



MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Urban Education. Global Citizens.

Associate Superintendent Office

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Theresa Battle

Associate Superintendent

March 6, 2013

Dear Lake Harriet Community School Families:

As you know construction has begun for the addition to the Lake Harriet Community School's Lower campus with completion summer 2013. Currently, Lower campus has about 400 students, but will increase to about 530 by fall 2013 when 3rd grade moves from Upper to Lower campus. Upper currently has about 720 students and, even with losing 3rd grade, it will remain close to 700.

With the increased enrollment at Lower campus for next year, I must ensure that there is appropriate administrative support.

I have considered the district administrative staffing for similar dual campus schools and stakeholder feedback. For the 2013-2014 school year the administrative structure will be a principal for each campus and an assistant principal assigned to the Upper campus.

While every decision has implications, both negative and positive depending on one's perspective, I believe this structure will have the following benefits:

- Lake Harriet School serves over 1,200 students, one of the highest student enrollments in any MPS K-8 program. This change will align the Lake Harriet campuses with other schools that serve similar numbers of students.
- The administrative structure will increase school leaders' time devoted to meaningful teacher evaluation and coaching, provide greater direct support from school leaders for families and staff and improve the relationships that school leaders develop with families.
- Continues the established pathway between the two campuses and the assurance of sibling preference assignment protocols between the buildings.
- The structure will not result in any increased cost to either school or the school district. In preparation for a possible separation, both campuses began staffing appropriately last school year. Since the Audubon and Fulton schools were merged into one K-8 Program the buildings have maintained their separate budgets, organizational codes and reporting lines to the State. There will be seamless reporting to the state with the exception of the change in the location of the third grade classrooms.

Additional Rationale:

- Upper Campus enrollment as of fall 2013 is expected to be 700 or greater which is similar in size to Barton, Jefferson, Nellie Stone Johnson (all single campus K-8's) and Sanford and Northeast (both middle grades only single campus schools). Other dual campus schools, whether sister schools such as Hale/Field and Lind/Olson or dual principal/administration schools such as Lake Nokomis Community Schools (dual campuses) will still be smaller than the combined Lake Harriet enrollment between the two campuses.
- Many aspects and needs of Lower are unique to a young elementary student population, while Upper more closely mirrors the aspects and needs of middle grade students.
- In response to the increased enrollment at Lake Harriet Community School, the Superintendent assigned a principal to both schools, but retained the primary principal as the principal of the Upper Campus. While cooperation between the two principals has been good, the arrangement has led to some confusion both for families and staff as to the lines of authority for each campus. Students and families will be clear as to "their" principal. Teachers will benefit from having teacher evaluations and coaching from "their" principal.
- Upper and Lower campuses each have administrative teams and building secretaries.

None of us want any changes that would diminish the strong and positive K-8 experience that the students have received. While I hope the benefits of the structure will be realized, it is crucial that the Lake Harriet administrative team and I work with staff and parents to address concerns or challenges they foresee. To that end, I will continue to gather feedback and identify a clear process for additional listening and problem-solving sessions when the new principal is named.

I look forward to working with parents and staff as the process to select a new principal, to replace Mary Rynchek, begins.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me via email at Theresa.battle@mpls.k12.mn.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Theresa Battle".

Theresa Battle
Associate Superintendent