



Town Hall: Middle School East Campus Expansion

October 15, 2019, Gerlinger Auditorium

**Discussion notes: Questions from participants and responses
from Tim Bazemore, Barbara Ostos, and Ted Chen**

How will we keep the students all connected across two campuses?

In terms of Middle School students' interactions with other divisions, we think it's best to make those interactions intentionally through planned cross-divisional events and collaborations. Middle School students currently do not have much interaction with other divisions, but we may be able to create more opportunities in the future, especially in terms of mixing the Middle and Beginning/Lower Schools.

Will we have a staggered start time with Middle School? Will buses drop off at Middle School and then come down to the main campus?

We are working through those questions now.

At all school events that families attend, like homecoming, there is a sense that kids can roam around safely. I worry that the Middle School will feel like it's separate and the kids will feel separate too.

We know the 200-yard separation is a challenge we will need to figure out. Safety concerns will need to be addressed. This will continue to be the main campus and we will need to figure out how to make sure Middle School kids feel included—that is part of the east campus design goal. We want to consider: How does a Catlin Gabel experience feel going all the way through? We want to make sure the new campus "feels" like a Catlin Gabel campus. Visual tie-ins will be one part of creating that feeling.

Is there a way to do a tunnel under 84th? A pedestrian tunnel?

That's a great idea! All ideas are on the table right now.

I appreciate the vigilance we create as a community—we notice when someone is here who isn't a part of our everyday experience. That's part of the safety we create for ourselves. How will that work up there?

We are going to limit the number of access points to campus and ensure there is a contained but accessible community there. We will implement the same safety systems at the east campus as we have on the main campus. The east campus placement gives us more visibility, but it also raises safety questions. We want to have visibility and sight lines to kids to make sure they are safe. We are also

thinking about what other functions of the school may live on the east campus—what Catlin Gabel offices and departments could be moved—because that will increase adult supervision.

What aspects of the Upper School will transform/evolve with this change?

We have lots of exciting options for the Upper School campus with the Middle School moving. Social spaces will expand, which is an important part of providing kids autonomy and independence, and co-curricular programs may expand as well. Other considerations we need to address include how might spaces like the Upper School library change with expansion, and whether robotics should move into the Middle School instead of being out behind the gym. We will spend time in the next couple of years thinking about these questions.

Are there educational facilities on the east campus that bring Beginning/Lower School or Upper School kids there to create cross-pollination—a movement between divisions that is not just one-way?

The woodshop and ceramics studios are options for cross-divisional interaction, and robotics may move to the east campus. At this moment we are primarily focused on Middle School spaces, but this is good food for thought.

Are we going to leave any art galleries intact where Catlin Gabel parents could showcase their art to students? We might replicate something like the Cabell lobby gallery on the east campus. There is a gallery currently on the east campus that we'd like to maintain for all sorts of exhibitors—this is another way we can make learning visible. We would ideally like to have a flexible space where student work can be showcased, and possibly rotate artwork by parents and faculty.

What was the thinking behind enrollment growth?

We are turning down kids every year because we are at capacity in each division and would like to provide more access. Upper School kids liked the idea of a bigger Upper School—more social opportunities, clubs, teams, etc.—so we decided to have modest growth in either grades 9-12 or 6-12. As we add students, we will increase staffing at a similar level to maintain class sizes and ratios.

Will east campus have an access point from Leahy Road?

We are looking into it. It will be a negotiation with the county to determine access points and parking. We are thinking of every permutation of buses, cars, team buses, etc. The county will require us to do that research and identify our needs. We are working on that process right now with the county.

Would we turn one of the roads into a dead end, perhaps 84th Street?

We have not considered that idea.

How much will it cost to get the east campus ready for occupation?

There are basic needs, then renovations, to make the Middle School vision a reality. We are still assessing costs, but likely around \$14-16M. There are a lot of delayed maintenance issues. Our planned athletics and wellness center will be about \$20M raised through the upcoming capital campaign.

Have you had any pushback from the neighborhood?

We had a community meeting last spring with neighbors. The spirit of the meeting was the neighbors were glad Catlin Gabel bought the property. We promised we would meet periodically to update on plans. The groups was generally positive and supportive. Last week, we also posted our plans on Next Door.