



September 26, 2023

Dear Parents, Students, and Community Members,

We want to share important updates to the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute building renovation project since our last communication in March.

Over the past few months, City Schools' leadership team has met with several members of the Poly community including alumni, parents, and community members to discuss concerns regarding funding, swing space location, the project timeline, as well as the overall decision-making process throughout design phase. The key questions that were asked during those meetings are included in the Q&A at the end of this letter. Those meetings also included meetings with the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) who will be managing the Poly/Western project. Via this letter we would like to bring the larger school community up to date on the project.

In August 2023, City Schools secured approval from the IAC for our proposal to revise the current building plan from a *full modernization* to a *renovation*. This change means that we will be able to maintain elements of the building that are important to the Poly community. The full footprint of the structure will remain, eliminating the need to demolish the annex and narrow the hallways, allowing the facility to retain its band room, plaques, shared swimming pool and auditorium, while significantly improving the building.

This revised plan allows for consideration of additional swing options. *Swing Space* refers to a temporary school building, used while renovations are being carried out. In the feasibility study that is currently being updated, three options are currently under consideration for relocating the school community during construction:

1. **Full Swing:** Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and Western High School would both temporarily relocate off-site during construction for approximately 3-4 years. Western High School would swing to the Chinquapin building and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute would swing to the Northwestern building. Both schools would return to their fully renovated buildings once construction is complete.
2. **Single School Swing:** One of the high schools would remain on campus, utilizing available existing spaces, while one high school would swing off-site to the Northwestern building during construction for the duration of the project, approximately 3-4 years. Both schools would return to their fully renovated buildings once construction is completed.
3. **Alternating Swing:** Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and Western High School would swap locations during construction. This would mean one school relocates temporarily, while the other school stays on campus. Once the initial school's building is completed, they would return to their newly renovated building. The other school that stayed on campus would then temporarily relocate for the duration of construction. Northwestern would be the off-site swing location for the project. The total project timeline would be 4-6 years.

By the end of October, City Schools will share the feasibility studies and the final swing decision. In making its decision, City Schools district leadership, in consultation with school leadership, will take into account critical factors such as:

- minimizing disruption to students during the construction process,
- optimizing spending to best meet the needs of each school,
- reviewing the swing options that provide the greatest ability to meet the programmatic needs of each school, and
- considering the total costs of each option.

Once the feasibility studies are complete, we will move into the design phase and choose an architectural firm for the renovation. We will seek broad input during this phase. School communities will be invited to view draft designs, provide direct feedback, and ask questions to the designers. A project update meeting is being planned in late fall for community members, families, and students. If you have any questions or would like to provide feedback, please reach out to Ivy McNeill, Senior Program Coordinator for Community Engagement & Public Relations, IDMcNeill01@bcps.k12.md.us. To learn more about the project visit baltimore21stcenturyschools.org.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Smith, PE, PMP, ALEP
Executive Director – Facilities Planning, Design, and Construction
21st Century School Buildings Program

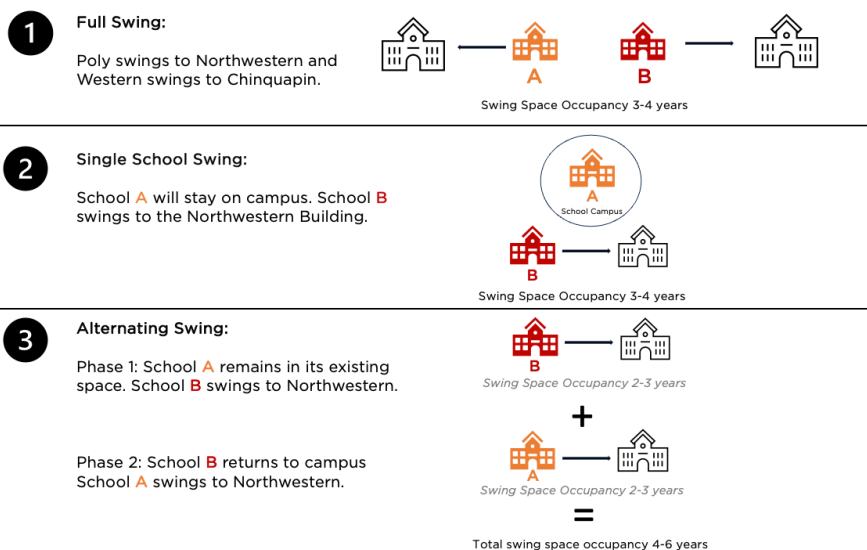


QUESTION & ANSWER

Q: What are the options for the school communities during construction?

