

CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

THE **CMSD**
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School Naming Initiative: Louis Agassiz

Summary
March 2022

Executive Summary

- Four weekly meetings were held from February 2 through February 23.
 - Meetings were held in-person at the school as well as live-streamed for any virtual attendees.
- A total of 23 name suggestions were collected from the school community.
 - Brief explanations of rationale were also collected.
- The community was invited to express their preference by ranking their most preferred names.
- The most preferred names are:
 - Neil Armstrong
 - Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
 - Mary Church Terrell
- The following pages describe the process, the suggested names, and the final rankings in more detail.

We have been working on this initiative since July 2021

Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
1. Work Group Develops Criteria, Bios		2. Board Approves Criteria	3. Work Group Finalizes List of Schools to be Further Reviewed		4. Board Approves List		5a. Collect and Synthesize Public Input & Feedback		5b. Board Approves New Names

School Naming Criteria (1 of 2)

- The following school naming criteria were approved by the Board of Education at the Sep. 21 Board Business Meeting and are intended to provide guidance to community members and community committees whose input is solicited regarding the name of specific Cleveland Metropolitan School District school buildings or facilities in accordance with Board Policy FF (Naming District Buildings).
 - General School/Facility Naming Criteria
 - The Board desires school/facility names that will build community over generations.
 - The Board will consider school/facility names of neighborhoods, geographical or geological features, floral and fauna (wildlife), that represent general features of the area around the school as well as the names of persons.
 - The Board wishes to avoid school/facility names that will likely present pronunciation challenges for students, families, or members of the school community.

School Naming Criteria (2 of 2)

- School/Facility Naming Criteria related to the names of people
 - The Board will consider the names of persons who have been deceased for a minimum of five (5) years and whose biography has been thoroughly and adequately researched by a trained public historian/historical consultant.
 - The Board will consider the names of persons who are recognized by the general public and widely respected, who embody exemplary qualities that can serve as models of excellence, and who have made significant contributions to our nation, state or local community, with a preference for persons whose contributions were specific to Cleveland and/or the Cleveland Municipal School District.
 - While the Board is happy to accept financial gifts as part of the school naming process, no school/facility will be named after an individual/entity solely for the purpose of accepting a financial gift. In general, names that are considered in conjunction with a proposed financial gift should only be considered for a specific portion of a building (e.g., gymnasium, library) and not the entire school/facility itself.
 - The Board will consider the names of religious leaders as long as the individual's contributions extend beyond religious actions.
 - The Board will not consider the names of persons who have a documented history of enslaving other humans, or have actively participating in the institution of slavery, systemic racism, the oppression (the inequitable use of authority, law, or physical force to prevent others from being free or equal) of people of color, women, or other minority groups, or who have been a member of a supremacist organization.

The Board approved seven schools for renaming

No Add'l Review Needed (32)

- A. J. Rickoff
- Abraham Lincoln
- Alfred Benesch
- Amasa Stone
(Stonebrook)
- Anton Grdina
- Benjamin O. Davis
- Charles A. Mooney
- Clara Westropp
- Daniel E. Morgan
- Garrett Morgan
- George Washington
Carver
- Hannah Gibbons
- Harvey Rice
- Jane Addams
- John Adams
- John Hay
- John F. Kennedy
- Joseph Gallagher
- Kenneth Clement
- Louisa May Alcott
- Marion C. Seltzer
- Mary M. Bethune
- Michael R. White
- Nathan Hale
- Newton D. Baker
- O. H. Perry
- Robert H. Jamison
- Robinson G. Jones
- Whitney M. Young
- Wilbur Wright
- William Cullen
Bryant
- William Rainey
Harper

Possible Add'l Review Needed (11)

- Adlai Stevenson
- Artemus Ward
- Ben Franklin
- Charles Dickens
- Douglas MacArthur
- Franklin D. Roosevelt
- Garfield
- Ginn
- Mary B. Martin
- Max Hayes
- Paul Dunbar

Definite Add'l Review Needed (7)

- **A. B. Hart**
- **James Ford Rhodes**
- **John Marshall**
- **Louis Agassiz***
- **Luis Munoz Marin**
- **Patrick Henry****
- **Thomas Jefferson**

