

## QuickPoint! - Why are Portland School Construction Projects So Expensive?

By John A. Charles, Jr.

In 2021, Sherwood School District opened the largest high school in Oregon. At 350,000 square feet, Sherwood High accommodates 2,000 students.

The 73-acre campus includes a 600-seat performing arts center, a football stadium complex, and seven multipurpose sports fields.

The total cost was \$186 million, paid for by Sherwood taxpayers.

The Beaverton School District is currently rebuilding Beaverton High School with a capacity of 1,500 students, at a cost of \$253 million.

The Portland School District is preparing to rebuild Jefferson, Ida B. Wells, and Cleveland high schools at an average cost of \$362 million dollars per school. Each of the three schools will have a capacity of 1,700 students, though Jefferson enrollment is only 459.

The School Board is planning to ask for the money in a May, 2025 bond measure. The details are still under discussion, but the bond must be referred to the ballot by February 28.

Since the new Portland schools will be the most expensive schools ever built in state history, voters should be asking:

*What do the school boards of Sherwood and Beaverton know that the Portland Board doesn't?*

If PPS Board members can't answer that question, they shouldn't refer the measure to voters.

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