

# BALTIMORE CITY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL



March 29, 2023 | Project Update Meeting Questions & Answers

## SWING SPACE QUESTIONS

### **Q: Will students be able to assist with the move for service-learning hours?**

During the summer we have interns that assist our teams through the Baltimore City Youth Works Program. High School students needing service-learning hours could partner with our summer interns to complete their hours.

### **Q: Am I hearing correctly that fine and performing arts will be incorporated in the swing space?**

Yes, all academic programs that are currently offered in the home building will be offered in the swing building. We will work with school leadership and academics specialists to assure that these spaces are what they need to be.

### **Q: Why is the design phase 20 months?**

We have delivered 26 buildings in the past 7 years and on average they have taken between 18-24 months depending on the complexity of the project and there is no project more complex than a high school. If you want to get it right, you have to take the time up front to do all the work necessary to create a building that can support academic programming.

### **Q: Does the Thurgood Marshall building have air conditioning? Will they have operable windows at Thurgood Marshall and will City College have operable windows for clean air even when using HVAC systems?**

No, the building does not have air conditioning, however we will work diligently to assess possible AC options so that teaching and learning can occur without disruption.

### **Q: What is the plan for facilities for the theater program? Black Box and fine arts classrooms?**

We will work with school leadership to outfit the space the best we can. A lot of schools bring specialized equipment to the new space. If there are things in the space that you need, we will work to ensure that you have them.

### **Q: You can build a new building in one year, is there consideration to build it in one year?**

It is a historic preservation and needs a lot of work and a new HVAC system, so it will take 3 years.

### **Q: Will the seniors have an opportunity to take celebratory photos with the castle as the background?**

The challenge is it may not be safe to do it because it will be a construction site. We understand the importance of it, but if it is dangerous, we cannot do it. We can certainly figure out a way to have a background of the castle.

# SWING SPACE QUESTIONS CONTINUED...

## **Q: Any consideration for asynchronous work during this transition?**

At this time, there are no plans for asynchronous work.

## **Q: Was Lake Clifton HS considered as swing space?**

The Lake Clifton building is not in the district's portfolio of schools; the building was previously purchased by Morgan State University. The University has started demolition on that building.

## **Q: What is going to be done to secure the historic artwork and memorabilia that is housed within these walls.**

We do an appraisal of artwork in the building. If the artwork requires restoration, we make arrangements to make that happen. We are not only looking at our work but all kinds of ephemera. Typically, there is a person on board who will address all of those things; they will be removed, restored, or conserved as needed and reinstalled. We do not release artwork to anyone without getting a receipt, neither do we release it to anyone that is not properly insured. No one touches anything unless they are properly qualified to do so. There will be an inventory of all the items that we have.

## **Q: Is it possible to do a staged renovation?**

What you are referring to is a phased occupied construction model. Unfortunately, what that does is it protracts the construction phase. There are inherent safety issues that makes it a very difficult thing to do, as well. We could consider doing if we were only doing City College on an unlimited budget, but we are not only doing City College, but Poly, Western, and Douglass. Over five years we are delivering four high schools.

Additionally, the building does not have the space to shift students in and out. This model requires wings that are empty and that we can move in and out of. This is an extensive project, which means we are ripping out the insides of the building which makes it a difficult project to do in this building because of shutting down HVAC systems and asbestos abatement. In addition, the insurance program does not allow for students to be on site, and we are saving a lot of money by using this insurance program to do the project. Unfortunately, we cannot feasibly do a phased occupied renovation on this project.

## **Q: Will City be the only school at the swing space when they transition?**

Yes, City College will be the only school located in the Thurgood Marshall Building.

## **Q: For some of the students that may just be freshman and sophomores, they will spend the entirety of their high school is at the swing space. What will you do to make them feel the legacy and make sure that it transfers over to the swing space?**

We will ensure that the swing space can support the incredible programming and faculty that make up City College, but there is a limit to how much we can invest in the swing space. We just have to have balance and make sure that the building is good for the long term.

