

1. COVID-19 and the lack of in-person classes have reduced DCPS enrollment this school year. How does the model that DCPS uses to project enrollment figures account for this unprecedented public health crisis, especially whether families who left Lafayette will return?
  - a. According to DCPS's *Annual School-Based Enrollment Projection Methodology for 2021-22*, "DCPS specifically assumed that a school with a 10-or-greater enrollment decrease in Kindergarten in 2020 compared to 2019 would likely see half of those students return to 1<sup>st</sup> grade the following year as buildings reopened."
    - i. What data did DCPS use as the basis for this assumption?

DCPS used the Office of the State Superintendent's (OSSE) reported enrollment file, which is a snapshot of all current enrollments as of October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The file is taken annually for reporting purposes and is specifically required for use in enrollment projections. In developing assumptions for enrollment projections, DCPS also collaborates closely with other teams across DC Public Schools, as well as with the Deputy Mayor for Education's team to understand citywide trends and factors that may influence enrollment.

- ii. Does DCPS have any information about whether families who left DCPS intend to return to DCPS generally and/or to Lafayette specifically?
      - If DCPS does not have this information for Lafayette, we request a DCPS administered survey of Lafayette families to collect and analyze the necessary data before any final decision regarding Pre-K4 classes are made.

As noted in the enrollment projection methodology, DCPS has made broad assumptions for the district that a subset of students in lower elementary grades who did not enroll in SY20-21 will return to DCPS in SY21-22. However, we also rely upon input from school principals and communities to make additional considerations school-by-school. In the case of Lafayette, Principal Broquard has engaged with many lower ES families who have expressed their intention to return to the school in SY21-22 once in-person learning resumes.

2. What data did DCPS rely on to determine that Lafayette’s projected enrollment numbers require a move to LAMB or downsizing the Pre-K4 class size?

The proposal to move the Lafayette PK program is based on both the growth seen recently at Lafayette, as well as the 5- and 10-year projections for Lafayette ES developed by the Deputy Mayor for Education’s team as part of the Master Facilities Plan. In recent years, Lafayette has added larger cohorts in lower elementary grades that are rising into upper elementary, requiring the use of additional classroom spaces for K-5. While DCPS has been able to accommodate this growth so far through repurposing spaces within the building, we do not have additional space on site to expand further and will therefore need to recoup PK space, either through the move to Military Road school or by decreasing PK sections. We will track K-5 enrollment closely in the Spring, to determine final classrooms needs.

Long-term, the city projects growth to continue in the 5- and 10-year forecasts included as part of the DME’s Master Facilities Plan (MFP). These projections rely on historical enrollment patterns and population growth forecasts provided by the DC Office of Planning. For more information on the enrollment projection methodology used in the DC Public Education Master Facilities Plan 2018, see Chapter 3 of the MFP 2018 report (<https://dme.dc.gov/node/1391541>).

3. What data does DCPS have regarding the number of parents who would choose not to send their Pre-K4 children to Lafayette if it were relocated to the former LAMB School?
  - a. While Lafayette conducted a survey about the proposed move, Principal Broquard stated at the December 14<sup>th</sup> ANC Meeting that “our data [from the survey respondents] is not clean” and did not allow DCPS to draw conclusions about particular grades. Given this limitation, what alternative efforts has DCPS made to contact in-boundary parents of prospective Lafayette Pre-K4 children to get their views?
  - b. DCPS has referenced the long waitlist of in-boundary families to attend Lafayette Pre-K4. Is there any data to suggest there is a demand among in-boundary Lafayette families to send their children to Pre-K4 at the former LAMB School?

- a. If not, can DCPS conduct a new survey to acquire this information before a final decision is made? This survey also could include requests for information about other possible Pre-K4 options. (See Alternatives to LAMB below.)

DCPS plans to review all engagement, including the survey, to understand the trends and themes of feedback from families, prospective parents, and community members, regarding the potential move to Military Road School. In addition to the survey and community meetings/presentations, Principal Broquard is also hosting a Principal's coffee and several tours for prospective families – heavily attended by in-boundary PK families – in January and February. In events hosted so far for prospective families, Principal Broquard has shared that several incoming PK families have attended, many whom have been supportive of the potential move. We have no plans to issue another survey at this time.