A: In the feasibility study that is currently being updated, three options are being considered:

- 1. Full Swing:** Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and Western High School would both temporarily relocate off-site during construction for approximately 3-4 years. Western High School would swing to the Chinquapin building and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute would swing to the Northwestern building. Both schools would return to their fully renovated buildings once construction is complete.
- 2. Single School Swing:** One of the high schools would remain on campus, utilizing available existing spaces, while one high school would swing off-site to the Northwestern building during construction for the duration of the project, approximately 3-4 years. Both schools would return to their fully renovated buildings once construction is completed.
- 3. Alternating Swing:** Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and Western High School would swap locations during construction. This would mean one school relocates temporarily, while the other school stays on campus. Once the initial school's building is completed, they would return to their newly renovated building. The other school that stayed on campus would then temporarily relocate for the duration of construction. Northwestern would be the off-site swing location for the project. The total project timeline would be 4-6 years.



Q: What does this project mean to MSA?

A: This project is of the highest priority to MSA, just as the other 30 projects that MSA has managed for City Schools. MSA manages the feasibility study, design process, construction and warranty periods. City Schools manages the academic program, ed specs and the community/stakeholder engagement. City Schools also chose the study option to use for the design.

It is an important, multifaceted project that aims to put student safety first, minimize disruption and bring the project to completion on schedule and within budget. The feasibility study for the renovation option should be completed by the end of September for review by City Schools staff and for presentation to the stakeholders, alumni and the community by the end of October.

City Schools will consider critical factors such as minimizing disruption to students during the construction process and maximizing spending to best meet the needs of each school. The swing options that provide the greatest ability to meet the programmatic needs of each school and the total costs of each option will determine the best options for swing. MSA will manage the implementation of the chosen plan.

Q: Who is the Project Manager?

A: Skanska is providing advice during the update of the feasibility study. The design architect and construction project manager will be selected through competitive processes following the feasibility study.

Q: What was the original cost estimate? At first it was a full modernization and now it's a renovation in place with the new feasibility study. Poly would like to see a side-by-side analysis and the break down to how MSA/City Schools came up with the renovation recommendation.

A: A cost estimate analysis of the options will be a part of the updated feasibility study, and the study information will be shared with both Poly and Western communities. City Schools' leadership will make the decision regarding the option for the swing space plan based on consideration of critical factors such as:

- minimizing disruption to students during the construction process,
- optimizing spending to best meet the needs of each school,
- reviewing the swing options that provide the greatest ability to meet the programmatic needs of each school, and
- considering the total costs of each option.

Q: Can a mechanical package be put together sooner?

A: An early release package will happen during design and/or the first year out. We will not start until an architectural design team is selected.

Q: Will we still swing Fall 2025?

A: At this time, the current schedule has Poly swinging in the summer of 2025. However, investigating new swing options that could allow for a school to stay on site has extended the feasibility study. There are potentially timing implications based on any of the options that could impact the timing of when Western and Poly swing.

Q: Any modular/trailer considerations?

A: The cost for modulars/trailers for the entire complex is prohibitive, however we may consider adding some for small groups if a school remains on site during construction.

Q: Baltimore Polytechnic Institute does not work to have some classes in the school and some out, it is not appropriate. We are concerned about the damage if all students cannot stay engaged together.

A: There are no considerations for Baltimore Polytechnic Institute or Western High School breaking up or splitting grades. All students attending either Poly or Western will swing together.

Q: On June 21st Baltimore Polytechnic Institute met with Western High School and Western indicated that do not mind swinging. Are City Schools aware?