Schools to be prioritized for renaming during this phase

Schools to be considered for renaming at a later date

* Also see Cleveland City Council Resolution No. 625-2020

** Also see Cleveland City Council Resolution No. 554-2020

Each school was taken through an identical process

- Meeting #1
 - Provide high level overview of initiative, timeline, naming criteria, brief biography, rationale for name change, and meeting timeline
 - Share process for submitting new names
 - Collect new submissions
- Meeting #2
 - Summarize submissions received to date
 - Share process for providing input on submitted names
 - Collect ranked input and any new submissions
- Meeting #3
 - Summarize last week's rankings
 - Summarize submissions received to date
 - Collect ranked input and any new submissions
- Meeting #4
 - Summarize last week's rankings
 - Summarize submissions received to date
 - Collect ranked input
 - Discuss next steps
- Online access to submission and input forms also provided

Each school's process was undertaken concurrently

Jan. 24	Jan. 31	Feb. 7	Feb. 14	Feb. 21	Feb. 28	Mar. 7	Mar. 14	Mar. 21	Mar. 28
	Agassiz: Mtg. 1 (W)	Agassiz: Mtg. 2 (W)	Agassiz: Mtg. 3 (W)	Agassiz: Mtg. 4 (W)	Louis Agassiz: Online Form(s) Open				
		T.J. : Mtg. 1 (TH)	T.J. : Mtg. 2 (TH)	T.J. : Mtg. 3 (TH)					
			Hart: Mtg. 1 (TU)	Hart: Mtg. 2 (TU)	Hart: Mtg. 3 (TU)	Hart: Mtg. 4 (TU)	A.B. Hart: Online Form(s) Open		
					Henry: Mtg. 1 (W)	Henry: Mtg. 2 (W)	Henry: Mtg. 3 (W)	Henry: Mtg. 4 (W)	Patrick Henry: Online Form(s) Open

April:

Historian to Research Proposed Names

Compile Input Summary for Board

5b. Board Approves New Names



Who was Louis Agassiz?

- The following brief biography was provided to the working team who ultimately recommended a name change:
 - Louis Agassiz (1807-1873) was a Swiss biologist and geologist who contributed to the fields of zoology and geology and founded the study of glaciology. Agassiz resisted accepting Charles Darwin's theory of evolution even after it was generally accepted by the scientific community. Agassiz also subscribed to the theory of polygenism, a belief that human races had different origins and were genetically distinct. To support this theory, Agassiz used racist reasoning and argued that non-white races were inferior to whites. Agassiz's theories were often used by slaveholders and white supremacists to defend their beliefs. While a professor at Harvard University (1847-73), Agassiz tried to prevent Jewish and Irish students from enrolling.
 - Race and gender identity: white, male

What was the rationale for renaming this school?

- The committee reviewed the biography and discussed his actions and behaviors in light of the recently approved naming criteria on October 14, 2021.
- The committee felt that Louis Agassiz used racist reasoning and argued that non-whites were inferior to whites.
- In addition, Cleveland City Council resolution no. 625-2020 urges CMSD to consider the renaming of Louis Agassiz.
- The committee unanimously agreed to place the name of Louis Agassiz in the strongest category possible for consideration of a new name.

What names were proposed?

- Louis Stokes
- Arnold Pinckney
- Benjamin Wade
- George Washington Williams
- Niagara
- Larry Doby
- Bosworth Elementary
- Einstein Academy
- Jesse Owens
- Abraham Lincoln
- Harriet (Tubman) Academy
- Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
- Mary Church Terrell
- Langston Hughes School
- Bruce Lee
- Halloran
- Robert Lockwood, Jr.
- Neil Armstrong
- John Patterson Green
- Jean Murrell Capers
- Linda Eastman
- John D. Rockefeller
- Carl B. Stokes

How feedback was submitted on proposed names

- A digital Ranking Form was available on our web site.
- A link to the digital form was posted into the Zoom chat for any virtual attendees.
- Paper forms were made available during the meetings.
 - Attendees could scan the QR code on the paper form with their phones and access the digital form to complete.
 - Alternatively, they could complete the paper form and turn it in to a District representative.

