Lincoln Expansion Summary Recommendations & FAQ

Summary Recommendations

- Reopen Lincoln Middle for the 2019-2020 school year
- School Size: 550 seat middle school, 1,000 seat high school
- Grade Configuration: 6-8 in middle school, 9-12 in high school
- Entrance Requirements: Modify entrance requirements for Lincoln Middle. Entrance requirements for the high school will remain in place

PROPOSED MIDDLE SCHOOL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

- Students must have a record of good citizenship (will remain in place)
- Applicants must also have cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher (will remain in place)
- Applicants must score at or above the 60th percentile on a national standardized reading and math test to be eligible for entrance will remain in place

If not, then...

- Students may enter on a PROBATIONARY basis if applicants score at or above a cumulative percentile of 130 on a national standardized test in math and reading, with neither score below the 55th percentile

Ex: A student scores 91st percentile in reading and 58th percentile in math. Their cumulative percentile of 149 would qualify them to be eligible for entrance. If accepted, students would receive targeted support to reach the rigor of Lincoln

The number of probationary seats for students below the 60/60 requirement will be limited. (No more than 5% of the total middle school enrollment)

- GPA Requirement: Minimum 2.5 GPA requirement for middle school and high school students will remain in place
- Automatic roll up to the high school for students who successfully complete 8th grade will remain in place

Lincoln Middle Potential Enrollment

Q1: Will the school be the ideal middle school size?

A1: By 2023, the middle school is projected to enroll around 550 students. KCPS school size standards recommend a 7-8 grade middle school of 450-800 students. Lincoln Middle will serve 3 grade levels, therefore ideally it should be larger. However, due to the high level of interest/applications at the 9th grade and limited capacity of the high school building, the middle school enrollment will need to be kept smaller than our traditional school size standards. This allows the high school to accommodate students entering Lincoln as 9th graders, as well as, all the 8th graders rolling up from the middle school. If we are able to accommodate more than 1,000 students at the HS, we could also grow the middle school enrollment as we will be working with the architects to have a middle school capacity around 700.
Q2: How do we have certainty for KCPS students who want to attend Lincoln after 6th grade?

A2: Since most KCPS elementary schools have a K-6 configuration, enrollment projections allow for an additional 40-85 students to enter Lincoln as 7th graders. This is intentionally done in order to leave available spots for KCPS students who wish to finish at their elementary school before enrolling at Lincoln Middle.

Q3: Is the view of the district that the LCPA Middle expansion plan will retain current KCPS students or is there a plan to attract outside students?

A3: Projected enrollment takes into consideration modified entrance requirements, elimination of wait lists, aggressive marketing to charter and private school families, and increased retention of KCPS students who leave after 4th grade. It is estimated by SY2023, 37% of new students will be the result of expanded marketing to public, charter, and private school families, 21% from improved retention of KCPS elementary students, 14% from elimination of wait lists for middle school grades, 12% from modified entrance requirements for middle school, 10% from the elimination of wait lists for high school grades and 6% from organic growth/retention of Lincoln students.

Q4: What happens if 100% of the middle school students roll to the high school?

A4: Enrollment projections have allowed for a sufficient number of seats at 9th grade to accommodate students rolling up from the middle school, as well as, approximately 75 additional incoming students from other schools.

Staffing

Q5: What impact will expansion have upon staffing?

A5: The reopening of Lincoln Middle will not have an impact on staffing. Current Lincoln teachers (gr. 6-8) will be moved to the middle school building, unless they choose to transfer to another site. If teachers from other schools want to work at Lincoln Middle, they would have to apply via the inter-district transfer process. Expansion will require the recruiting and hiring of additional teachers at the middle school and high school.

Q6: How are we going to address/improve teacher quality at LCP?

A6: School improvement begins with principal leadership. Therefore, as a district, we are providing increased instructional leadership support for all principals through our monthly instructionally-focused principal meetings and principal Professional Learning Communities, held at various campuses monthly. These meetings provide a framework for principals to have a sharpened view for the instructional program on their campuses. Additionally, our assistant superintendents provide leadership coaching to principals individually. These items combined will improve the instructional quality at all campuses.

Specific to Lincoln Prep, staff will be receiving professional development that will incorporate IB and ACT standards and expectations in middle school and 9th and 10th grade core classes.

Communications/Engagement

Q7: How did we solicit feedback during this process?
A7: KCPS invited current/prospective parents, students, and staff to give feedback at meetings held on 7/17, 7/18, and 8/3. Meeting invitations via email and robocalls were sent to all current Lincoln parents and all KCPS elementary parents 1.5-2 weeks prior to each meeting. KCPS also reached out to charter and private schools with an invitation for parents to attend. Show Me KC Schools featured the event on their website and Facebook page. KCPS sent a press release prior to each meeting and local television media covered the event on 7/17. The three meeting dates were established in early July and did not change. The combined attendance at all three meetings was 165. In addition, 226 individuals completed an online survey. Feedback indicated that 63% of those surveyed didn’t like the idea of housing middle school students and high school students in the same building. 53% of those surveyed said they were looking for more attention to be given to middle school needs.

Following the public meetings, attendees were emailed the presentations and meeting notes. Materials were also made available on our website: http://www.kcpublicschools.com/lincolnexpansion. Stakeholders were also encouraged to continue giving feedback to either district staff or KCPS Board members. An email was sent to solicit additional feedback and provided contact information for Board members.

Q10: Is this a deviation from the master plan approved in February 2016?

