



# REGISTER

[www.cashnet.org](http://www.cashnet.org)

Volume XXXII, No. 5

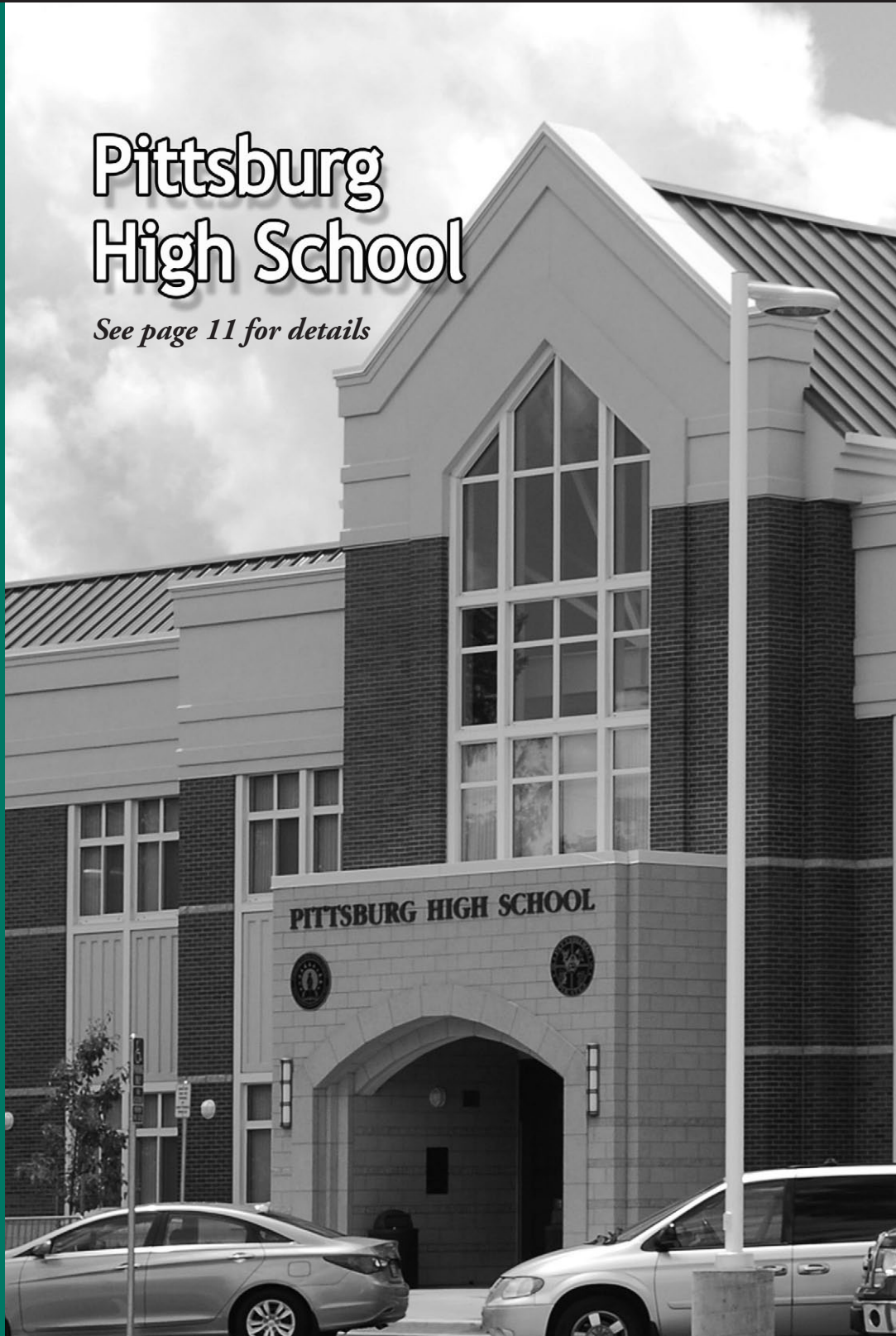
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COALITION FOR ADEQUATE SCHOOL HOUSING

## ***In This Issue...***

- 2 ▶ Message From The Chair
- 3 ▶ May 25, 2011 Monthly Update Meeting Notes
- 4 ▶ May 25, 2011 State Allocation Board Meeting Notes
- 6 ▶ School Roofing Bill Dies
- 7 ▶ SAB Subcommittee on Priorities in Funding Update
- 8 ▶ SB 474 (Evans) Update
- 9 ▶ C.A.S.H. Op-Ed Response to California Watch  
Articles: Public School Safety
- 10 ▶ State Budget May Revision Update
- 12 ▶ School Profile: Pittsburg High School, Pittsburg Unified School District
- 14 ▶ Webcast Sponsorship Opportunities
- 20 ▶ Upcoming Meetings, Conferences & Workshops

## **Pittsburg High School**

*See page 11 for details*



# Pittsburg High School Reconstruction: Phoenix Rising

The sign in front of the Pittsburg High construction site simply stated, "Pittsburgh High School – Phoenix Rising."

