

# Community Inquiries Regarding Attendance Centers Study

## Preamble

The questions below were gathered at a meeting conducted by Midwest School Consultants (MSC) and by questions presented by school staff. MSC was commissioned by the Canton School Board to determine if the attendance center concept would improve student learning, and, most importantly, eliminate inequality within the district. This document is for informational purposes only.

1. **What was the Canton School Board’s Original Intent?**
  - a. **The intent to commission the Attendance Center Study was to learn if the concept would promote student learning and eliminate inequality within the district.**
  
2. **What issue needs to be addressed that prompted this study?**
  - a. **The Illinois State Board of Education reported that 36% of Canton students who completed the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) met or exceeded state goals and standards in English Language Arts and 30% in Math. The state average is 37% in English Language Arts and 32% for Math. Similarly, CHS students who completed the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) 35% met or exceeded state goals and standards in English Language Arts (37% state avg) and 26% Math (state avg 34%).**
  
3. **How do grade levels look different when there aren’t district mandates for classrooms?**
  - a. **Unfortunately, the district struggles with balancing grade level sections every year. The study indicated that grade level sections would be more balanced and normalized under an attendance center model. Inequality in enrollment would also be eliminated within grade level sections. Current enrollment figures are displayed below. Class sizes have become more balanced within the last few years. However, as you can see, some class sizes have significant enrollment margins.**

Total Enrollment	Grade	Eastview	Lincoln	Westview
164	k	21	22	18
	k	21	21	21
	k	20		20
145	1	19	19	18
	1	19	19	16
	1	19		15

	2	25	24	26
	2	25	24	24
199	2	25		25
	3	19	19	23
	3	18	20	23
162	3	19		21
	4	17	23	21
	4	19	21	22
161	4	19		18
831				

4. **When thinking about title services, how does that look in this model?**
  - a. **Title services are extremely important for at risk students – especially those children that are living in poverty. Under this concept there will be no change. Staff would continue to support students in the same exceptional manner.**
5. **How will this impact staff?**
  - a. **There will be staff impacted. For example, teachers will need to move to other buildings to work. Also, some support staff may need to be reallocated based on student needs.**
6. **How will this impact SPED?**
  - a. **Special Education staff will continue to provide support for students with disabilities in the same manner as services are currently provided.**
7. **How will this impact staff that serve multiple grades? I.E. social workers, music, art, library, pe.**
  - a. **Those staff members would continue to serve the needs of all students in their assigned buildings.**
8. **Does this proposal increase or decrease staff needed?**
  - a. **Neither. There would be no impact on staffing levels.**
9. **Horizontal collaboration improves, what happens to vertical collaboration?**
  - a. **Currently all district-wide elementary horizontal articulation is served during school improvement days. This practice would continue for vertical articulation under the attendance center model. Horizontal collaboration would be conducted within buildings.**
10. **Is there a projection for moving costs?**
  - a. **This is simply a study. Since no decision on reconfiguration has been made a projection for moving costs has not been completed.**
11. **Many teachers share supplies and equipment. Will additional supplies be purchased?**
  - a. **If there is a need the district will continue to support teachers and students.**

12. How will this greatly improve Canton School District with current enrollments and achievement levels?
  - a. It may not. However, attendance centers will create equality for all students by normalizing class sizes and allowing school officials to provide specific professional development that is unique to specific students. In addition teachers will have an opportunity to share teaching ideas and review students data in a more comprehensive horizontal manner.
13. Kindergarten is still a singleton - essentially.
  - a. For some students. For example, 40% of our students begin their academic careers within the Canton District by enrolling in the Little Learners or Early Childhood program. On the other hand, others begin their schooling at day care centers or at home. Those that start their career elsewhere are actually transitioning into Kindergarten from another setting.
14. Why fix something that's not broke?
  - a. To some it may seem so. However, our district faces many challenges with our students as indicated by our school report card. We also embrace continuous improvement.
15. What is the specific issue that needs to be addressed?
  - a. The improvement of student learning and the elimination of inequality.
16. Will the district keep the same number of teachers?
  - a. There is no plan to reduce staff.
17. Have you considered how it will affect parents if they have children in three buildings?
  - a. There certainly will be some challenges. For example, to decrease bus travel time school start times would need to be staggered. Principals would also need to carefully plan student activities to avoid conflicts.
18. In terms of transportation, there could be a significant increase in cost. How will this be covered by the district?
  - a. The report indicates the cost would be between 25,000 to 56,000. Most of those costs would be recovered through state reimbursement.
19. With the rising social-emotional needs of our students how would attendance centers positively affect those needs?
  - a. That's a great question. Next year all Canton Schools will have a specific improvement goal relating to Social Emotional Learning (SEL). With that in mind, each grade level has individual needs. Attendance centers would allow the district to target specific student cohort needs rather than a large body of student's house in individual buildings with a variety of need. In short SEL would be specialized.

20. Are there any studies on the effects of students with special needs regarding the number of transitions they encounter when changing to Attendance Centers from a neighborhood elementary model that we currently use?
  - a. Transitions are always a concern for all children – including those children with disabilities. Most research indicates that multiple transitions are a negative factor in any child’s education and would need to be carefully planned. Similarly, bad and ill planned transitions are also a factor that impacts learning negatively. However, if planned carefully, the negative impact of transitions may be overcome.
21. Will there be special transportation from door to door offered at each building for students who require it?
  - a. All students receiving special transportation currently have an IEP (individualized Education Plan). As a result, those students would continue to receive special transportation. There would be no interruption in special transportation services.
22. Will there be changes to elementary playgrounds at Eastview and Westview that are handicap accessible such as Lincoln’s playground?
  - a. Play and playground equipment is an important aspect of a child’s education. The board of education is sensitive to this fact and will continue to support students in the purchase of any equipment that improves the education of children.
23. Does this proposal address having the special education divisions of Resource, Functional, and Behavioral in each building? If so, will there be a timeout room and a sensory room in each building?
  - a. Currently each building has a sensory area. Resources and instructional support would continue to be allocated based on student need.
24. How will Speech, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work, and Adaptive PE be done across all of the elementary buildings?
  - a. All of the services mentioned in this question are essential for many children. As mentioned previously the board and school officials will provide services based on student needs.
25. How will paraprofessionals be distributed?
  - a. All support staff would be allocated based on student need and within the scope of the collective bargaining agreement.
26. What will happen in regards to Club Unify? There would be no buddy option for kindergarten level.
  - a. Student collaboration would need to be reconfigured. Some activities have already been implemented. For example, there has been Dr. Seuss day, CTE

**students have visited elementary buildings for construction activities, and Bio Medical students have completed Frog Activities.**

27. How will social modeling take place? If Pre-K and K are together, 1st and 2nd together, and 3rd and 4th together, there will not be typical social interactions that occur organically in our current elementary environment.
  - a. **This would be completed through the Social Emotional Learning Plan for each building. A student assessment of needs would have to be completed.**
28. An Attendance Center eliminates collaboration that occurs for special education teachers. How will we collaborate?
  - a. **Collaboration would not change with attendance centers.**
29. An Attendance Center will limit educational resources in regards to special education students because they may not work at grade level and may need material that is unavailable in the building. IE...a 4th grade student functioning at a 1st grade level will not have access to all of the lower grade level material.
  - a. **District assets would be distributed based on student need. Our district is required to provide a Free and Appropriate education for students with disabilities. That includes age appropriate teaching materials.**