4. Please confirm the statement made at the December 14, 2020 ANC meeting that Lafayette will not fill any of its Pre-K4 slots with out-of-boundary children who will have a right to go to Lafayette kindergarten.

Students can enroll in DCPS schools through three primary methods: through in-boundary or feeder rights, through the My School DC (MSDC) lottery, or through formal placement, which can occur in several scenarios, including placements for special education students and military families. In-boundary families (with siblings and then without) will continue to receive the top preferences to any PK seats at Military Road, followed by out-of-boundary families. Typically, the general education seats that Lafayette offers for PK4 are filled exclusively by in-boundary students. There are a small number of PK seats reserved at all schools for placements by DCPS' Early Stages team, which places young learners with special needs into DCPS pre-k programs. Should the decision be to move forward with moving the PK program to the Military Road school, we have discussed with Principal Broquard the option to not expand the current number of PK rooms in order to settle into the new location and monitor enrollment.

5. Have all the following alternatives been evaluated? If so, please explain the facts considered and the basis for each decision:
  - a. Has DCPS obtained pricing from the Episcopal Center for Children to lease or purchase all or parts of the Center?

DCPS is always interested in exploring opportunities to acquire new property in strategic locations that can relieve overcrowding. At this time, ECC is not available for purchase. Should that change, we are open to considering should funding be available. Currently due to operating budget impacts, DCPS is not able to consider a lease option.

- It has been reported that the Episcopal Center is in discussions with the Maret School to use some portion of the site.
- Has DCPS explored whether Maret would be willing to work with Lafayette and share space and expenses?

It is DCPS's understanding that ECC and Maret are discussing leasing options. DCPS has not reached out to Maret to discuss shared space as DCPS is not able to consider leasing options at this time.

- b. Has DCPS considered the use of the new Lafayette Recreation Center for any segment of the Pre-K4 student class?

Yes, DCPS has had conversations with DPR regarding any available space at the Lafayette Recreation Center. Unfortunately, this recreation space is unable to accommodate any PreK spaces.

- c. Has DCPS considered using the Community Center/Library in its current condition for Pre-K4 students?

DCPS has had preliminary conversations with DCPL and DPR regarding both spaces. At this time, there is currently no space available to accommodate PreK classes without negatively impacting programmed space for DCPL and DPR. DCPS will continue the conversation with both agencies as we understand this co-located site is up for a redevelopment in a few years.

- d. Has DCPS considered splitting the Pre-K4 into two cohorts, each of which would be located within boundary?

- Has DCPS explored moving to two half-day sessions to accommodate all Pre-K4 students within the school building?

DCPS has made significant efforts over the last several years to develop a high-quality, standard model for PK excellence across the district, which offers the youngest learners a comprehensive educational program for a full school day, aligned to national best practice models. DCPS does not offer half day models in its PK program

currently. While this could allow for more students to be served, DCPS knows that a half-day schedule can be operationally challenging for parents. Additionally, some families on an afternoon schedule may have access to aftercare while other would not.

- Could any additional classrooms be built in the Lafayette basement space? Could trailers be used to accommodate two Pre-K4 classes?

DCPS has accommodated growth in the past through reconfiguration of common spaces and building out the basement, but there is not additional space available within the building at this point for further modifications. Trailers have been considered but would significantly impact the available outdoor/site space, which has programmatic implications.

- Has the use of trailers in other in-boundary locations been explored?

This would still require a lease of some kind as we would be using property that is not district owned. DCPS is not currently exploring options to lease land in other sites within the Lafayette boundary given the impact on the district's operating budget.

6. Has DCPS considered relocating the city-wide special education program at Lafayette, which already is overcrowded, to a school with more space, facilities, and extra resources?

