



SWING SPACE QUESTIONS

Q: Poly and Western share a band, so how are we going to manage the relationship between bands and other enrichments when the two schools are divided?

Discussions have not yet taken place with the academic department, but City Schools will plan to access possible options with both schools. We hope to provide updates at the next meeting.

Q: If the Northwestern swing space doesn't work, where do we go from there? The school community is concerned about safety in regard to the swing space.

Northwestern has been a high school for many years and recently hosted a high school (Forest Park) in a swing space. We understand concerns with parking, other safety, etc., and we are working with our planning team on the best way to move forward. However, we think the safest option is to keep everyone away from the construction site, so we think it's in everyone's best interest to pursue that.

Q: Is there a consideration to renovate Poly while it's occupied?

We explored that in the feasibility study, and we're always looking for the most effective way of doing things. However, at this current time, the recommendation is to swing.

Q: Can the Poly alumni representatives be a part of that decision-making process for the project and specifically the swing?

Yes, we will always engage with the community throughout the project timeline. 21st Century Schools would also like to emphasize the variety of factors that go into the project, including budgets, safety, two campuses in this case, and certain overlapping timeline. These factors contribute to limited options, but right now, Northwest seems like the best option.

Q: Have we really looked at how sports will transition to Northwestern and will we have to share with other schools?

There will not be two schools sharing the school at Northwestern; it will only be Poly at the site. We've been in consultation with the director of athletic services, Tiffany Byrd, and looked at the fields since Forest Park has used them; we can confirm that they have already been used for high school sports and will make any renovations after our assessment. Transportation is still in the planning stages, and we will have future meetings with you all on the topic.

Q: Who do we connect with to make a case against Poly going to a swing space?

Connect with Communications and Public Engagement Manager, Renee Stainrod, at rastainrod@bcps.k12.md.us.

SWING SPACE QUESTIONS CONTINUED...

Q: We have more parking at Poly than Northwestern, so will we make arrangements with apartment complexes nearby to get more parking?

We're working with our planning team on those options. We can confirm it's only seven spaces less than the number of staff members at Poly, but our team is assessing the community to review additional parking options.

Q: I looked at a feasibility study and thought it was cheaper to not swing, so I wanted to see if we had made a final decision on that because I have a 7th grader and that does influence our high school decision.

I don't believe we've advocated for that, but the current recommendation and plan is to swing.

Q: Can you give an example of how you get the lab spaces ready for swing spaces? That's a big part of the Poly experience, so it's important to our community that things are upheld, especially with the more advanced labs.

In the 26 buildings we've delivered in the last 7 years, there have been a lot of special spaces, so we work with the school communities to recreate those spaces effectively. We plan on working with stakeholders throughout that planning process to ensure the space meets your needs and we uphold Poly culture. We've transitioned high school programs like Patterson and Forest Park and plan to put the knowledge gained to use in this process.

Q: Poly has roughly double the number of students as Forest Park, so how will we function at Northwestern?

The capacity of Northwestern is 1600; the building held a lot of space that wasn't used when Forest Park was there (only 50% of the building was active), so we are confident that it can hold the population.

Q: Is the decision final?

There are challenges with closing financing gaps due to the bond market and inflation when dealing with construction. Due to those gaps, we are always leaving room for reassessment, but utilizing the swing space is our current plan.

Q: Who makes the decision on this specific project?

The final decision is with City Schools leadership.

Q: How did you come to the conclusion that Northwestern was the most appropriate site for Poly?

We're doing several schools at once, and there are few buildings in the City Schools portfolio that can accommodate a high school. When looking at what was available, it was the most efficient space to fit Poly's academic needs, transportation routines, etc. We understand that there is a certain level of sacrifice that every school undergoes in this process, but ultimately, we believe this is the path to get Poly the best building they deserve for years to come.

Q: What happens if something happens at the swing space that impacts our experience?

We maintain a robust connection with our schools that will be active throughout the occupancy.

SWING SPACE QUESTIONS CONTINUED...

Q: Why are all schools being renovated at once?

Not all schools are being renovated at once, however, we are doing Frederick Douglass, Poly, City College, and Western at the same time. Where there are overlaps, it is because there is a time limit to the funding that we've received to make these projects possible.

Q: When do you engage with students about these things so they can offer input?

We have and will always welcome student engagement throughout the process of this project. Especially in the predesign and design projects. However, swing spaces are often the least flexible part of this process because it's heavily based on what's in the City Schools portfolio.

Q: Transportation for students who live in different neighborhoods will be impacted by this; are they working with the MTA so students can still get to these places in a timely fashion?

Yes, the MTA is aware of the proposed change as well as the location. Every year, they are sent the schedules of the schools to make the most effective routes for students. Also, we will hold meetings to get your input amidst the transportation planning process.

Q: How will we ensure we preserve certain landmark aspects of the building?

We will complete a building assessment with the Poly community to identify those landmarks and preserve them for the duration of construction.

Q: How will high-tech equipment be impacted in this move?

We work with staff to identify the equipment that is needed, and it is taken into the swing space. Furthermore, when providing the new buildings, we consult with the school communities to provide upgrades.

Q: Why can't we get a new building so we can stay in Poly during construction?

We've looked at the option of a replacement building, and it would be inferior to what you currently have. Particularly for high schools, under state guidelines, there are constraints on what you can build, so there are more long-term sacrifices with space.

For more information or to view the meeting presentation please visit:
baltimore21stcenturyschools.org → School Projects → High School Feasibility

CONTACT US:

Phone: (443) 642-4600

E-mail: 21stCenturyBuildings@bcps.k12.md.us