

Dear Madison Families,

These are challenging times for our communities in many ways, and they have shined a light on the continuous systemic inequities that exist in the United States. **I am announcing that Madison High School will be starting the process to rename our school along with Wilson High School.** The Portland Public School Board has created a district wide [policy](#) that provides a detailed outline for naming and renaming district properties.

At Madison, our values are **Community, Respect, Education, Equity, and Diversity**. Our school's namesake, President James Madison was racist and was someone whose beliefs and actions stand in direct conflict with our school's and our district's commitment to racial equity. Therefore, I am in support of the PPS plan to change our school name and mascot. In the United States, school names and symbols that memorialize racist leaders have a traumatizing impact on students, families, teachers and staff of all backgrounds. When our public schools are named after individuals who advanced slavery and systemic racism, and we allow those names to remain on school property, we tacitly endorse their values as our own.

There are more than 4,000 individuals who have signed the [petition](#) advocating to change the name of our school. In 2019, the **Madison Peace and Justice Club** conducted a poll where more than 80% of students supported the name change. Several of our students have given [testimonies](#) asking our Board of Education for their support to change the name. They advocated for the name to be changed to one that is not "disheartening" and instead, empowers students and values racial justice.

Now is the time to change the various ways we've memorialized racist and painful histories of our past, and move forward with a school name that reflects the inclusive, diverse, and welcoming school community every Madison student deserves. This is our civic duty to foster. I look forward to working with each of you to create this change.

- Here you will find the application for students to join this committee
- Here is the community version of the application.

Applications are due on October 9th.

Please if you have any questions let me know.

Respectfully,

Principal Adam Skyles