

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 11, 2021
TO: Members of the School Board
VIA: Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
FROM: Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation

CIP QUESTION: Slide 24 & 25 – What is the plan to fill between 200 – 550 MS seats at the Career Center? There are only 37 Montessori MS students (90 at its peak) and the CC is planned to be an Option School, not neighborhood. Where will those MS students come from?

Updated RESPONSE: The initial vision for the Arlington Career Center (ACC) was defined as a high school program. Projected seat needs were reviewed with instructional leaders from Teaching and Learning and the ACC and the group considered other potential solutions, like repurposing the Ed. Center for middle schools. In the end, all agree the best option is to expand the ACC vision to include middle school students.

Details about the vision will take shape over time and Bridget Loft, Asst, Superintendent, Teaching and Learning, will share initial plans at the May 25 work session.

Initial plans:

- There will be capacity for approximately:
 - 375 to 450 middle school students in for Arlington Tech and
 - about 150 middle Montessori students.
 - Between the two programs, there are 525 to 600 middle school students.
- We anticipate that Montessori will be like immersion with most students entering at the early grades and continuing with the program. Students can join at later points; however, families will need determine if their students will thrive in the Montessori structure.
- This central location may help retain Montessori students. Gunston is sometimes too far away for some families to continue with the program in middle school, especially as students begin to participate in after school programs.
- A lottery would be used for entry into Arlington Tech for grade 6 and grade 9.
- Applications to Arlington Tech have increased since Arlington Tech students started meeting with grade 8 students to describe the program and their experiences. We expect something similar will be added to encourage grade 5 students and their families to apply to the program.
- Arlington Tech focuses on problem-based learning (PBL), which is central to instruction at Dr. Charles R. Drew, Campbell EL and MPSA. Families with students who thrive in the elementary PBL programs are more likely to apply for the Arlington Tech lottery.