## **Q: Will there be a school resources officer at this location?**

The swing building will be covered by the Northeast district police. We have a special relationship with the principal and when City College moves the school resource officer will go with City. There will also be units in that area to support the officer, including coverage during social events. The principal will have full support from the school police officer.

# SWING SPACE QUESTIONS CONTINUED...

## **Q: How will you work with the community?**

Community, parents, staff, and students will be engaged throughout the entire process. The engagement team will host meetings such as this, focus groups, and surveys. We encourage all stakeholders to participate to provide feedback for design. We ask you to continue to come to the forums and engage with us. We will work with alumni and parents and invite specific stakeholders to these meetings to provide feedback.

## **Q: Will the new building keep the castle look?**

There will be no demolition of this building. This building is of historical significance, and we cannot make any dramatic changes to the front of the building. We will do a nice refresh and explore up-lighting the building so that this wonderful structure will be illuminated at night.

## **Q: Is the swing space large enough to accommodate a City-Wide High School like City College? What is the capacity of the building?**

The capacity of the Thurgood Marshall Building is currently 1453, based on its current use. Capacity is calculated based on how it is used at the time of the calculation. The design capacity of the building is approximately 2000 students.

## **Q: I've seen people live in row houses where they've rehabbed the building in stages. I know this is a much larger scale. But the question is, why right now? These students have already lost two years of in-person learning and it seems like one more distraction in their academic career.**

This is historical, one-time funding that is available to complete this project. We have not had this kind of funding in the past, which is why we have so much deferred maintenance and systems that need to be replaced. Doing this project at City College is a significant investment for which we have not had funding for until now. If we don't take advantage of the funding when we have it, the opportunity may not be provided again.

## **Q: Is there currently any asbestos treatment happening at the Thurgood Marshall building?**

There is likely asbestos containing materials at that building, however it is all contained materials, so it is not a hazard to anyone in the building and we do not intend to abate. Once the swing use is complete, the building will be surplus to the City. The asbestos is encapsulated and sealed. For example, it could be in the roof membrane, but encapsulated and not a hazard.

# FUNDING QUESTIONS

**Q: Is funding secured already with no needs for local or state approvals for all improvements that have already been identified or that are identified in the future at the swing space? I want to understand if we might be told 3 years in that improvements to the swing site cannot be made because there is no funding.**

City Schools has allocated funds specifically for the swing space. If there are resources remaining, they will be allotted to the project.

**Q: Is this a different pot of funding for this project?**

This is funded by Built to Learn. The Built to Learn Act (BLT) of 2020 was established by State Legislation to fund school construction projects through the issuance of revenue bonds. The feasibility study was funded by 21st Century School Buildings Program. We are prioritizing this money for the high schools.

**Q: How is this project going to impact enrollment and if it does, will it affect the budget and the programs' ability to maintain the rigorous program?**

City College is a popular school and there is always a long waiting list of students who are eligible. There is no shortage of students who want to get into City College, so we don't expect it to impact enrollment. If it does, we will assess the situation at the time, but this is a major program for City Schools and there are a number of students every year who don't get in. The standard is much higher than the eligibility line, so if students choose not to participate because of swing, there are other students who have high scores just below them that will get in.

**Q: Will the fluctuation of the bond market postpone the project by a year or so?**

The only thing that could delay this project is the volatility of the bond and construction markets. We are committed and hopeful while working to close the funding gap needed to complete these projects. We want to do this in a way that restores the beauty of this building and want to make sure we can do the full renovation.

Yes, but it is our sincerest hope is that it won't happen. These are major projects and the sheer cost of doing the most basic repairs is far more than our regular budget can handle. These schools are way overdue, and they have to be done, but if we don't have it we may have to postpone. If we don't have the resources, we are going to lean on you to help us get to Annapolis and try to figure out how we are going to close this gap. I want to be honest with you, I was really hopeful this year, we got more last year, so they are helping us close this gap but it is still widening.

