

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

DRAFT

TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: Chairman Phil Mendelson
Committee of the Whole

DATE: July 9, 2019

SUBJECT: Report on Bill 23-216, the “Wells Middle School Designation and Master Facility Plan Disapproval Act of 2019”

The Committee of the Whole, to which Bill 23-216, the “Wells Middle School Designation and Master Facility Plan Disapproval Act of 2019”¹ was referred, reports favorably thereon with amendments, and recommends approval by the Council.

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BACKGROUND AND NEED

On March 25, 2019, Bill 23-216, the “Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019” was introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor to officially designate a new school in Square 3269 Lot 807 as Ida B. Wells Middle School. On March 15, 2019, PR 23-193, the Master Facilities Plan Approval Resolution of 2019” was introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor to approve the comprehensive multiyear Master Facilities Plan for public education.

Wells Middle School Designation

The purpose of the proposed official building designation is to name the new middle school constructed adjacent to Calvin Coolidge High School as Ida B. Wells Middle School. The name was chosen through a process whereby D.C. Public Schools collected nominations from the general public which were reviewed by parents, teachers, students, Coolidge High School alumni,

¹ Formerly the “Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019”

and community members. Ida B. Wells scored favorably through all nominations rounds, and the name was ultimately recommended to the Council.²

Ida B. Wells was a noted journalist and activist born into slavery on July 16, 1862 during the Civil War. Her family became politically active during the Reconstruction Era and instilled into Ida Wells the importance of education. She would go on to enroll at Rust College in her hometown of Holly Springs, Mississippi. Tragedy struck and her parents and infant brother were killed during a yellow fever epidemic that had struck her hometown while she was away visiting her grandmother. Ida Wells resisted attempts to separate her remaining siblings and took a job as a teacher to keep the family together. She would later move to Memphis, Tennessee where she was hired as a teacher in the Shelby County school system. She attended college during her summer breaks at Fisk University in Nashville and Lemoyne-Owen College in Memphis.³

In 1884, Ms. Wells was removed from a first-class train car despite having paid for a ticket. She refused to give up her seat and was dragged out of the car. She would go on to write about her experience which gained publicity and would go on to sue the railroad. She eventually lost the case. However, while continuing to teach, she became more active as a journalist. She worked in an editorial position for the Evening Star in Washington, D.C. and wrote weekly articles under a pen name where she denounced Jim Crow policies.

After the lynching of a close friend, Ms. Wells turned her attention to journalistic investigations of lynching. In May 1892, she published an editorial that resulted in her newspaper office being burned down. In that wake, she left Memphis, but would continue to write about the horrors of lynching in the South. She went on to gain political momentum behind anti-lynching efforts, including tours of Britain where she shed light on lynching to new foreign audiences.⁴ Ms. Wells was also a strong proponent of women's suffrage helped found a number of prominent women's organizations to promote suffrage. Ms. Wells died on March 25th, 1931.

Legal Background

The Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 *et seq.*) (“Act”) establishes procedures for closing streets and alleys, opening new streets and alleys, naming public spaces, and other procedures related to streets and alleys. Specifically, the Act authorizes Council to designate or change the name of any public space in the District of Columbia.⁵ Public spaces include “any public street, alley, circle, bridge, building, park, other public place or property owned by or under the administrative control or jurisdiction of the District of Columbia.”⁶

² Shanita Burney, Chief of the Office of Family and Public Engagement, DCPS, oral testimony before the DC Council Committee of the Whole, June 27, 2019.

³ MIA BAY, *TO TELL THE TRUTH FREELY: THE LIFE OF IDA B. WELLS* 67 (2009).

⁴ MICHELLE DUSTER, *IDA FROM ABROAD: THE TIMELESS WRITINGS OF IDA B. WELLS FROM ENGLAND IN 1894* 13 2010.

⁵ See D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 *et seq.*

⁶ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.11(2)(A).

The Act establishes a notice requirement for the official designation of public spaces including parks; at least 30 days prior to the scheduled public hearing, the initiator of the proposed designation shall submit a copy of the legislation for review and comment to each Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC”) in which the public space is located. Regarding Bill 23-216, the notice requirements were not strictly met, but the intent of the requirement was met. ANC 4B was notified of the proposed name as early as January 2014, and passed a resolution supporting the Ida B. Wells name on January 24, 2019. The Committee cannot verify that the legislation itself was sent to the ANC, which is the strict requirement in the law, but the Committee believes that the ANC support of the name outweighs the need to transmit the actual legislation in this case.

