

Ruth Acty Elementary School
Suggestions for Carrying the Learning Forward
December 9, 2020

There was enthusiasm and interest about continuing to learn the stories about all of the top seven names, as well as a desire to incorporate the history of prior renaming efforts which had lifted up the name “Sequoia” as an alternative, as well as a desire to continue to engage with understanding the former name “Jefferson” in deeper historical context. The suggestions included:

Acty

Create a permanent exhibit about Ruth Acty and additional curriculum that could be shared with other schools as part of a “local heroes” curriculum.

Angelou-Bridges-Ginsburg-Soskin-Uchida

Suggestions included:

- Painting a mural in the courtyard that includes all the top 7 name contenders
- Creating a “Local Heroes” curriculum.

Ohlone

Further consultation with tribal representatives revealed that there are some differences of opinion on the use of the name 'Muwekma' and/or 'Ohlone,' and more time and process is needed to think this through. Superintendent Brent Stephens has asked that the District “press pause” in order to engage in a more comprehensive review and discussion of how indigenous history and presence is represented in our District curriculum, so that renaming of a school or other facility with an indigenous name is accompanied by a district-wide, ongoing commitment to thoughtful engagement with the people whose name would be made a part of our schools. This could be part of the Washington renaming process, or could be revisited at another appropriate time in the near future.

Sequoia

The committee recommends ensuring that the 2003-2005 effort to rename the school be honored through renaming the school’s meeting room / cafeteria as “Sequoia Hall” and include a sign which explains the renaming history, and continue to maintain links to the documents now posted on the PTA and BUSD website about the 2003-05 history.