage, Search, Geotargeting & Digital Advertising

Phase II Exploration

- Showcase Pathways Through Student, Staff & Industry Stories
- Host Community Events, Family Learning Sessions & Webinars
- Conduct Middle School Visits & Feeder Pattern Outreach
- Expand Industry & Community Partner Engagement
- Offer Guided Tours & Interactive Learning Experiences
- Help Students Compare High School Options & Experiences

Phase III Enrollment

- Launch Enrollment Marketing & Recruitment Campaign
- Support Applications Through Workshops, Webinars & Office Hours
- Highlight Transportation, Access & Student Supports
- Reach Multilingual Families & Traditionally Underserved Students
- Use Targeted Advertising, Retargeting & Direct Outreach
- Promote Student and Family Testimonials & Success Stories

Phase IV Onboarding

- Welcome Accepted Students & Families
- Build Founding Class Identity & School Traditions
- Connect Students to Pathways, Partners & Opportunities
- Launch Student Ambassador & Peer Connection Programs
- Share Opening Milestones, Construction Progress & School Culture
- Prepare Students and Families for the Transition

Phase V Opening

- Deliver Orientation, Schedules & Readiness Information
- Celebrate the Founding Class, Staff & Community Partners
- Launch Opening Countdown & Media Relations Campaign
- Host Community Preview, Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting Events
- Share First-Day and Early Success Stories
- Establish Ongoing Engagement & Advocacy Efforts

Discussion and Questions