The Act also promulgates requirements that the Mayor must meet prior to consideration of a public space designation by the Council. First, the Mayor shall provide the Council with comments on the proposed designation submitted by any District agency with jurisdiction over the public space to be designated.⁷ The District Department of Public Schools (“DCPS”), which has jurisdiction over the school at issue, attended the June 27, 2019 hearing on Bill 23-216 and submitted comments (supporting Bill 23-216) as part of their testimony at that time, thus meeting this requirement. Second, prior to consideration of a designation by the Council, the Mayor shall provide to the Council a surveyor’s plat showing the public space to be designated, including any adjacent and abutting squares to the designation.⁸ The Office of the Surveyor provided the Council with a plat of the designation prior to mark up by the Committee of the Whole. The plat is attached to this report.

After the official public space designation legislation becomes law and all conditions required by the Council and the Act have been satisfied, the Mayor will install signage denoting the public space name.⁹ The signage shall conform to the policies of the agency with jurisdiction over the public space, in this case DCPS.¹⁰ Additionally, the Surveyor of the District of Columbia shall record a copy of the act and the Surveyor’s plat in the Office of the Surveyor.¹¹

Master Facilities Plan Disapproval

The District of Columbia’s Planning Act of 2016 (PACE) requires the Deputy Mayor for Education to prepare a ten-year Master Facilities Plan to anticipate and enable the development of adequate public-school facilities.¹² The 2018 Master Facilities Plan (MFP) analyzes the state of Washington, DC’s current school facilities and specialized programs, forecasts future enrollment growth, analyzes the gap between enrollment and facility capacity now and in the future, and makes recommendations for efficient and equitable delivery of high quality public school facilities over the next ten years. The plan incorporates information about the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools to better understand the current landscape and future facility needs.

⁷ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.22(b).

⁸ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.22(c)(1)-(3).

⁹ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.24(b).

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.24(c).

¹² D.C. Official Code § 38-2803.

Schools across the District, but especially in Ward 3, are experiencing extreme overcrowding. A recent report by the Wilson High School Feeder Pattern Community Working Group called for the MFP to address overcrowding and high utilization at the feeder schools. Total utilization of the ten feeder schools ranged from 82%-123% including both permanent buildings and portable units. Eight schools currently have enrollment that exceeds their permanent capacity, with utilization rates ranging from 101%-137%. Four additional schools are above 90% utilization of their permanent capacity. The report called for several recommendations to address overcrowding, but the MFP failed to recommend or enact any tangible solutions to overcrowding within the feeder pattern. The Lab School occupies a DCPS-owned facility in Ward 3 that could be used as a new DCPS middle or elementary school in the Wilson feeder pattern, but the extension of that lease by the Mayor through 2023 will eliminate one of the few viable options for decreasing the amount of pressure on the existing schools in Ward 3.

Concurrently, over 61% of the facilities in the 0-50% utilization range are elementary and middle schools, primarily located east of the river. These schools are under-enrolled even though enrollment in DCPS is expected to grow between 12,000 and 17,000 students in the next ten years. With increased demand for parent options and the number of schools opening and closing on the rise, there is a need to address schools and school populations that are under-enrolled and below capacity as we plan for school locations. The MFP does not provide a plan for schools with low enrollment in under-utilized facilities – an important strategy for understanding enrollment projections and developing a plan for schools to ensure that all students are in good facilities conducive to learning.

Lastly, the MFP does not provide a description of the ratings used in the Facility Condition Index (FCI). Facilities are rated as Good, Fair, or Poor with minimal to no explanation of what the ratings are connected to other than prioritization in the PACE Act. While important, without clear definition of the ratings and a detailed plan for next steps for facilities rated as poor or fair, we cannot plan for the disposal or modernization of DCPS-owned buildings that are not currently being prioritized in the PACE Act or included for funding in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Overall, the Master Facilities Plan is not a plan. The information provided in the MFP as transmitted to the Council lacks critical elements that would inform the Mayor and Council's decisions on school location, school building utilization, student enrollment, and potential charter school locations. The MFP also lacks comprehensive information about the plan for six vacant public-school facilities, fails to address school overcrowding and under-enrollment or a plan for school buildings with poor utilization (below 50%), and does not clearly define the Facility Condition Index (FCI) which identifies ten schools with buildings in poor condition. Six of those ten schools in poor facilities are east of the river.

In addition to disapproving the MFP, the Committee Print, as amended, removes unnecessary language from the PACE Act that requires that the Council vote on the MFP concurrently with the vote on the Mayor's capital budget proposal. This language is unnecessarily limiting with respect to when an MFP may be transmitted, considered, or adopted by the Council. Moreover, removing this limitation makes clear the Committee's intent that an MFP addressing the issues raised above could be adopted by the Council outside of a budget process – well before 2020 which is when the next budget would come before the Council.