Before you begin *
[It is important that you review the District's updated school naming criteria.](#)
Please click here to acknowledge that you have read and understand these criteria.

Name

Email *

Role *
Select or enter value

Top Choice *

- Arnold Pinkney
- Benjamin Wade
- George Washington Williams
- John Patterson Green
- Stephanie Tubbs Jones
- Fannie Lewis

Second Choice *

- Arnold Pinkney
- Benjamin Wade
- George Washington Williams
- John Patterson Green
- Stephanie Tubbs Jones
- Fannie Lewis

Third Choice *

- Arnold Pinkney

Illustrative Example

What were the final rankings?

- Last week, you ranked 23 total submissions:

Proposed Name	Ranked First (3 pts)	Ranked Second (2 pts)	Ranked Third (1 pt)	Score (Total pts)
Neil Armstrong	26	1	0	80
Frances Ellen Watkins Harper	3	1	2	13
Mary Church Terrell	1	4	1	12
Linda Eastman	3	0	1	10
Jesse Owens	1	2	0	7
Bosworth Elementary	2	0	1	7
Halloran	0	2	1	5
Jean Murrell Capers	1	1	0	5
Langston Hughes School	0	0	4	4
Louis Stokes	1	0	0	3
George Washington Williams	1	0	0	3
Harriet (Tubman) Academy	0	1	0	2
Niagara	0	0	2	2
Benjamin Wade	0	1	0	2
John Patterson Green	0	1	0	2
Larry Doby	0	0	1	1
Einstein Academy	0	0	1	1
Arnold Pinkney	0	0	0	0
Abraham Lincoln	0	0	0	0
Bruce Lee	0	0	0	0
Robert Lockwood Jr.	0	0	0	0
John D. Rockefeller	0	0	0	0
Carl B. Stokes	0	0	0	0

Most Preferred
Names

Where can this be found on the web site?

- You can continue to check our progress at <https://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/renaming>

▼
Louis Agassiz

Louis Agassiz (1807-1873) was a Swiss biologist and geologist who contributed to the fields of zoology and geology and founded the study of glaciology. Agassiz resisted accepting Charles Darwin's theory of evolution even after it was generally accepted by the scientific community. Agassiz also subscribed to the theory of polygenism, a belief that human races had different origins and were genetically distinct. To support this theory, Agassiz used racist reasoning and argued that non-white races were inferior to whites. Agassiz's theories were often used by slaveholders and white supremacists to defend their beliefs. While a professor at Harvard University (1847-73), Agassiz tried to prevent Jewish and Irish students from enrolling.

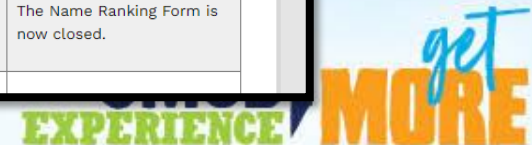
Race and gender identity: white, male

Patrick Henry >

Thomas Jefferson International Newcomers Academy >

Community Meeting Dates

School	Remaining Meetings	Meeting Time	Meeting Link	Online Suggestion
			Meeting Recordings	Rationale Ranking Form
Louis Agassiz 3595 Bosworth Rd.	Video of past meetings are listed under meeting recordings. Meetings are arranged by date, with the most recent at the bottom of the list. Click the meeting date to watch/listen to the meeting and view slide decks.		Core Team Meeting Feb. 9 Meeting Feb. 16 Meeting Feb. 23 Meeting	The Suggestion Form is now closed. Public-submitted rationales for suggested names The Name Ranking Form is now closed.
	Video of past meetings are			



Next Steps

- A professional historian will be hired to research the most preferred names.
- The summary of preferences along with the historian's biographies/notes will be provided to the Board in April/May for their review.
- Please note: the Board of Education makes the final decision on which name shall be chosen!
- Once the Board has approved a new name, an internal team will work to ensure that all physical, print, and digital references to the name are updated in time for the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

**Thank You Again
for Your Participation!**