

2023-2024 Facility Updates & Plan

Dear PACS Paterson Community,

We have reason to be hopeful. Our community is excited about the progress that we have made to secure a permanent modern facility that will provide necessary spaces for teaching and learning, staff productivity, extracurricular activities, and community gatherings to service our school at full scale. **Our future home will be located at 102-124 Madison Ave, Paterson, NJ 07524 in North Paterson.**

The space, once constructed, will feature bright classrooms, full gymnasium, a performance stage, multiple play areas, a courtyard, and a rooftop garden. The new facility will boast approximately 65,000 square feet internally and 100 parking spaces. Recently, the construction team completed steel framing and protective barriers. Many students have taken and shared exciting pictures of the facility being built as they ride the construction site.

As famously quoted by Frederick Douglass, “there is no progress without struggle”. To get this far, together we have overcome many obstacles. Due to delays in closing on the land where the building is being built, to accessing permits to begin construction, and receiving necessary supplies and equipment to complete the projects, we have been met with and have overcome delays. As discussed during several public board meetings, staff meetings, in passing since the Fall, and most recently in my New Year Letter to our community, **we are now expecting our new building to be available in March of 2024.**

Given the delay, our team has worked to identify temporary locations for the 2023-2024 school year that will house Kindergarten to seventh grade students and staff. Finding adequate temporary facilities has not been an easy task because of the little supply of spaces in our densely populated city of Paterson. However, with the support of our Board and community members, **we have secured three facilities leases that will serve as temporary school buildings for our students in grades K-2, grades 3-5, and grades 6-7. Most importantly, we are now able to keep ALL students and families in Paterson and prevent the need for students and families to travel outside of Paterson!**

Each grade-level's location and timeline for using the temporary facilities in the 2023-2024 school year are shown below:

Grade K-2 students will temporarily remain at 47 State St. Paterson NJ, 07501

Grade 3-5 students will temporarily relocate to 159 Madison St. Paterson NJ, 07501

Grade 6-7 students will temporarily relocate to 59 Spruce St. Paterson NJ, 07501

Transportation For 2023-2024 School Year: Families that are two (2) miles or less from the school location are responsible for the transportation of their child to and from school. Bussing is not provided.

Bussing to the school location in Paterson will be provided to families that are located more than two (2) from their child's school location as shown above. We have coordinated with the Paterson bussing service to ensure that bussing for these locations are scheduled for the next school year. Bussing transportation for families of students in grades 6-7 that are more than two (2) miles away from the temporary school location will also be provided by Paterson's bussing service. We are extremely grateful to provide these services to our families.

Estimated Timeline for Temporary Space: Currently, the use of temporary space as described above may vary. Our lease for State St. runs from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, while the leases for Madison St, (Grade 3-5) and Spruce St. (Grade 6-7), run from July 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024 with month-to-month options after March 31, 2024. This provides our school with flexibility and security as we await our new facility to open and students and staff to move in. Please see the anticipated timelines to transition from our temporary facility to the new facility (based on construction completion in December 2023):

- By March 31, 2024: Grade 3-7 students, Administration, and Back Office Staff move to new building
- By July 1, 2024: Grade K-2 students & staff moves to new building

Classroom and Class Sizes: Each temporary building provides adequate classrooms, multiple-purpose space, and/or a gymnasium. We do anticipate reducing sections in grades 3-6 from 4 sections to three and grade 7 from 3 sections to 2. This will allow for more effective use of our temporary spaces while providing quality experiences. While classroom sizes will increase, our staffing model for the 2023-2024 school year will increase from 100 staff members to 112+. This will ensure that the student-to-teacher and staff ratios in the upper-grades remain the same. Particularly in our middle school, each class section will have a support staff throughout the day.

What Remains the Same: While there will be anticipated changes, multiple moves, and adjustments needed next school year as we wait for our new building to open and students to move in, we know learning will not be impacted. **Our building is not our school and our school is not our building. Our students, staff, parents, and**

community members are our school. I have personally received encouraging messages over the months as we plan for the opening of our new building. I want to thank each and every person that remains understanding, optimistic, and ready for the next chapter of PACS Paterson's journey.

Onward,

Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Dwayne Davis