Conclusion

Officially designating the new middle school located in Square 3269 Lot 807, as Ida B. Wells Middle School will honor Ms. Wells who is nationally recognized as an activist and journalist with experience in teaching. Disapproving the Master Facilities Plan will also send a strong message to the Executive that the plan must be supplemented. For these reasons, the Committee of the Whole recommends the approval of Bill 23-216, the “Wells Middle School Designation and Master Facility Plan Disapproval Act of 2019.”

LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

March 15, 2019	PR 23-193, the “Master Facilities Plan Approval Resolution of 2019” is introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor.
March 22, 2019	Notice of Intent to Act on PR 23-193 is published in the <i>Register</i> .
March 25, 2019	Bill 23-216, the “Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019” is introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor.
March 19, 2019	PR 23-193 is “read” at the March 19, 2019 regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting and referred sequentially, first to the Committee on Education and second to the Committee of the Whole.
March 29, 2019	Notice of Intent to Act on Bill 23-216 is published in the <i>Register</i> .
April 2, 2019	Bill 23-216 is “read” at the April 2, 2019 legislative meeting and referred to the Committee of the Whole.
April 12, 2019	Notice of Joint Public Roundtable on PR 23-193 is published in the <i>Register</i> .
June 5, 2019	A Joint Public Roundtable is held on PR 23-193 by the Committee of the Whole and the Committee on Education.
June 7, 2019	Notice of a Public Hearing on Bill 23-216 is published in the <i>Register</i> .
June 27, 2019	A Public Hearing is held on Bill 23-216 by the Committee of the Whole.
July 9, 2019	PR 23-193 is re-referred to the Committee of the Whole with comments from the Committee on Education.
July 9, 2019	The Committee of the Whole marks up Bill 23-216.

POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Shanita Burney, Chief of the Office of Family and Public Engagement testified on behalf of the Executive in support of Bill 23-216, the “Lawrence E. Boone Elementary School” designation. Her testimony is summarized below. Paul Kihn, Deputy Mayor for Education, testified on behalf of the Executive in support of PR 23-193, the “Master Facilities Plan Approval

Resolution of 2019” with Scott Pearson, Executive Director, DC Public Charter School Board, and Patrick Davis, Chief Operating Officer, DCPS available to answer questions.

COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

On January 24, 2019, ANC 4B, in which the proposed official school designation is located, voted 8 yea and 0 nay, in support of naming the new middle school Ida B. Wells Middle School to honor Ms. Wells with the “only current standalone middle school named after an African-American woman.” A copy of ANC4B’s letter in support is attached to this report.

V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public hearing on Bill 23-216 on Thursday, June 27, 2019. The testimony summarized below is from that hearing. Copies of written testimony are attached to this report. The Committee received no comments in opposition to Bill 23-216.

Shanita Burney, Chief of the Office of Family and Public Engagement, District of Columbia Public Schools, testified that the Executive supports the “Ida B. Wells Middle School” designation. Ms. Burney spoke about DCPS’s process for recommending school names. She also spoke to the Ms. Wells’s background and legacy. Finally, she described the new middle school building that is a combination of new space and renovated portions of Coolidge High School.

The Committee of the Whole and Committee on Education held a joint public roundtable on PR 23-193 on Wednesday, June 5, 2019. The testimony from that hearing is contained in the hearing record for PR 23-193.

VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

Bill 23-216, as it pertains to the Ida B. Wells Middle School Designation, has no impact on existing law. D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 authorizes the Council to designate any public space, including parks.¹³ Further, the Act provides that, with limited exception, no public space shall be named in honor of any living person or in honor of any person who has been deceased less than two years.¹⁴ Ms. Wells away in 1931. As it pertains to the Master Facilities Plan, Bill 23-216 amends Section 1104(a) of the School Based Budgeting and Accountability Act of 1998, effective March 26, 1000 (D.C. Law 12-175; D.C. Official Code § 38-2803(a)) to remove the requirement that an MFP can only be adopted in conjunction with a budget.

¹³ Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201).

¹⁴ See D.C. Code § 9-204.05.

VII. FISCAL IMPACT

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2019 through fiscal year 2022 budget and financial plan to implement the provisions of the proposed legislation. A copy of the July 8, 2019 Fiscal Impact Statement is attached to this report.

