

2021 CAMPAIGN PROGRESS REPORT



YELLOWSTONE. FOREVER.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR YELLOWSTONE SCHOOLS

When we launched Yellowstone's current capital campaign in 2018, the world was a significantly different place. The challenges brought by the novel coronavirus pandemic have rapidly re-shaped our society—and especially our school. Combined with continued racial tensions and injustices, ongoing educational inequity, and growing polarization across our nation, our mission is more vital now than ever before. Over the last year, we have learned many lessons, and we are excited to move towards a brighter future. I hope you enjoy this report on our progress to date, the challenges we have overcome, and a look at what is coming next.



Ryan Dolibois
Executive Director / Superintendent

CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

2018

SUMMER 2018: Campus Master Plan is finalized with Kirksey Architects.

NOVEMBER 2018: Yellowstone Board approves capital campaign to move forward.

2019

MARCH 2019: Through competitive RFP, Yellowstone hires CBRE/Heery as project manager.

SPRING/SUMMER 2019: The recently-launched capital fundraising campaign quickly raises nearly \$13 million in commitments from board members and a small group of foundations.

AUGUST 2019: Yellowstone selects Tellepsen as building contractor through a competitive RFP/bid process.

OCTOBER 2019: Recognizing the challenges of the fundraising landscape and the need to focus on programmatic needs at the school level, Yellowstone Board votes to pause the capital campaign effort, while continuing to move forward with the construction planning process.

CAMPAIGN TIMELINE, CONT'D.

2020

SPRING 2020: The novel coronavirus pandemic upends schools across the world; the capital campaign remains paused, while the construction project is modified to better align with COVID requirements and additional renovation needed for existing facilities.

SUMMER 2020: Construction drawings are completed, permits are submitted to the city, and Tellepsen begins bid process for subcontractor work. After the killing of George Floyd, weeks of protest in support of Black lives across the nation inspire a renewed sense of urgency, purpose, and resolve among our campaign leadership and board.

LATE JULY 2020: Yellowstone receives a surprise \$8 million gift from an anonymous donor inscribed with these words,
“Don't be afraid, move ahead with your capital project.
God bless you and this campaign.”

OCTOBER 2020: City permits are completed ahead of schedule; negotiations continue for road closure appraisal and land acquisition from the city.

NOVEMBER 2020: Yellowstone re-launches the capital campaign with a goal to finish in calendar year 2022.

DECEMBER 2020: Negotiations are completed for maximum guaranteed price and final contract with Tellepsen.

2021

FEBRUARY 2021: Renovations begin on existing Douglass Elementary building.

MAY 2021: Yellowstone's board finalizes a new strategic plan with updated mission and vision statements. This new plan takes into account all of the lessons learned throughout the course of 2020 and focuses our efforts to build a brighter future for our students.

Read more about our strategic plans at
WWW.YELLOWSTONESCHOOLS.ORG/FUTURE

CHALLENGES AHEAD

ROAD CLOSURE DELAYED

Negotiations with the city have taken longer than expected and are proving more expensive than anticipated. We have increased the campaign budget to help account for this and are in the final stages of negotiation with the city.

DOUGLASS RENOVATIONS REQUIRED

In the course of planning, we learned our current building must be brought up to code on several points before new construction can begin. These improvements include upgrades to our sewage system, installation of new fire sprinklers throughout the building, and renovations to the building's aging restroom facilities. We have folded these costs into the updated budget and started renovations as the first stage of the construction project in February 2021.

In addition, we added a maintenance fund to our campaign to ensure the new and improved campus is well maintained. This fund will provide for major facility expenses over the lifetime of our campus.



CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic is making a devastating impact on education. 42% of Houston Independent School District students were reported to be failing at least two classes. Thousands of Houston students have “gone missing” from school over the course of online learning and will require significant resources to re-engage. **Experts predict that it could take at least four years to recover, especially in at-risk populations.**

At Yellowstone, our data suggests we have succeeded in keeping our students from regressing but made no forward progress in improving academic benchmarks during the pandemic. Since many of our students come to us two years behind, this means a large percentage of our students are now at least three years behind grade level. This translates to some of our middle school students still reading on second-grade levels.

While the pandemic has upended life as we knew it, we have learned a number of lessons that have been incorporated into our campaign plans. These changes will make our model more resilient against the threat of future health emergencies and prepare us for the changing face of education.

- **Included additional funding in this campaign for the school's ongoing response to COVID-19.** Early reports from across the country indicate that it will take several years and a redesigned intervention model to properly address the “academic slide” that is a direct result of this pandemic. For the 2021-2022:
 - We will keep our classes small and hire additional staff who are expert academic interventionists, including a director of student achievement. This position will leverage student data to provide targeted, individualized support.
 - We will extend the time in our school day, lengthen our school year, increase dedicated math and reading instruction time, and add an intervention class period for all middle school students.
 - Through a planned partnership with the University of Houston, we will provide highly trained tutors to work with our students one-on-one.
- Increased the number and quality of outdoor spaces for learning.
- Redesigned a number of classrooms from stand-alone rooms to larger rooms with movable dividers. This will help in the event of future social distancing guidelines and also provide for more flexible academic programming.
- Included a dedicated budget for land acquisition to ensure Yellowstone's campus has adequate land and space for future expansion.