The Roman poet Ovid described the Phoenix as a majestic bird that at the age of 500 would die and, out of its ashes, a new vibrant bird would emerge. Built over 100 years ago, the original Pittsburg High School and Junior High School were proud landmarks in the community. In 1953, portions of the beloved historic high school were replaced with a 1950's modern design due to failure to meet the Field Act. As the community of Pittsburg grew, Pittsburg High School first expanded into the adjacent elementary school creating the "east wing" of the campus, and subsequently expanded across the street into the original junior high school creating the "central side" of campus. Due to continued growth in the City of Pittsburg, portable classrooms were added in later phases to meet the growing student body. A common problem of campuses that have seen dramatic growth and undergone many additions are confusing and conflicting circulation patterns that create many unsupervisable areas with little security. The District and the community treasured portions of the original historic school, but the campus had expanded to the point of dysfunction. Was there a band-aid that would resurrect the old "Phoenix"?

Unfortunately, there was no easy fix. The hodge-podge of various architectural styles made the campus disjointed



and lacking character. Vince Ferrante, Pittsburg School Board member, summed up the community's frustration by saying, "We need to start over. We need to provide a new state-of-the-art school that reflects the architectural heritage of the original school."

Starting from scratch was not an option. The District needed the Pittsburg High School to remain on the original site and to function during construction. Successful campus reconstruction requires significant involvement from the District, school administration, faculty, the school board, and the community. The reconstruction design had to solve a multidimensional puzzle, to create a unified campus that works within the existing site.

In 2006, the Pittsburg School Board put a bond measure (Measure J) on the

ballot and set up a campaign committee to rally community support. The community of Pittsburg showed strong support of their schools by passing Measure J with an overwhelming majority. The District also sought out state funding programs, specifically state grants for growth, modernization, Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, and Overcrowding Relief Grants (ORG). The Administration and School Board assessed the Pittsburg High School campus needs and quickly determined the goals and objectives for the design: a unified campus that provides security and supervision, incorporates the latest educational technology, provides for complete on-campus food service and promotes community use.





California Design West Architects worked with District staff to first solve logistical problems. The main assets of the existing campus were the 2,500 seat Creative Arts Building and two small Gymnasiums. The newly reconstructed main campus would be built adjacent to those buildings, and would be constructed where the existing “east wing” of the campus was currently located. By placing temporary classrooms on the north side of campus, Pittsburg High School would remain open throughout construction. Once the new campus was complete, the 1950’s high school campus additions would be removed to make way for new playfields and faculty parking. With these large logistical problems solved, California Design West Architects began to create a design that addressed the goals and objectives of the District.

The unifying feature of the design of Pittsburg High School is a central quadrangle. The central quad is not only the key to organization; it is the backdrop to meeting the goals of the District. The central quad is reminiscent of a traditional college campus. The neo-gothic character of the 264,000 square foot two-story brick building mirrors the design of the original Pittsburg High School campus.

To ensure safety and security, access to the campus and central quadrangle is through three entrances: a public entrance, a student entrance adjacent the student parking lot, and a faculty entrance adjacent the faculty parking lot. This provides for a tightly supervised and secure campus, an important goal of the new design, as all entrances

are easily viewed from administrative offices. Supervision is also enhanced by simple circulation patterns with large open stairways leading down from the second story of the main building, out to the central quad.

The central quad acts as the student gathering place and as the main dining area. With direct access to the cafeteria, outdoor covered dining, and multiple food service points of sale, the quad allows for a closed campus at lunch for the entire student body.

While maintaining the traditional character of the school constructed 100 years ago, the new structure incorporates the latest educational technology. The structure is designed around sustainable energy principals including: a well insulated, compact building envelope, high efficiency HVAC systems, natural daylighting and light control systems, and easily maintained and eco-friendly interior surfaces. The Pittsburg High School campus exceeds Title 24 standards by nearly 30%. Currently, solar panels are being installed over the parking areas and Creative Arts Building roofs, which will provide the majority of the electrical needs for the school. Had the District decided to pursue LEED Certification, the campus could have

met the requirements for LEED Gold Certification.

The District strongly believes that the goal to promote community use should not compromise the security of the academic campus. The existing Creative Arts Building and the new Gymnasium have separate public lobbies facing public parking to allow for safe and secure public access. The new 18,000 square foot Gymnasium, large enough to seat the entire student body, has its own lobby facing public parking. Students access the new Gymnasium, Locker rooms, and new Music and Drama classrooms in the Creative Arts Building directly from the central quad. The Creative Arts Building was modernized and outfitted with a fully automated stage rigging system, sophisticated theatrical lighting and sound system. Other modernization features include accessibility upgrades, full HVAC replacement and new interior finishes.

In August of 2010, as the Pittsburg High School band marched into the quad during the grand opening of the reconstructed Pittsburg High School, the community admired the new and modernized 3,000 student, 395,000 square foot campus. It was an impressive sight; it seemed as though a Phoenix had indeed risen from ashes. However, one part of the myth will never fit. According to legend, a Phoenix rises out of the ashes alone; in reality the Pittsburg High School stands as an accomplishment of the dedicated and passionate District administration and staff, Board Members, faculty, designers and community members. 

### ***Pittsburg High School Reconstruction Design Team:***

- District: Pittsburg Unified School District
- Architect: California Design West Architects, Inc.
- Construction Manager: RGM and Associates
- General Contractor: SJ Amoroso Construction Co., Inc.
- Structural Engineer: Buehler & Buehler Structural Engineers
- Mechanical Engineer: Capital Engineering Consultants, Inc.
- Electrical Engineer: Charles A. Martin and Associates