



## Guidance and Considerations for Renaming Schools and Facilities

This document is designed to support districts and charter schools in New Mexico with requests for changing school names that are linked to a community's lived and historical experience with racism, oppression, and genocide. Districts and charters may use the following checklist to navigate the process.

### School and Facilities Name Change Checklist Anchored in Policy

- Determine if the district, school or charter school's community is supportive or opposed to changing a school name using a survey, social media, and community meetings (virtual meetings are recommended given standing Health Orders).
- Determine if the local school board or charter school governing body includes provisions for renaming schools/facilities, and adhere to them when applicable.
- Ask students, parents, district/charter school employees, and the community to submit new school names that are free from links to racism, oppression, and genocide; using a petition method, a survey, social media, community meetings (virtual meetings are recommended to ensure health and safety) and/or the method detailed in the local school board or charter school governance body policies.
- Establish a school-renaming taskforce or committee to review the names submitted by the district/charter school community and come to a consensus around 3-5 names for a final community vote and/or school or governing board vote.
- Hold a public local school board or charter school governance body meeting and allow for public comment regarding the school renaming.
- Local school board or charter school governance body votes.
- If local school board or charter school governance body do not have policies for renaming schools, the district/charter school may choose to adopt.

### Renaming Considerations

Recognizing that the ethnic and cultural composition of a local school community may change and that school/facility names are permanent, the name selected should have broad acceptance in a multi-cultural society and have a unique association with that school community.

### Some Renaming Ideas/Options

- Geographic locations within the state or community
- Cultural celebrations or events that honor local/state culture, history and heritage
- Goal and value words like: achievement, success, realization, longevity, etc.

### Resources

Culturally and linguistically responsive (CLR) school environments please visit the Language and Culture Division's CLR page: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/languageandculture/culturally-and-linguistically-responsive-instruction/>

Burch-Brown, Joanna. "Is It Wrong To Topple Statues & Rename Schools?". *Journal of Political Theory and Philosophy* 1 (1):59-88 (2017). <https://philpapers.org/asearch.pl?pub=280902>

Las Cruces, New Mexico school renaming: <https://www.lcsun-news.com/story/news/education/lcps/2020/08/04/onate-high-school-las-cruces-vote-name-remain-board-new-mexico/3293827001/>

California school renaming: <https://edsource.org/2020/california-districts-look-to-rename-schools-linked-to-racist-past/634080>

Richmond, Virginia school renaming: <https://diverseeducation.com/article/118625/>

Fairfax County, Virginia school renaming: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2020/07/23/john-lewis-new-name-fairfax-virginia-robert-e-lee-high-school/5498267002/>

Portions of this guidance is adapted from the Albuquerque Public Schools Board of Education Procedural Directives and Board Policies.