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

<u>Section 1</u>	States the short title of Bill 23-216.
<u>Section 2</u>	Officially designates the school in Lot 2369 Lot 807 as “Ida B. Wells Middle School.”
<u>Section 3</u>	Disapproves the Master Facilities Plan 2018
<u>Section 4</u>	Removes the time limitation on the MFP approval by the Council
<u>Section 5</u>	Adopts the Fiscal Impact Statement.
<u>Section 6</u>	Establishes the effective date by stating the standard 30-day Congressional review language.

IX. COMMITTEE ACTION

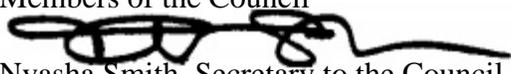
X. ATTACHMENTS

1. Bill 23-216 as introduced.
2. PR 23-193 as introduced (without attachments).
3. Written Testimony and Letters.
4. ANC 4B Letter.
5. Surveyor’s Plat.
6. Comments from the Committee on Education.
7. Fiscal Impact Statement for Bill 23-216.
8. Legal Sufficiency Determination for Bill 23-216.
9. Committee Print for Bill 23-216.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20004

Memorandum

To : Members of the Council

From : 
Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

Date : March 26, 2019

Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Monday, March 25, 2019. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019", B23-0216

INTRODUCED BY: Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor

The Chairman is referring this legislation to the Committee of the Whole.

Attachment

cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services



2019 MAR 25 AM 11:23
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY

MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

MAR 25 2019

The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Suite 504
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

Pursuant to the Public Space Naming Amendment Act of 2016 (D.C. Law 21-161; D.C. Official Code §9-204.01), the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is requesting the DC Council officially designate a school in Square 3269 bounded by Sheridan Street N.W., 5th Street N.W., 3rd Street N.W., and Van Buren Street N.W. in Ward 4, as Ida B. Wells Middle School, to honor Ida B. Wells, an iconic investigative journalist, feminist, civil rights activist, educator, and researcher.

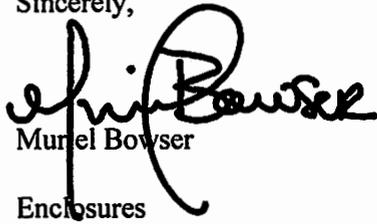
Born into slavery in 1862, Ida B. Wells was a tireless advocate for the underserved and brought injustices against African Americans to light, despite considerable opposition. She started her career in the classroom. At the age of sixteen, Wells became a teacher to support her family when both of her parents and younger brother died as a result of a yellow fever outbreak. While working as a teacher in Memphis, she began writing a column for *The Living Way*, a weekly newspaper, under the pen name "Iola." Her writings on racial injustices for the newspaper earned her a national reputation and she eventually became editor and co-owner of the *Free Speech and Headlight*.

Wells began her career as an investigative journalist after three of her friends were lynched by an angry white mob. She began documenting and compiling statistics on the widespread practice of lynching in the United States. Her investigation found that black men and women were frequently lynched for failing to pay debts, for perceived disrespect of white people, competing with white people economically, and at times for consensual relationships with white people. Her writing and activism quickly made her the foremost leader in the crusade against lynching. She was a radical activist at time when being both radical and a woman was unheard of in our country.

Today, on the 88th anniversary of her passing and during Women's History Month, it is my honor to request this designation. Wells Middle School will be D.C. Public Schools' only current standalone middle school named after an African-American woman. Naming this school after a woman as fearless as Ida B. Wells is an important milestone for our city and DCPS, and one that reflects our values of courage, equity, and excellence. The proposed name was chosen after a several month-long community engagement process DCPS undertook to engage the community and select a name. I urge the Council to take prompt and favorable action on this legislation.

As always, I am available to discuss any questions you may have regarding this report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Muriel Bowser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "B".

Muriel Bowser

Enclosures



Chairman Phil Mendelson
at the request of the Mayor

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Chairman Phil Mendelson, at the request of the Mayor, introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on _____.

To officially designate a new middle school in Square 3269, bounded by Sheridan Street N.W., 5th Street N.W., 3rd Street N.W., and Van Buren Street N.W. in Ward 4, as Wells Middle School, to honor Ida B. Wells, an iconic investigative journalist, civil rights activist, educator, and researcher. There are no proposed changes to the name of Calvin Coolidge High School, which occupies the same square and lot.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019”.

Sec. 2. Pursuant to sections 401 and 422 of the Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official Code §§ 9-204.01 and 9-204.22) (“Act”), the Council officially designates the middle school in Square 3269, bounded by Sheridan Street N.W., 5th Street N.W., 3rd Street N.W., and Van Buren Street N.W. in Ward 4, as the Ida B. Wells Middle School.

