

# **A Consideration of Increasing Student Enrollment at ANCS**

**Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School  
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# Overview

- History & Context
- Practical Considerations of Adding a Kindergarten Class
- Recommendations & Next Steps
- Discussion

# History & Context

- Over the past several years, demand for enrollment at ANCS has increased as evidenced by number of students on wait list
- Current wait list numbers at lower grades:
  - *Kindergarten: 68 students*
  - *1<sup>st</sup> Grade: 14 students*
  - *2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: 21 students*
- Demographic trends highlighted in [recent APS study](#) project continued increased student enrollment in grades K-8 in the southeast quadrant of the city in next five to ten years

# History & Context

- These two points raise the question: *Should we expand our enrollment to provide more students with the ANCS educational experience?*
- Last spring, during the evaluation of different potential class and grade level size increases as a part of the budget process, decision was made to limit increased enrollment to only small class size increases
- At that time, a commitment was made to reexamine the possibility of adding an additional kindergarten class heading into the 2012-13 school year to address the issue of high demand for the school

# Practical Considerations of Adding a Kindergarten Class

- The Elementary Campus leadership team discussed and articulated the practical considerations of adding a kindergarten class while still maintaining the essential features of the educational program that drive interest in the school. These considerations included:
  - *Increased staffing*: Immediate need for additional lead and associate teacher. Also need for additional teachers in PE, Spanish, and special education to accommodate increased students
  - *Increased materials costs*: Purchase of additional instructional materials for additional students
  - *Space needs*: Costs associated with creating additional classroom space

# Practical Considerations of Adding a Kindergarten Class

- Cherie Ferrell, director of business and operations, generated projected revenue/expense figures associated with these considerations:
  - *Summary* of Projected Revenue/Expenses
  - *Detail* of Projected Revenue/Expenses
- K-8 Leadership Team then examined and discussed these considerations and financial projections

# Recommendations & Next Steps

- Adding an additional kindergarten class on its own next school year while maintaining the ANCS educational program *does not* make financial sense, and, therefore, should not be considered
- There *is*, however, emerging interest among the faculty and staff in affording more students the opportunity to take part in the ANCS educational experience

*So where do we go from here?*

# Recommendations & Next Steps

- *Solidify being a K-8 school:* Continue to develop the educational and operational practices that will help us to realize the benefits of merging 6 months ago. Establish stability of school leadership structure.



# Recommendations & Next Steps

- *Express clear board commitment:* Through the strategic plan update, demonstrate governing board's firm commitment to increasing student enrollment capacity of ANCS.

# Recommendations & Next Steps

- *Create a structure to develop plan for increasing enrollment capacity:* Increasing enrollment makes the most sense financially by adding multiple classes at once in order to benefit from economies of scale. Yet significantly more planning is needed to execute this approach, and a structure is needed to consider board, faculty, parent, and student perspectives when answering critical questions, such as...
  - What is the optimal overall student enrollment for ANCS?
  - What facilities and grade level configurations are most *educationally* ideal to accommodate this enrollment?
  - What facilities and grade level configurations are the most *financially and operationally* ideal to accommodate this enrollment?

# Recommendations & Next Steps

- *Aggressively pursue facilities possibilities:* The current APS redistricting discussion presents an opportunity to work with the district to access school buildings which may soon be closed as traditional public schools as sites for expanded ANCS enrollment. Those possibilities must be weighed against plans to add on to our current facilities to accommodate increased numbers of students.