



Cool Spring–Adelphi Elementary School

Project Planning Committee (PPC) Meeting #3 Minutes

Date: May 29, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Facilitator: Brittney Bennett, Communications Specialist, Department of Capital Programs

Attendees:

Brittney Bennett

Robert Nelson

Brianna Blackaby

John Wooden

Joseph Howell

Laura Carr-Degen

Moona Barikdar

Niki Newman-Brown

Dawn Holton

Delegate Deni Taveras

Doug Ostazeski

Senator Malcolm Augustine

Dr. David Lever

Valerie Keil

Deborah Szyfer

Summary

The third PPC meeting for the Cool Spring–Adelphi Elementary School project focused on clarifying the current role of the PPC during the construction phase. While major structural and design decisions have been finalized, participants were invited to contribute feedback on interior color schemes, FF&E selections, and school-specific features such as murals. The project team addressed prior concerns, emphasizing transparency and outlining why certain changes are no longer feasible due to the project's progress and use of modular construction. The team also reviewed instructional implications, school configuration, transportation logistics, and outdoor learning opportunities. Several key action items and next steps were noted to continue incorporating community and staff input where possible.

Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Brittney Bennett opened the meeting by welcoming participants and confirming that this was the third PPC meeting for the Cool Spring–Adelphi Elementary School project. She introduced members of the project team, including:

- PGCPs Capital Programs:
 - Director Shayla Jackson (not present),
 - Senior Mechanical Engineer Dawn Holton
 - Project Manager Joe Howell
- Gilbert Architects (Project Architect):
 - Scott Adams (not present)
 - Brianna Blackaby
- Adtek Engineers:
 - Doug Ostazeski
- PGCPs Instructional Leadership:
 - Dr. Nikki Newman Brown (Instructional Director for Cool Spring and Adelphi)
- Planning and Design Liaisons:
 - Dr. David Lever
 - Deborah Szyfer
- PGCPs School Boundaries Office
 - John Wooden

PPC Expectations and Role Clarification

Brittney Bennett emphasized that the Department of Capital Programs' PPC initiative was created after several new schools, including this one, were already underway. As such, the committee's role is limited to contributing input on the following:

- Interior Color Schemes
- Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (FF&E)
- School-specific artwork and murals

Structural and site changes (e.g., building layout, modular design) are no longer feasible due to construction progress, finalized materials, and regulatory approvals. The team acknowledged stakeholder frustration while stressing the importance of continued input in available areas.

Review of Concerns from Previous Meeting

The project team revisited concerns raised at the last PPC session and provided updates or clarifications:

1. Shared School Identity
 - a. Each school (Cool Spring and Adelphi) will maintain a distinct identity within the building.
 - b. Separate entrances, signage, interior themes, and dedicated spaces will support this goal.
2. Safety and Supervision
 - a. The team addressed site supervision concerns, particularly in shared spaces.
 - b. Confirmed clear boundaries and protocols will be in place to ensure student safety.
3. Middle School Foot Traffic
 - a. A suggestion to connect the site to the adjacent middle school via a paved path was deemed unfeasible.
 - b. Reasons included site topography, safety risks (middle schoolers walking through an active elementary school), and disruption to outdoor instruction.
4. Outdoor Learning and Play Space
 - a. Plans include two playgrounds and outdoor classrooms.
 - b. Emphasis placed on equitable access and use of green spaces for each school.

Design and Construction Updates

The architecture and civil engineering teams shared updates on the construction progress:

- Modular construction is well underway, limiting the scope for design changes.
- Stormwater management systems and site grading are complete or in progress.

The building pad is set, and foundation work is scheduled. They also confirmed that ADA-compliant and sustainability features are being incorporated and that interior design decisions will be finalized with PPC input.

Instructional and Operational Planning

Dr. Nikki Newman-Brown discussed how instruction will be supported and aligned:

- Staff from both schools will receive transition support and professional development.

- Curriculum and teaching models will be aligned to maximize collaboration and resource sharing.
- Opportunities for shared programming (e.g., assemblies, extracurriculars) are being explored with care to preserve school identity.

Transportation and Site Circulation

Site circulation plans were presented:

- Separate parent and bus drop-off zones will reduce congestion and enhance safety.
- Pedestrian paths and access controls will be designed to maintain secure perimeters.
- Clear signage and operational protocols will support smooth daily traffic flow.

Cultural Representation and Murals

The project will incorporate murals and artwork to reflect the culture and values of both schools:

- PPC members will help select mural content and themes.
- Community involvement in the artwork process is encouraged.

Next Steps and Engagement Opportunities

The project team will continue sharing updated renderings and design visuals.

- Interior finishes and FF&E decisions will be made in the coming months.
- Feedback on mural designs and school branding features will be actively solicited.
- PPC meetings will continue to serve as a venue for focused stakeholder input during the project's remaining phases.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.