Sec. 3. Transmittal.

The Council shall transmit a copy of this act, upon its effective date, to the Mayor, the District of Columbia Public Schools, and the Office of the Surveyor.

Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.

36 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
37 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
38 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

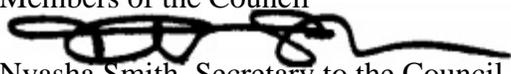
39 Sec. 5. Effective date.

40 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
41 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
42 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
43 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
44 Columbia Register.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20004

Memorandum

To : Members of the Council

From : 
Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

Date : March 19, 2019

Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Friday, March 15, 2019. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Master Facilities Plan Approval Resolution of 2019", PR23-0193

INTRODUCED BY: Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor

The Chairman is referring this legislation sequentially to the Committee on Education and Committee of the Whole with comments from the Committee on Facilities and Procurement.

Attachment

cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services



2019 MAR 15 AM 11:55
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY

MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

MAR 15 2019

The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

Pursuant to the Planning Actively for Comprehensive Education Facilities Amendment Act of 2016 (PACE) (D.C. Law 21-219), I present to the Council of the District of Columbia the “Master Facilities Plan Approval Resolution of 2019,” and the *DC Public Education Master Facilities Plan 2018*.

The 2018 Master Facilities Plan (MFP) provides detailed information about the state of Washington, DC’s current school facilities and specialized programs, forecasts future enrollment growth, analyzes the gap between enrollment and facility capacity now and in the future, and makes recommendations for efficient and equitable delivery of high-quality public school facilities over the next ten years. The information provided in this study is a significant milestone to allow District officials and school leaders to make informed decisions when they work with the community to determine which recommendations should be implemented.

This MFP, unlike previous iterations, includes data and analysis of facilities from all types of public schools, representing both DCPS and public charter schools. The MFP contains analyses of a wide range of information including facility locations, facility conditions, programmatic capacities, facility utilization, and gross square footage. The MFP also includes specialized program offerings; enrollment patterns; transportation accessibility; population forecasts; and enrollment projections¹.

¹ The “Master Facilities Plan Approval Resolution of 2018” (PR22-1141) and previous MFP study was submitted on November 19, 2018 and withdrawn on February 15, 2019 in order to correct errors in the enrollment projections model made by AECOM, the company contracted to prepare the report. A letter from AECOM detailing the errors and corrections is enclosed. The corrections have been made and are reflected in the copy of the MFP enclosed.

Three overarching objectives have guided the MFP process:

1. Provide critical analysis and future estimations to address the needs of the District's public education facilities, with general options that are both District-wide and respond to the unique nature of the DCPS and public charter school sectors.
2. Outline key opportunities and challenges in current educational facilities planning processes in the District, and include recommendations for future educational facilities planning processes.
3. Develop a report, data visualizations, and publicly-available data sets for LEAs, District agencies, residents, and other education stakeholders to use in their work to improve public education in the District.

The MFP also incorporates feedback from parents, community residents, and school leaders on the MFP priorities, preliminary analysis, and recommendations. Over 600 people collectively participated in the public outreach process that consisted of a series of public workshops and in-person surveys conducted in April, August, and October of 2018.

The study concludes with a suite of options that the District may employ to assist with meeting public school students' education facility needs. The MFP's recommended options respond collectively to the analysis of the facility conditions and modernizations, transportation, specialized programs, enrollment growth, and facility utilization now and in the future, as well as the insights formulated from the community and stakeholder engagement processes.

The MFP recommends that the DME work with District agencies and school leaders, along with substantial community input, to scope out each recommended option, document the resources required, and the set an implementation planning time horizon. This MFP study is the critical first step in laying the groundwork for a more robust, cross-sector facility planning process.

Sincerely,



Muriel Bowser

Enclosures


Chairman Phil Mendelson
at the request of the Mayor

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A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Chairman Phil Mendelson, at the request of the Mayor, introduced the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on _____.

To approve the comprehensive multiyear Master Facilities Plan for public education.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the "Master Facilities Plan Approval Resolution of 2019".

Sec. 2. Pursuant to Section 1104(a) of the School Based Budgeting and Accountability

Act of 1998, effective March 26, 1999 (D.C. Law 12-175; D.C. Official Code §38-2803(a)),

the DC Schools Master Facilities Plan 2018 as submitted by the Mayor to the Council of the

District of Columbia is approved.