Stay abreast of our plans to respond to the devastating academic impact of COVID-19 at WWW.YELLOWSTONESCHOOLS.ORG/FUTURE

UPDATED CAMPAIGN BUDGET

As a result of our strategic planning, this campaign has evolved from a strictly capital campaign into a comprehensive campaign to provide funding for both capital and programmatic initiatives. The budget has been updated to account for the challenges mentioned previously.

Existing Building Renovation	\$2,500,000
New Building Construction	\$18,500,000
Road Closure/Abatement, Outdoor Improvements, and Future Land Acquisition	\$2,000,000
Academic Response to COVID-19	\$3,000,000
Repair/Maintenance Fund and Working Capital for Budget Growth	\$4,000,000

GRAND TOTAL **\$30,000,000**



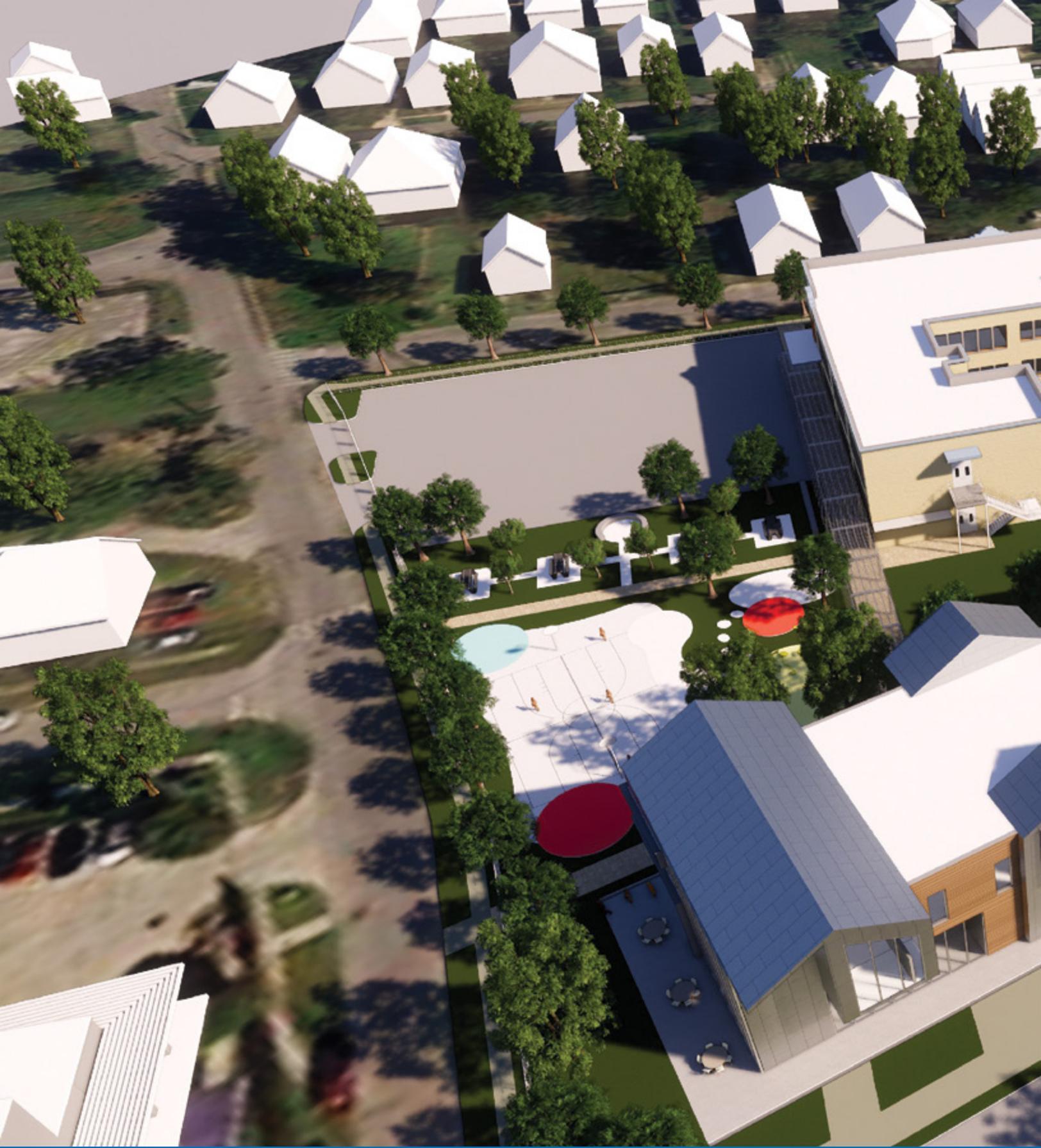
Yellowstone Schools | Lobby Rendering



LOOKING AHEAD

Despite the many challenges brought by 2020, the future remains bright at Yellowstone. In the next year, we expect to complete renovations to our current building and break ground on our new construction. We also expect to wrap up our fundraising efforts by securing the final \$7 million needed to reach our goal!

Thank you for joining us!



YELLOWSTONE
INSPIRE. EMPOWER. INVEST.

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