A10: No. The recommendation to reopen Lincoln Middle is not a deviation from the master plan, but rather fulfilling a promise made to KCPS stakeholders. Expansion of the Lincoln program was specifically mentioned in the master plan and reaffirmed in the strategic plan.

Q11: Why haven’t we recruited and marketed Lincoln effectively?

A11: There has been hesitation to aggressively market Lincoln due to space limitations and concerns of recruiting students to end up turning them away. Enrollment at the school has increased by 200 students since SY15 with little to no marketing specific to Lincoln. Expansion of Lincoln will allow the communications department to effectively market the middle school and high school programs.

Q12: What are the plans for new parent engagement at the building level?

A12: Our Family Engagement Specialist will work with incoming families to create a strong SAC at Lincoln MS. We also will meet and engage with families on multiple occasions before opening the middle school, as well as, during the school year.

Impact On Other Schools/ System of Schools

Q13: Are we creating a two-tiered system (haves and have nots)?

A13: We are working hard to ensure that our system provides equity for all learners. Each school has unique characteristics that require a different set of services in order to improve student outcomes. As we continue to have conversations with principals, analyze data, and observe classrooms, our desired outcome is to offer a system that provides leverage for all schools to be successful. The schools that have more need based on the needs of the students will receive more support.

Q14: What is the impact on Northeast Middle, Central Middle, Paseo, or other KCPS schools?
A14: An expansion of Lincoln is estimated to have little impact on enrollment at other KCPS schools. Based upon the proposed entrance requirement changes and past trends, Central Middle could decrease by 3 students, while Northeast Middle could decrease by 9 students. Foreign Language Academy could decrease by a total of 10 students, while other KCPS schools (including Paseo) could decrease by 0-3 students. To calculate these estimates, we considered current and historical capture rates among KCPS students who qualified for Lincoln and whether or not they chose to attend. (District-wide more than 60 percent of existing KCPS students who qualify to attend Lincoln choose to attend another KCPS school.) We then applied these trends with the total number of children who would qualify under revised entrance requirements. Among current KCPS students it is estimated that an additional 50 students would choose to attend Lincoln Middle. Since these students are spread among 23 different school sites, the impact on enrollment is minimal.

The expansion will not negatively impact Northeast Middle or Central Middle financially. In fact, $2.1 million additional funds are being devoted to these schools to improve middle school education (for additional details please attend the Board meeting on 10/25/17).

Q15: How do we get Northeast Middle and Central Middle to succeed?

A15: A concerted effort is currently being made to support Central Middle and Northeast Middle. The Center for Conflict Resolution is working with NEMS to train staff in Restorative Justice methods. School Leadership is providing focused and increased time with both staffs to maximize leadership and instructional practice capacity. We are training administration and teachers to focus on student learning and culturally relevant teaching and learning. We also are spending more time with each school’s staff by means of instructional walkthroughs. We have provided (and will continue to provide) extensive counselor and administrative training to develop classes and master schedules that meet student need in terms of instruction, remediation, and acceleration.

KCPS will add support for neighborhood middle schools in SY18-19. Additional FTEs will be allocated to address social-emotional needs. Additional FTEs will also be provided for academic intervention support. Programs and courses will be expanded including the CTE program and advanced course offerings such as Pre-AP (for additional details please attend the Board meeting on 10/25/17).

Q16: How are we going to create a better, more comprehensive and exploratory middle school experience?

A16: We are currently addressing the middle school experience for all of our middle schools. Our Director of Career and Technology Education has held several focus groups with community employers and community college representatives to determine what this landscape will be. The middle school programming will be designed based on this feedback. We plan to implement a middle school model that allows the students to have career pathways, gain certifications, and begin the career inventory process. Our goal is the have a completed draft of the recommendations by January 31. Additionally, we plan on adding Pre-AP course offerings for the core courses in order to add rigorous course offerings as an option for students.

Q17: LCPA Middle will be the only 6-8 school. I think all of our elementary schools are K-6 or K-8. Middle schools are 7-8 and High schools are 9-12 or 7-12. How do we bring alignment so that we are not disrupting grade levels at our existing schools?
A17: Under the leadership of Dr. Bedell, Cabinet members are undertaking a system-wide analysis of several factors including grade configuration to bring better alignment to KCPS. Configurations vary greatly from district to district. Some districts have a unified configuration, while others do not. KCPS is currently discussing the best fit for our local circumstances. Since most middle schools nationally include grades 6-8, and there has been strong support for the 6-8 configuration at Lincoln, the administration decided to continue this configuration at Lincoln Middle.

The 6th grade class will be limited in size to 80-125 seats, significantly less than space available in 7th and 8th grades. This is intentional in order to minimize the impact on our existing elementary schools with K-6 configurations.

South Middle School

Q18: What impact will this have upon establishing a south middle school?

A18: In early 2017, the Administration worked with the south middle school steering committee “to investigate the potential of opening a 3rd middle school that would serve the community south of Brush Creek.” The steering committee expressed strong support for the creation of a 3rd middle school south of Brush Creek (SOBC), however, the committee caveated its support for a 3rd middle school because the committee determined that enrollment data does not currently indicate that a 3rd middle school SOBC could be opened without a significant impact on the existing system. In order to determine whether a 3rd middle school could be successful, the committee recommended that KCPS, charter schools and community partners take several actions over the next 12 months (through June 2018). KCPS is committed to identifying strategies for opening a 3rd neighborhood middle school SOBC, and as such, KCPS and community partners have begun working on several of the recommendations.

For additional information on the south middle school steering committee’s recommendations, please refer to: https://www.kcpublicschools.org/Page/5551.