Sec. 3. The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the

fiscal impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of

1975, approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DC Public Schools (DCPS)**



**Public Hearing on
Bill 23-216, the “Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019”
&
Bill 23-263, the “Lorraine H. Whitlock Elementary School Designation Act of
2019”**

**Testimony of
Shanita Burney**
Chief of the Office of Family and Public Engagement

Before the
Committee of the Whole
Chairman Phil Mendelson

June 27, 2019
Room 412
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004



Good morning, Chairman Mendelson, members, and staff. I am Shanita Burney, Chief of the Office of Family and Public Engagement for the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). Beginning in August, I will lead the Communications and Engagement Office, which will oversee DCPS' commitment to transparent communications and meaningful public engagement. I am pleased to testify before you today on Bill 23-216, the "Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019" and Bill 23-263, the "Lorraine H. Whitlock Elementary School Designation Act of 2019."

School names help to identify the school community, establish a legacy, and develop a sense of pride in the traditions of DCPS and our schools. After a several months-long community engagement process that the DCPS School Planning team led in collaboration with the Office of Family and Public Engagement, DC Public Schools is pleased to support Bill 23-216, the "Wells Middle School Designation Act of 2019" to honor Ida B. Wells, an iconic investigative journalist, feminist, civil rights activist, educator, and researcher.

Legacy of Ida B. Wells

Born into slavery in 1862, Ida B. Wells was a tireless advocate for the underserved and brought to light injustices against African Americans. At the age of sixteen, Wells became a teacher to support her family and began her career in the classroom. During this time, she also reported on the disgraceful conditions of black-only schools. Through her writing, she fought against discriminatory hiring and was an advocate for women's suffrage.

Wells dedicated much of her career as an investigative journalist, reporting the truth about the brutality of lynching in the United States after three of her friends were lynched by an angry white mob. She began documenting and compiling statistics on the widespread practice of lynching in the United States. Her writing and activism quickly made her the foremost leader in the crusade against lynching. She was a radical activist at time when being both radical and a woman was unheard of in our country. As a lifelong fighter for justice, DC Public Schools believes that honoring the life of Ida B. Wells will serve as a constant reminder that our students have the opportunity to be leaders and change agents who positively influence their community and the world each and every day.

School Naming Process

The school planning team launched the process to name New North Middle School in June 2018. The school, which will open at 405 Sheridan Street NW in August 2019, will be a neighborhood middle school available to all 6th grade families currently living in the boundaries of Brightwood Education Campus, LaSalle-Backus Education Campus, Takoma Education Campus, and Whittier Education Campus. The process was shaped by DCPS' School Naming Policy.¹ Nominations collected from the general public were carefully reviewed by parents, teachers, students, Coolidge HS alumni, and community members to help determine the finalists. Over the summer and into the fall, DCPS engaged with over 450 members of the community. The nomination to name the school after Ida B. Wells received positive feedback and input from current teachers, parents, and students alike.

¹ [School Naming Policy](#)



The New Wells Campus

Ida B. Wells MS will open in a fully modernized building in the fall of school year 2019-2020. The new facility will have dedicated classrooms for each subject, including rooms for art, choir, band, health, and a science lab. The building will have dedicated spaces for the middle school such as a gymnasium, locker rooms, and a multipurpose space. The collocated campus will provide students with access to many resources, including the Frank Williams Activity Center, a community health clinic and a day care center to promote student success. The main building, modernized stadium, and field will all be complete before the first day of school in August.

The inaugural 6th grade class at Wells will enjoy electives and clubs designed to prepare each student to positively influence society and thrive in life. An education at Wells will provide pathways to the Early College, Mass Media & Health Sciences Academies at Coolidge High Schools, and will allow students to reach their full potential through rigorous and joyful learning experiences provided in a nurturing environment. Each year a new grade will join the campus until it is a 6th-8th grade middle school in School Year 2021-2022.

DCPS is dedicated to providing excellent schools and modern facilities that promote and support successful teaching and learning. By establishing the Ida B. Wells MS, we honor a fearless woman and mark an important milestone for our city and for DCPS. This name reflects our values of courage, equity, and excellence. Her legacy will help establish a precedent that DCPS is consistently focused on creating a safe, affirming, and empowering space for students of color, and all students, to build community, confidence, and leadership skills.

Lorraine H. Whitlock Elementary School Designation Act of 2019

I would now like to share DCPS' perspective on Bill 23-216, the "Lorraine H. Whitlock Elementary School Designation Act of 2019." While we support the intent of the bill, we do have concerns about the process for re-naming Aiton Elementary. Based on DCPS' experience with re-naming schools, we know that proposing a name change for a school frequently leads to community unease and concerns from stakeholders that were not initially aware of the proposal. Because of this, we feel it is important to commit to a deep-level of engagement, as we did with both Ida B. Well MS and Boone ES. Based on those prior examples, we recommend a pause on this proposal until appropriate, full community engagement and consideration is possible.