A: No such sentiment has been communicated to City Schools and City Schools' leadership will make the decision on the swing space plan based on consideration of critical factors such as minimizing disruption to students during the construction process, maximizing spending to best meet the needs of each school.

Q: Will transportation, labs, and athletics be considered for the cost factor for swing?

A: Yes, planning for lab spaces and athletics will be included in the costs for the swing considerations. Some of the transportation elements will still need to be developed as we go through the swing planning process.

Q: The Poly community requested time to review the reports and have the time to digest before the next meeting.

A: By the end of October, City Schools will share the feasibility studies with the Poly and Western communities. At that same that time, City Schools leadership will make a determination and communicate to the two school communities which of the three options will be implemented based on the swing options that provide the greatest ability to meet the programmatic needs of each school and total costs of each option.

Q: How will you ensure the swing spaces can support teaching and learning? How is the budget for swing space determined?

A: After swing spaces are selected and the Design phase has begun, the project team will prepare the swing spaces' infrastructure for each school's specific programming (Ex. CTE labs, computer labs, etc.). The goal is to create spaces comparable to the existing facilities taking into consideration the academic programming, so that there is minimal to no disruption. The swing space renovation budget is determined during the planning of the swing space.

Q: What will transportation for students look like?

A: Similar to other middle and high schools that have swung successfully, students who already use MTA will continue to use MTA services. Students who received specialized transportation due to an IEP or approved status will continue to receive those services as long as they continue to be eligible.

Q: How will children be protected if staying later for after school activities?

A: Student safety is a priority in every space where students are located. City Schools Police, school leadership, and the Central Office team will work together to ensure students are safe and schools are equipped with safety plans under whichever swing space plan is selected.

Q: Will historic elements of the building be preserved like the dedicated memorial spaces inside and outside the building?

A: Yes, during the Design phase building elements can be identified for repurposing. The City Schools team will make every effort to preserve elements valued by the school.

Q: The athletic facilities, particularly the track and fields, need improvements, bathrooms, bleachers, improved access, is that a part of the 21st century budget?

A: The athletic fields and facilities are not a part of the renovation plan. There have been recent investments to the fields by community partners, and City Schools will continue to welcome conversation with external partnerships about any additional investments the community would like to make.

Q: Where can we find information on this project?

A: All feasibility presentations are available on the program website under [High School Feasibility Studies](#). All meetings will be posted on our website calendar as well as on our social media accounts. If you register to attend a meeting, you will automatically be included in our listserv for meeting reminders and announcements. To reach a member of the engagement team, please reference the contact slide from any of the presentations or reach out to 21stCenturyBuildings@bcps.k12.md.us.

Q: What will engagement look like moving forward?

A: Community feedback is important to this process. The most engagement for this project happens in the next two phases, Pre-Design and Design. However, the engagement team is available and will continue to have touch points throughout the process.

	SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM	FAMILIES	STUDENTS	COMMUNITY
PRE DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus Groups ✓ Monthly Check Ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus Groups ✓ Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus Groups ✓ Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus Groups ✓ Meetings ✓ Participation in Community Led Meetings
DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Surveys ✓ Monthly Check Ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Surveys ✓ Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Internships ✓ Design Challenge ✓ Lunch & Learn w/ AE ✓ Love Our Schools Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Surveys ✓ Meetings
CONSTRUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monthly Check Ins ✓ Tours* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Update Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Internships ✓ Love Our Schools Initiative ✓ Lego Build Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Update Meetings
OCCUPANCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Grand Opening ✓ Monthly Check Ins ✓ Onsite Transition Liaison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Grand Opening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Grand Opening ✓ Post Occupancy Tour Guides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Grand Opening

*Tours will be limited to specific groups based on capacity and construction restrictions.

The first graphic to the left details the major steps within each phase and when community or school input is collected or shared. All community input and feedback are welcomed; however, to be considered it must meet the Educational Specifications, which will be made available before the Design phase, and [City Schools' Design Standards](#).



The second graphic on the left goes further into detail about when and how the engagement team will connect with each stakeholder throughout the process. These are sample engagement activities and subject to changed based on external factors.

To learn more about the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute renovation project history visit: baltimore21stcenturyschools.org