**Q: What are the chances that this is delayed by a year?**

We are hopeful, and we are still working on closing the amount we need for the school. We are working on closing the gap. We want to do this in a way that restores the beauty of this building so we want to make sure we can do the full renovation. We are committed to these high schools, the challenge is the return on bonds is going down and the cost of construction is going up. That is the only thing that could slow it down.

Working to close the gap:

- We refinanced, adding 5 years of debt to the 21st Century Buildings Program
- Additional 75 million from the legislature
- Repurposed money to use for these projects

# ATHLETIC FACILITIES QUESTIONS

## **Q: Are we prepared to fully renovate the space including the field, in order to get students to utilize the building as well as the fields?**

There are two schools in the Thurgood Marshall building now, the Furley building is starting construction it is slated to be finished summer of 2024, and the renovation for the Northeastern building for Vanguard is expected to be complete in 2024. We do intend to be out of the building to welcome City College.

## **Q: Fall Sports – how will the fields be equitably shared for all of the sports?**

We will work with the athletics director and the various schools to make sure there is adequate access to the fields once they are upgraded. We will work with the school to make sure there is adequate scheduling as well.

## **Q: Will the fields be turf?**

We plan to do some field upgrades, but it will not be turf because it is short term, three years, it will not be perfect, and it will not be turf. As we are trying to close the gap, anything we put into the swing space comes from the renovation of the building. It's all the same resources essentially in the end.

## **Q: Will there be funding to compensate Morgan State University to use their fields for sport and will there be transportation to and from MSU?**

One of the partnerships we are working on is with Morgan State University Athletics. I (Renee Stainrod) am planning a meeting with our athletic director Tiffany Byrd to assess the broad-scale needs of schools like City College and how Morgan State University can help specifically. There is no dedicated funding, it would be a partnership with MSU to figure out how they can best support City schools through this transition. This will need to be a discussion involving the school principal and the athletic directors.

## **Q: What does it mean that field use will need to be "scheduled" for soccer, in particular? Can there be a commitment that sports (both boys and girls) be given equal priority/access to limited fields?**

This will need to be a discussion involving the school principal and the athletic directors.

# TRANSPORTATION & PARKING QUESTIONS

## **Q: Will there be on-site parking for students at the swing space?**

There are two large parking lots at the Thurgood Marshall Building.

## **Q: Will the new parking situation have a Kiss & Ride? Separate staff/student parking?**

There will be provisions for drop-off and adequate parking, but we do not have any additional parking information at this time.

## **Q: I am concerned about the transportation; the school is not in a great neighborhood and she (my daughter) will be standing in the dark at the bus and I don't feel it is a safe place to wait. Are you offering transportation to the swing building?**

City schools is assessing all possible options, working with our partners at MTA looking at the best options for students traversing to the buildings. This early in the process we do not have the information, but we will update the community as we move through the swing space process.

## **Q: Will there be enough time for people to make transportation accommodations?**

In summer of 2024 we will certainly be able to provide information in adequate time to make any accommodations.

## **Q: Will the MTA have special buses from there swing space to the west side?**

Once we get our final bell time, they will use Day-tripper buses to go to the swing spaces at pick-up times.

## **Q: Is there a space in the school where students can wait for parents to pick them up instead of waiting on the bus stop or for early drop off?**

Yes, the cafeteria has been identified as the place in the school where students can wait to be picked up. How late they can stay will depend on the schedule of activities and the principal.

## **Q: Will there be a safe space for drop off?**

Thurgood Marshall has a lot of spacing in terms of the parking lot, so drop off in the morning should not be an issue.

## **Q: Is there any talk about changing the start time to 8 am or 8:30 am?**

Bell times are based on the other bell times in the system and there is potential for a change if it works better for that geographic area. We have students who want to play sports, and be in the band, and participate in programming, which also has a lot to do with scheduling. We will look at it and see what makes sense for routing in that area.

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For more information or to view the meeting presentation please visit:  
[baltimore21stcenturyschools.org](https://baltimore21stcenturyschools.org) → School Projects → High School Feasibility

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