We recognize that students, parents, and community members may wish to propose a name for a school, and the opportunity it presents to establish new traditions; however, we support our established and thoughtful school naming process, which, in the case of Ida B. Wells MS, was based on six months of engagement, including alumni outreach, multiple feedback sessions, and a community survey. We are open to considering a new name for Aiton, after a similar, collaborative engagement process.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important topic, today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.





Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B

*Brenda Parks, ANC 4B04, Chair; Alison Brooks, ANC 4B08, Vice Chair;
Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02, Secretary; Geoff Bromaghim, ANC 4B07, Treasurer;
Evan Yeats, ANC 4B01; Scot Knickerbocker, ANC 4B03; Perry Redd, ANC 4B05;
Tiffani Nichole Johnson, ANC 4B06; LaRoya Huff, ANC 4B09*

June 24, 2019

Dr. Lewis D. Ferebee
Chancellor
DC Public Schools
1200 First St NE
Washington DC 20002

RE: ANC 4B support for naming the new north middle school Ida B. Wells Middle School

Dear Chancellor:

At its regularly scheduled, properly noticed meeting on January 24, 2019, with a quorum of 8 Commissioners present (a quorum is 5 of 9 Commissioners), Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 4B voted 8 yea and 0 nay to support the naming of the new north middle school to Ida B. Wells Middle School in honor of Ms. Well's legacy.

Ida B. Wells was an iconic African-American investigative journalist, civil rights activist, educator, and researcher. As a lifelong fighter for justice, she dedicated much of her career to investigating and reporting the truth about the brutality of lynching and the disgraceful conditions of black-only schools in the United States. She fought against discriminatory hiring and was an advocate for women's suffrage. As you yourself noted, Ida B. Wells Middle School will be DCPS' only current standalone middle school named after an African-American woman. ANC 4B agrees that this is an important milestone for DCPS.

Sincerely,

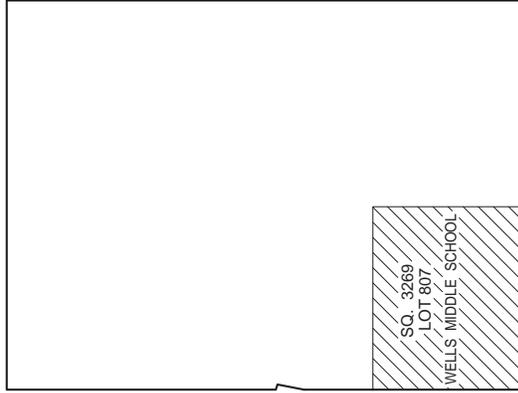
Ms. Brenda Parks
Chair
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B

cc: Councilmember Brandon Todd

NAMING OF A SCHOOL
 SQUARE 3269
 LOT 807

VAN BUREN STREET, N.W.

3rd STREET, N.W.



SHERIDAN STREET, N.W.

5th STREET, N.W.

PURSUANT TO D.C. LAW _____ EFFECTIVE _____
 THE AREA SHOWN THUS: [Hatched Box] IS HEREBY DESIGNATED AS
 "WELLS MIDDLE SCHOOL".

OFFICE OF THE SURVEYOR, D.C.
 _____, 2019

I CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAT IS CORRECT AND IS RECORDED.

 SURVEYOR, D.C.

SURVEYOR OFFICE, D.C.	
Made for: DDOT	Checked by: _____
Drawn by: AS	Recorded and computations by: B. MYERS
Revised date: _____	Page: _____
Recorded in Book: _____	SR: 19-0000
Scale: 1 inch = 150 feet	File No. 19-11111

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

DAVID GROSSO, CHAIRPERSON

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: Councilmember David Grosso, Chairperson
Committee on Education

DATE: July 3, 2019

SUBJECT: Comments on Bill 23-0216, the “Wells Middle School Designation and Master Facilities Plan Disapproval Act of 2019”

While the underlying bill designating the new Ward 4 Middle School as the “Ida B. Wells Middle School” was not referred to The Committee on Education, the Committee wishes to provide the following comments on Bill 23-0216, the “Wells Middle School Designation and Master Facilities Plan Disapproval Act of 2019” for context as the bill relates to the 2018 Master Facilities Plan:

On Wednesday, June 5, 2019, the Committee on Education, jointly with the Committee of the Whole held a roundtable hearing on the Master Facilities Plan Approval Resolution of 2019. The Committee asked several substantive questions regarding recommendations in the plan, how they compare to the previous MFP, and who takes ownership regarding the implementation of the MFP. The feedback provided by the Deputy Mayor for Education, Paul Kihn, Chief Operating Officer of DCPS, Patrick Davis, and Executive Director of the Public Charter School Board, Scott Pearson to be quite helpful in analyzing the dense plan.

