



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF SCHOOLS

Gregory Baker, Deputy Superintendent
PK-12 Cleveland, Roosevelt, Wilson Clusters
501 N. Dixon, Portland, OR 97227
Phone: (503) 916-3329 Fax: (503) 916-2466

February 17, 2010

To the Abernethy School community:

I am writing to share some important information with you about growing space issues at Abernethy School. As you know, Abernethy has experienced significant growth over the last few years. Your school is now up to four sections of kindergarten and has almost 400 students enrolled K-5. However, this has resulted in space issues at the school on the first floor, where grades K-2 must be located due to fire codes.

As part of a district-wide capacity analysis, PPS staff recommended that Abernethy receive a modular building (2 classrooms) to expand first floor capacity. When this recommendation was presented at a School Board Committee meeting, staff was asked to review whether or not Abernethy's boundary could be changed in order to address the over-crowding issue in the neighborhood. Staff has completed that analysis and will be recommending proceeding with the modular as a boundary change at this time will not resolve the current Abernethy crowding issue.

Factors Considered:

- 1) Abernethy's current enrollment is at the low end of the ideal program size. Reducing the size of the program via a boundary change will create challenges in meeting core program requirements.
- 2) Surrounding neighborhood schools do not have room to absorb enough students from the neighborhood to relieve the crowding issue.
- 3) The Edwards School building has been leased to the Multnomah Education Service District until 2013.

Since the recommendation was made, it has become apparent in discussions with city planning officials that the modular placement and permitting will be a long process, due to the historic nature of the Abernethy area. As such we now anticipate that the modular will be in place in September 2011. In the interim, we will be working closely with Mrs. Barron to identify facilities options to hold the enrollment adequately within the existing structure for the 2010-11 school year. The extent to which internal space changes will be required will depend largely on incoming K enrollment for the fall. We will be monitoring registrations closely as they come in and will be able to make decisions about summer space modifications by June.

The entire Abernethy community deserves tremendous credit for creating a vibrant, thriving and special learning environment. As more information becomes available, Mrs. Barron will keep you updated.

Thank you,

Greg Baker
Deputy Superintendent