DCPS is proud to have developed capacity across the district to serve our students with the most significant needs in schools close to home. From a planning perspective, we also believe in providing students with predictable and coherent education pathways and believe that students in self-contained programs should have the same access to these pathways as general education students. DCPS has self-contained programming in nearly all schools across the district. Moving a full self-contained special education pathway would cause unnecessary disruption to some of our most vulnerable learners, and it would not actually resolve space needs long-term, as these programs are mostly located in smaller size classrooms.

- e. At its November 18, 2020 meeting, Principal Broquard asked the LSAT to consider three options for addressing the space issues at Lafayette.
  - What were the three original options?

- At what point and for what reason were these choices narrowed to only two?
- Who was involved in making that decision? Were any families consulted?

In the Nov 18 meeting, Principal Broquard and the LSAT discussed strategies for addressing space issues – either by recouping space in the Lafayette building from PK or specials rooms, or by moving PK to Military Road. Based on feedback from the LSAT, the group moved away from the idea of removing specials classrooms, given the impact on students in all grades and the impact on the school program. Specials are an integral part of the Lafayette experience and the group felt strongly that it was both operationally and instructionally important to maintain dedicated specials spaces. As an arts integration school and a school that employs the Peace of Mind curriculum, both the Art room and the Peace Room remain core fixtures in the building. The group was concerned that leveraging specials rooms would permanently take rooms away from these programs without a long-term plan to replace the space.

7. What steps would be necessary to reallocate funds in the DCPS operating budget to cover the lease of required space to maintain Pre-K4 at current levels?

- a. Is there any precedent for such a reallocation?

DCPS has not historically leased buildings for student spaces.

- b. Has DCPS rejected the possibility of reallocating funds to lease space — e.g., at the Episcopal Center for Children — that would accommodate Lafayette’s Pre-K4? If so, why?

At this time, DCPS is not able to consider a lease due to operating budget impacts.

- c. The Council repurposed \$8 million from the FMLA IT budget for the purchase of LAMB. What stands in the way of a similar reallocation to fund a lease of the Episcopal Center?

This reprogramming from FMLA to DCPS was a capital-to-capital reprogramming. This is possible when a building/property is being acquired. This is more challenging when considering a lease option such as ECC as that needs to come from the operating budget.

- 7. In SY 2020-21, there were 59 children on the waitlist for Brightwood Elementary’s Pre-K4 program (<https://tabsoft.co/3gAapzn>.) What are the projections for capacity in the coming year?

Brightwood is currently completing a grade reconfiguration to phase out their middle school program. Next year, Brightwood will remove 8<sup>th</sup> grade and complete their transition to a PK3-5 elementary school. As a result of this change, the school will gain back spaces previously dedicated to middle school and is therefore projected to decrease utilization rate from 90% in SY20-21 to 80% in SY21-22.

Brightwood EC does have unmet demand in PK3 and PK4, though the majority is from out-of-boundary families. In SY20-21, the school was able to seat all in-boundary applicants in the initial lottery for PK3 and had 26 in-boundary families on the waitlist for PK4 (the remainder of waitlisted applicants live outside of the school boundary). As Brightwood settles into their space and PK3-5 grade configuration next year, DCPS will work with the school administration if there is interest in expanding their PK program in the future.

8. What outreach, if any, has DCPS made to the Brightwood community about using the former LAMB School building for Lafayette's Pre-K4 with lottery preference for Lafayette in-boundary students?
  - a. Did DCPS consult with anyone else in the Brightwood community besides the principal at Brightwood Elementary School?
    - Please provide the details of the principal's response.
  - b. Did DCPS discuss the proposal for Lafayette to use the LAMB School building exclusively for its Pre-K4 with any of the following persons and organizations:
    - ANC 4A (particularly, Commissioner Candace Nelson whose Single Member District includes the former LAMB School and Brightwood Elementary)?
    - Ward 4 Councilmember-elect Janeese Lewis-George?
    - Ward 4 State School Board member Frazier O'Leary?
    - The Brightwood Community Association?
      - a. If yes, please provide the details of each response.
      - b. If not, please explain why not and please state that DCPS will obtain input from each before a final decision is reached on this matter.
  - c. Have any surveys or other information been sent to Brightwood families to inform them of the potential use of the LAMB School building by Lafayette or to seek their input? Please explain.

