



BENSON POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL

A look to the future — Information for students and families

November 2010

Benson Polytechnic High School is proud of its long tradition as a four-year career-technical education focus school. We are building on that tradition to help students succeed in a highly skilled, highly paid 21st century work force.

Benson as a focus school: Last spring, the Portland School Board affirmed that Benson will remain Portland Public Schools' premier career technical education school. Other high schools will add career technical classes different than those offered at Benson. As a result, Benson ultimately may have fewer students.

Benson Design Team: The Benson community is helping strengthen the school through the Benson Design Team. The team includes PPS staff and our entire site council: teachers, classified staff, students, alumni and parents. The team is looking at our existing academies and how to better prepare students for the 21st century workplace. It will also consider whether to go deeper in fewer areas or broadly in more areas, and how to ensure that new Benson students are truly interested in and prepared for CTE.

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Career-Related Learning: Superintendent Carole Smith and Mayor Sam Adams have convened a task force of industry leaders as well as teachers and administrators from Benson and other schools. By December 3, they will identify a set of career-interest focus areas that PPS should build or keep at its high schools. The task force will NOT link programs to specific schools.

CTE in PPS: Superintendent Smith will use the work of the design team and the task force to determine what Benson and other high schools will offer next year, and what will be phased in over the longer term. Her decisions about next year's programs are expected in January in time for the annual school lottery.

What does all of this mean for current students? Changes that result from this process will phase in over time. However, as always at Benson, particular course offerings will vary depending on student interest.

Your voice: Share ideas or questions for the Benson Design Team with Principal Steve Olczak (solczak@pps.k12.or.us) or Jeanette Pelster, (jpelste1@pps.k12.or.us), communications tech teacher and site council co-chair.