The plan is a first of its kind for the District of Columbia. It is the first plan to look at both the Charter and traditional public-school sectors. It is the first to require a 10-year facilities outlook and enrollment projections, and to make District-wide recommendations as well as local education agency recommendations (LEA). The plan utilizes data from Facilities Conditions Assessments, as required by law and suggests revisiting the facilities allotment for our charters schools and incorporating FCA data and capacity needs into the Capital Improvement Plan for DCPS. Among many other things, the recommendations incorporate analysis regarding co-location across sectors and grade-bands; creating an even distribution of students, including revising DCPS school boundaries, and through the adjustment of enrollment policies. The MFP is rich with transportation and programmatic data that help illustrate where our needs are greatest, and where there is room for improvement.

While most of the requirements of the law were met, there was some underlying confusion about what was required to be in the Master Facilities Plan versus its annual supplements. One part of the law that was not included in the MFP was information regarding school dispositions. As required by §38-203(b)(2):

“The [Office of Public Education Facilities Planning] shall include in the Master Facilities Plan detailed, current analysis and data on:

(K) Any school disposition, including a plan delineating the process through which citizen involvement shall be facilitated, and establishing the criteria that will be utilized in disposition decisions, one of which shall be consideration of the impact of any proposed new use of a school building on the neighborhood in which the school building is located;”

When asked, Deputy Mayor Kihn responded that there were no school dispositions under consideration at the time of the development of the plan, therefore that information was not required to be included. The Committee views this as an inaccurate interpretation of the law.

Additionally, the District of Columbia Auditor misinterpreted the law in her testimony with regard to the annual supplement. The Auditor’s testimony assumes that the Deputy Mayor for Education is required to provide the supplement immediately, whereas the language is clear in §38-203(b)(2A): Beginning on December 15, 2014, and every year thereafter, the OPEFP shall prepare and make publicly available an annual supplement to the Master Facilities Plan that includes...” The previous MFP was completed in 2013, and these requirements were intended as part of an annual supplement, not part of the underlying plan. The Committee expects the forthcoming annual supplements to be fully compliant with the law.

It is important to note that the Committee on Education did not hold a vote on the Master Facilities Plan. It was the hope of the Committee on Education to work with the Deputy Mayor for Education prior to a vote, build upon the existing MFP that is rich with data and recommendations, but also meet some of the concerns and criticisms that were apparent during the Roundtable. The Committee retains that hope to collaborate and improve the DC Public Education Master Facilities Plan 2018.

7 A BILL
8

9
10 23-216
11

12
13 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
14
15 _____
16

17 To officially designate the new middle school in Square 3269 as Wells Middle School, to
18 disapprove the Master Facilities Plan submitted by the Mayor to the Council, and to
19 amend the law with respect to the timing of approval of a master facilities plan.

20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
21 act may be cited as the “Wells School Designation and Master Facilities Plan Disapproval Act of
22 2019”.

23 Sec. 2. Pursuant to sections 401 and 422, but notwithstanding section 422(a), of the Street
24 and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law
25 4-201; D.C. Official Code §§ 9-204.01, and 9-204.22) (“Act”), the Council officially designates
26 the the new middle school in Square 3269, as shown on the Surveyor’s plat included in the
27 committee report, as the “Ida B. Wells Middle School”.

28 Sec. 3. Notwithstanding Section 1104(a) of the School Based Budgeting and
29 Accountability Act of 1998, effective March 26, 1000 (D.C. Law 12-175; D.C. Official Code §
30 38-2803(a)), the DC Schools Master Facilities Plan 2018 as submitted by the Mayor the Council
31 of the District of Columbia on January 7, 2019 is disapproved.

32 Sec. 4 Section 1104(a) of the School Based Budgeting and Accountability Act of 1998,
33 effective March 26, 1000 (D.C. Law 12-175; D.C. Official Code § 38-2803(a)) is amended by

34 striking the phrase “The Council shall vote on the 10-year Master Facilities Plan concurrently
35 with its vote on the Mayor's capital budget proposal.”

36 Sec. 5. Fiscal impact statement.

37 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
38 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
39 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

40 Sec. 6. Effective date.

41 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
42 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
43 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
44 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code §1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
45 Columbia Register.