DCPS has engaged with the Brightwood principal, a parent leader at Brightwood (who is also a newly elected local ANC Commissioner), and joined the ANC4A meeting, and is also planning to join the ANC4C, Brightwood Civic Association, and Ward 4 Ed Alliance meetings in January. Additionally, as part of the acquisition process for the Military Road School building, DGS notified the ANC (relevant SMD and Chair, and the Executive Director of the Office of ANCs) and the office of CM Todd by letter in June. Principal Broquard spoke with SBOE member O’Leary in November and reached out to CM Nelson with an offer to connect in December.

9. Has DCPS considered the option of keeping as many Pre-K4 classes that Lafayette could hold and any overflow to be accommodated by having the former LAMB School serve as a standalone Pre-K — e.g., the “Rock Creek Early Childhood Center” — that would permit children within both the Lafayette and Brightwood boundaries to attend? Please explain your response.

Through the engagements completed thus far with the Lafayette ES community, DCPS has heard interest in an option to maintain PK at Lafayette ES while also providing families a preference to a new standalone ECE center at the Military Road School. In considering this idea, DCPS must weigh the feasibility and policy implications of creating a new type of preference – offering one school in-boundary preferences to two sites - as well as how this shift would align to overall goals for ECE expansion around providing access to families furthest from opportunity, meeting unmet demand, and building enrollment pipelines to DCPS. In other instances in which a non-Title 1 school has faced similar space pressures, DCPS has at other schools reduced PK sections without providing in-boundary families with additional preferences to other school options. Additionally, the school community would need to consider the logistical and community aspects of this shift, such as how to assign students and staff across two campuses and maintain high-quality ECE programming across two sites.

From the conversations with Brightwood leadership, DCPS has also heard a desire to ensure that Brightwood’s enrollment is not negatively impacted by opening of the Military Road School site. Brightwood EC does have healthy ECE demand and there is growing population in the area, which the community has suggested could support demand for additional seats in the area. DCPS would need to consider the impact of introducing a new option for Brightwood EC families and whether this could impede the school’s goals of capturing and maintaining in-boundary families long-term.

10. Resolution 23-503, July 28, 2020, requesting the reprogramming of \$8,376,301 to purchase the LAMB School, was premised on the need “to help solve for the Ward 4 overcrowding problem at nearby schools and expand early childhood offerings”.

a. What factors led DCPS to select Lafayette over Brightwood or other area Ward 4 schools?

The proposal to leverage the Military Road School space to serve Lafayette PK4 was driven primarily by the space needs at the school. As noted above, Lafayette has both long- and short-term space needs, and the Military Road School is an opportunity to provide relief to capacity pressures while preserving PK programming. The move to Military Road School also would provide space for Lafayette to open a PK self-contained special education classroom to feed the K-5 programs already in place. Currently, without a PK program classroom, students must be rerouted into the Lafayette self-contained classroom at Kindergarten, whereas the move to Military Road would allow for a full, uninterrupted PK-5 pathway for students with significant needs.

While Brightwood EC is on DCPS’ radar for long-term growth, the school is going through a grade reconfiguration that will provide additional space within the building and has more space on-site for potential future expansion. The current and projected enrollment and building utilization at both schools indicate that Lafayette’s space needs are more acute than Brightwood, which was the driving factor to proposing the use of this space for space relief at Lafayette.

11. If a decision is made to reduce the number of pre-K4 classes, can DCPS prioritize financial need for in-boundary lottery?

In SY20-21, DCPS implemented its first pilot of a Priority Seat at Stevens Early Learning Center (ELC), which reserved a portion of available PK seats at the school for students meeting the district’s “at-risk” definition. Students qualifying as “at-risk” may be in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or receiving public assistance (SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)). DCPS is reviewing the impact and success of the Priority Seat preference at Stevens ELC and considering expansion to additional school sites in the SY22-23 lottery opening in December 2021. While we cannot apply at-risk preference for Lafayette for the 21-22 school year, we are open to considering this for future years.