

Revised Strategy for School Naming Decisions

At the Saturday, June 12 Board of Education Leadership and Development Session, Board of Education members outlined a clear desire to review the names of each CMSD school/property to better understand the history of the particular name, any potential concerns the name may present from a historical/cultural/equity perspective, and to make sound decisions regarding any future decisions about naming, renaming, or denaming a school/property. Board members also expressed a concern that a transparent, inclusive process be used but that it also be an efficient process that will guide the Board and community through the school naming discussions in a fairly short period of time. There was some additional support for a process that could be repeated in some form of regular cycle of review in future years as well. As a result, I am proposing the following strategy and suggested timeline to review the current names of CMSD schools/properties and to determine which, if any, of those names should be reconsidered.

At the Saturday, September 12, Board of Education Leadership and Development Session, the Board of Education members further clarified the criteria the Board is willing to consider when considering the naming, renaming, or denaming of a school/property and the process for doing so, as outlined below.

Step 1 (*completed July-August 2021*) – CEO to form an ad hoc work group to complete two discrete tasks: review available policies and research to present a proposed set of criteria for determining whether a school name is an appropriate representation of the district's values and therefore worthy of being the name of a CMSD school; and, creating a short biographical sketch of each current school/facility name that attempts to present an unbiased, fact-based narrative as to why the school/facility was named as it is, and if named after a person, any significant contributions the named individual has made to the nation, state, or local community, how and why the general public would hold the named person in high respect, and how the named person embodies exemplary qualities that can serve as a model of excellence. The biography should also identify any concerns about the named individual that would bring question to his/her accomplishments, community respect or role as a model of excellence. The ad hoc work group's membership could include a board representative, district staff, district students, community members, researchers or scholars with appropriate expertise, and members who can provide a sense of local and community history. This ad hoc work group would be charged with completing the model criteria and individual biographical sketches and presenting their findings to the Board at the August 24, 2021 Board Business Meeting.

Step 2 (*completed September 10-11, 2021*) – The CEO will organize a Board Leadership and Development Session to occur prior to the September 21, 2021 Board Business Meeting at which Board members will deliberate on which, if any, of CMSD's school names need to be considered for renaming.

Revised Step 3 – At the September 21, 2021 Board Business Meeting, the Board will adopt a resolution approving the school/facility naming criteria as presented from the summer 2021 ad hoc work group and amended by the Board of Education at the Board's September Leadership and Development Session and directing the administration to reconvene the ad hoc working group to review the names of existing CMSD schools/facilities that are named after persons to provide the Board with a list of schools which should be immediately reviewed for consideration of renaming for presentation to the Board of Education at the November 2021 Board Work Session.

Revised Strategy for School Naming Decisions

New Step 4 – At the November 2021 Board Business Meeting, the Board will consider the recommendations of the ad hoc committee and will adopt a resolution identifying the schools/facilities whose names the Board are directing the administration to review.

Revised Step 5 – The CEO will use a period of approximately 30-60 days to gather community feedback in the manner described in Board Policy FF related to each school identified by the Board and will present the feedback and recommendations to the Board of Education no later than the February 2022 Board Work Session, allowing each recommended name to be discussed at a public Board Work Session prior to being formally voted on at the February 2022 Board Business Meeting, as is required by Board Policy FF. For each school/facility identified, the CEO will identify a diverse steering committee representative of students, parents, educators, members of the surrounding community, and appropriate local leaders to lead a broad community input process, thoroughly review and summarize the community input, and make a recommendation back to the CEO and Board of Education.

Revised Step 6 – Any newly adopted name changes will be formally implemented in the 2022-23 school year. Upon Board approval, the administration will begin the process of fully reflagging each school's name change, including all signage associated with that school's name, for the 2022-23 school year.

While the process outlined above establishes a suggested timeline, as is the case with any effective community engagement process, the Board and administration should be flexible in the implementation to ensure a high quality, fully engaging process even if it means adjusting the timeline to effectively do so.