



PAYMON ROUHANIFARD
SUPERINTENDENT

PRESS RELEASE

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Camden Residents Stick with Tradition in Vote on the New Camden High School's Design Concept

*Over 260 Camden residents took part in a survey to choose the look and feel of the City's new
21st century high school campus*

Tuesday, January 23, 2018 – Office of the Superintendent, Camden, NJ – Superintendent Paymon Rouhanifard today confirmed with the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) that the new four-academy Camden High School Campus should be designed in the collegiate, historic model of the Castle on the Hill, the building being replaced to build a new, 21st century four-academy high school campus to serve 1,200 Camden high school students. The District asked the community to weigh-in on three possible design concepts developed by the SDA, which last year began a \$136 million project to build Camden a new, state of the art public high school.

The community feedback process launched in November when a group of 30 high school students attended a Design Day with the SDA, where they shared their feedback on draft building concepts and worked with SDA architects on the floor plan and classroom layouts. A week later, the 60-person Camden High School Community Committee – a group of alumni, residents, staff, and students who meet regularly to provide input and oversight on the SDA's high school construction project – weighed in on their preferred design concept, before the [three design concepts](#) were presented to the public for a vote last month. The District collected over 260 responses from students, community members, and the public. The survey was distributed in the City's high schools and was available online through the District's website.

Set to open its doors in fall 2021, the new Camden High school will be home to Camden's three public magnet high schools and a new STEAM academy, dedicated to providing a rounded curriculum in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. The new facility will offer a brand new auditorium, gymnasium, locker room, and cafeteria for students. Purpose-built labs, seminar spaces, and classrooms will support student learning and deliver access to the latest technology for students and staff.

Based on community feedback, the Superintendent presented the SDA with the City's preference for a new high school façade that pays tribute to the beloved Castle on the Hill. The second most popular design concept included a modern-looking reflective glass tower. When sharing their feedback, some community members asked that stones from the Castle on the Hill be used in the brick work in the new school building. Others suggested that the design of the new school more closely follow the design of the current Castle. All feedback is being shared with the SDA who will now work on creating an architectural blueprint for the building based on the chosen design concept.



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Plans are in place to use turrets from the Castle to build a [sculpture garden](#) nearby the new school building in Parkside. In addition, stones salvaged from the original Castle will be include in the brickwork for the stairway leading to the main entrance of the new school. Memorabilia from Camden High School will be displayed prominently in the new building, and sections of the gymnasium floorboards will be preserved and auctioned off to raise money for Camden High athletics. These are just a few of the examples of how the District and community are working with the SDA to commemorate Camden High's history in the new school building.

"I am so grateful to the alumni, residents, and students who took the time to help the SDA design the new Camden High School campus," said Superintendent Paymon Rouhanifard. "The new high school is going to give our students access to the quality, modern learning facilities our District has been lacking for far too long. The building design concept the community selected is another way to ensure that Camden High's legacy and history are reflected in the new building."

"Camden High is much more than a building; it is a close-knit community made up of generations of educators, athletes, scholars, and civic leaders," said Advisory Board of Education President Martha Wilson, a graduate of Camden High School's Class of 1970. "We are excited to see the new Camden High School project progressing, and are thrilled that it is being designed with feedback from the community and with a tower that pays homage to the Castle on the Hill."

"Being part of the decision making process is really important for residents and alumni," added Avis Satterfield, a Camden High graduate, guidance counselor, and Community Committee Chair. "Coming to work each day in the a brand-new 21st century Camden High School will be even sweeter knowing that I helped design it!"

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