

West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle School Design *Contingent Upon Funding*

The Academic Model

The West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle School was designed in response to a call from the Superintendent, to all PPSD staff, for creative school proposals aligned with Next Generation Learning Challenge's 7 design principals. This proposal was selected from over 30 proposals submitted to the Superintendent for consideration in fall 2013. This school model is designed with the needs of PPSD's diverse student body in mind and addresses each of the seven design principles for breakthrough schools.

Student Centered

At the heart of West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle School's student centered approach is a strong advisory program that will promote student ownership and connections with families. Student advisors will communicate regularly with families regarding student grades, well being, and upcoming school activities. Advisors will regularly assess student needs and provide referrals to academic supports such as tutoring and mentoring, as needed. Students will spend several days in advisory at the start of each school year to build relationships and community, and set high expectations for success throughout the year. Strong student-advisor connections will also promote regular attendance.

High Expectations

West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle School students will be held to the highest academic and behavioral expectations. Instruction will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards, and all students will participate in challenging course work, including the expectation to be prepared to take algebra in grade 8. Intervention classes in reading, writing, and math will be offered for students in need of extra assistance, and mandatory homework help and Saturday school will be available for students in need. These supports are in place to ensure that all students reach proficiency in each of the standards. Failing students that demonstrate content mastery through after school or Saturday support will have their grade changed to reflect their progress. This practice underscores the school's focus on content mastery for success and grade promotion using a standards-based grading system.

Self-Pacing and Mastery-Based Credit *and* Blended Instruction

West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle will integrate technology into lessons and instruction to implement a blended-learning and master-based progression model. Technology will be used to support students that need extra help, and to accelerate students who are ready to move at a faster pace. As student success in middle school math is critical in determining post-secondary and career options, math achievement will receive particular emphasis. In middle school, students must be able to transition from addition, subtraction, and multiplication to the more abstract math of expressions and equations. Students will be self-paced and progress only when they have mastered content areas.

Accelerated 7th grade students will have the opportunity to move to an 8th grade math class if they show mastery and are ready for algebra. At grade 8, those accelerated students will use the ala-carte, or self-blend, model to take a "virtual" 9th grade math class and receive high school credit. These accelerated students will also continue to participate in the 8th grade algebra class's warm-up activity to reinforce their skills and to stay connected to their classmates, before moving to their "virtual" class each day. Accelerated students will also be placed in an advisory led by the 8th grade math teacher, to better monitor their work and stay connected to instructors.

While blended learning and mastery-based progression will be intensified in math class, we plan to offer these tools to students across all content areas. We anticipate developing additional methods to integrate blended instruction and master-based credit into our model, and we expect to leverage the knowledge of other schools and community organizations to fine-tune this approach. A substantial portion of planning time and planning resources will be focused on this aspect of our model. Planning activities will include meetings with area charter schools, such as Blackstone Valley Prep and the Highlander Institute, and nonprofit organizations that are using the blended learning approach.

Internal District knowledge will also be leveraged to support this model, with an emphasis on Pleasant View Elementary School and their 2012 school redesign to a blended learning environment. Pleasant View Students use technology to spend 50% of their time on personalized learning. They rotate on and off computers, SMART board stations, iPads, and hands-on centers, during 90 minute blocks, and teachers work in small groups so students remain engaged.

Student Ownership

West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle School students will be empowered to impact their school community and manage their own learning. Students will play a central role in building school rules and designing student accountability. No academic classes will be held during the first 2 days of school. Instead, these days will be used to foster a sense of community and a team environment among all students and teachers. Students will create school rules each year anew, providing the basis for the discipline program and promoting a sense of ownership among students. This Social Contract will be worded positively and will become part of everyday school language. Students will be held accountable to the rules they created and often take part in deciding their consequence, if necessary, should they violate the social contract.

Students will also take ownership of their academic progress by moving through subject areas at their own pace and accessing virtual learning opportunities. Students will have the ability to access learning materials (such as Virtual High School's online learning opportunities) outside of the school day so they can continue to learn after school, at home, and on weekends. Students that fall behind will be provided with the tools and supports to get back on track through after school tutoring and Saturday school. These student supports, combined with virtual learning

technology and mastery-based progression, will empower students to manage their own learning.

Boldness and Impact

The West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle School is unique in its strong community approach and in its focus on students' social and emotional skills. The West Broadway neighborhood has a vested interest in a quality neighborhood public school as a means to strengthen the community, and a proven capacity to work together, with city officials and invested stakeholders, to generate positive change. The West Broadway Historic Preservation Middle School will grow out of the strengths of this neighborhood--its rich history, architecture, cultural diversity, and sense of community. The school model will use the West Broadway neighborhood and the City of Providence to make relevant the history of the United States and the world. Students will explore community-based topics such as industrialization, immigration, social movements, and entrepreneurship through a culturally responsive lens. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's program *Teaching with Historic Places* will also be utilized to design curriculum for Humanities classes. Broadway's unique architectural styles will be used to teach math concepts, as well as other subject area concepts, in a unique interdisciplinary approach. A passion for history, culture and architecture will be inspired in students, by integrating the unique characteristics of their own neighborhood into lessons. All this will be presented through a blended learning approach with the latest technology to support student ownership and progression through content areas. Students will also receive the social-emotional supports they need to succeed, with a focus on providing the advisory supports and strong family, teacher, and student relationships that are critical to student success.

The West Broadway Middle School will open for 5th and 6th grade students in fall 2014 running a typical Grade 5 elementary schedule and Grade 6 middle school schedule. An additional grade level will be added in each subsequent year, reaching full capacity, for all four grades (5-8) in three years.

If the grant is awarded, SY14-15 will be a planning year with design implementation in SY15-16. The design shall not be restricted nor otherwise limited by the working conditions provided for in the parties' collective bargaining agreement. Planning team will have discretion over the working conditions at West Broadway, such as: 1) length of work day; 2) length of work year; 3) class size; 4) design of instructional day; 5) use of school resources. Faculty and staff will have the opportunity to participate in the planning process. If the grant is awarded, teachers will have the opportunity to opt-out prior to SY15-16 CBH Hiring Fairs.