FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (STAFF)

Academics

1. **When will this plan be finalized?**
   Right now, these are recommendations. We will be gathering feedback from staff, students, families and the community throughout October and November. We anticipate the Board will vote on this plan in December.

2. **What is the academic vision?**
   The academic vision serves as a blueprint for enhancing the student experience and improving student outcomes for 21st century learners.

3. **How was the academic vision created? Who was involved in this process?**
   For nearly three years, we have engaged students, staff, families and the community in our Blueprint 2030 strategic planning. This process included more than 18,000 touchpoints to date through public meetings, focus groups, surveys and school and community events.

4. **How will teachers/staff be trained in the elements of the academic vision?**
   KCPS teachers will attend high-quality professional learning sessions during the summer, after school and during the Wednesday Professional Development Sessions scheduled throughout the school year.

5. **How will the academic vision be implemented?**
   The academic vision will be phased in over the next five years to allow for optimal effectiveness in implementation.

6. **What additional opportunities are available for staff to guide implementation?**
   Staff will be able to provide feedback and assist in guiding implementation through surveys, focus groups and PLC’s (professional learning communities).

7. **How will the academic vision enhance student learning?**
   Implementing the academic vision will lead to increased student performance in English Language Arts (ELA), science, math, attendance and graduation rates, as well as empower students to be agents of change who can solve real-world problems. This will be accomplished by expanding pre-K opportunities, exposure to world language and science labs in early
elementary school onward and deepening the instructional practices of teachers through researched based reading and math training.

8. How will the academic vision enhance the student experience?
The incorporation of project-based learning, STEAM, world languages, social-emotional wellness, the arts, Real World Learning, culturally responsive practices and college and career pathways will work together to create and sustain culturally-affirming classroom environments that produce students who graduate as critical thinkers and poised to succeed in college, career and life.

9. What is project-based learning?
Project-Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real world and personally meaningful projects to solve complex questions, problems or challenges. Through this process, students develop deep content knowledge, as well as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication skills.

10. What is an example of project-based learning?
Students work on a project over an extended period that engages them in solving a real-world problem or answering a complex question. They demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating a public product or presentation for a real audience.

11. What is STEAM and how will it enhance students’ current experience?
STEAM is the acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics. STEAM is different from STEM because it acknowledges an understanding and appreciation of the Arts (visual, instrumental, performing) and helps students develop the skills necessary to be innovative and contribute to society through the other four disciplines.

STEAM-focused learning includes the following resources/experiences:

1. Dedicated space for science and engineering activities and projects
2. Clubs such as LEGO League, Robotics, Math Olympians that support technology, engineering and mathematics in all elementary schools
3. Incorporation of virtual reality and artificial intelligence in classroom instruction
4. Staff and resources for all students to participate in virtual, instrumental and performing arts, starting in kindergarten

12. What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?
Culturally Responsive Teaching is a research-based approach to teaching. It connects students’ cultures, languages and life experiences with what they learn in school. These
connections help students access rigorous curriculum and develop higher-level academic skills.

13. What is an example of Culturally Responsive Teaching?
Culturally Responsive Teaching, during a unit about ratios or proportions, may begin with an activity comparing the number of students in the school with teachers in the school as a ratio. It could also include analyzing various data or data trends for familiar businesses in the students’ neighborhood, their favorite sports team or their favorite holiday traditions as a bridge before diving into the traditional content. This approach would encourage discussion, welcome diverse voices and perspectives and make the learning more relevant and engaging for all students.

Providing these opportunities as a part of learning provides a mirror for some students, a window for others and a sliding glass door for all. “Notice” and “wonder” activities with real-world connections capture students’ attention and curiosity at the beginning of a unit, even if they are not yet familiar with the relevant mathematics.

14. What are college and career pathways?
A college and career pathway is a career-themed program available at a high school. Pathways consist of a group of students who experience a sequence of industry-themed curricula that integrates career and technical education courses, core academic courses, work-based learning opportunities and student support services.

15. How will the pathways introduce students to college and careers?
We want KCPS students to be exposed to career pathways early and often. KCPS adopts a K-12 approach to exposing students to various careers through work learning opportunities such as on-the-job training, internships, apprenticeships and client-connected projects. Students can also earn dual credit and industry-recognized credentials as a part of the pathway experience.

16. How will KCPS decide which pathways to place at each school?
KCPS will use the following information to determine which pathways will be assigned to schools:
- School size and capacity
- Students’ interest
- Parent and community suggestions
- Local labor market demands
- State-approved CTE programs
- Business and industry support
17. Will BP2030 impact Career Technical Education (CTE) programming?
Blueprint 2030 will expand and increase access to Career Technical Education programming. The CTE program will continue to prepare students to enter a highly educated workforce or to begin post-secondary education. Successful completion of a designated program will still allow CTE students to be eligible for articulated or dual college credit and access to employment placement services.

Human Resources

1. How will my position be impacted by the consolidation or closure?
KCPS will prioritize retention of all teachers and support staff.

2. How was my school selected for consolidation or closure?
Our planning consultant, MGT, evaluated several factors and provided recommendations for consolidation or closure based on:
- Enrollment, recruitment and retention
- Equity
- Projected future demographic trends
- Facility conditions/operational costs
- Geographic location
- Academic performance

3. Can I transfer to another position within KCPS?
Yes, you can request a transfer to another position within the district. KCPS will prioritize transfer requests from staff at affected school sites. Please visit the KCPS employment page at https://kcmsd.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx to see job openings.

4. What will the transfer process look like?
The Human Resources office will send a copy of the approved transfer process to all staff by December 1, 2022.

5. Will my pay and benefits be affected?
Staff remaining in their current positions will not experience a reduction in pay or benefits. If a staff member is hired for a new role, pay will be commensurate with the new position.

6. When and how will staff be notified of the transfer approval?
Staff who have submitted transfer requests will be notified in writing of the decision.

7. How will families be notified of school closures and transitions?
KCPS is in the process of assembling a transition team to help families through the closure and consolidation process. We will work with families individually to understand their placement and options.

8. What happens if all vacancies are filled?
KCPS will prioritize retention of all teachers and support staff whenever possible. The Human Resources office has developed a staff surplus plan to assist with placement based on academic priorities.

9. Who should I contact if I have additional questions?
Please reach out to the Human Resources office at 816-418-7608. Tyler Morgan, Sr. Employee Relations Specialist, will be available to assist you with any additional questions you may have.

Transitions

1. How will families be notified of school closures and transitions?
KCPS is in the process of assembling a Transition Team to help families through the closure and consolidation process. We will work with families individually to understand their placement and options.

2. How does the district plan to merge communities so that there is a seamless transition of staff, students and families? If so, what is planned?
KCPS is in the process of assembling a Transition Team to make this process easier for families. This team will work closely with the Board, Cabinet, Communications and our Admissions/Enrollment Department to make sure families have the information they need throughout the Blueprint 2030 process.

3. What social emotional supports are in place, and will those continue or increase?
The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of trauma-informed practices in our schools. Over the past two years, we have added additional clinicians and counselors, provided “Life Skills Sessions” and substance prevention classes and strengthened our partnership with the Center for Conflict Resolution. These supports are crucial for recovery. Having them already in place will make Blueprint 2030 transitions easier.

Additionally, KCPS will assemble a Transition Team to support families whose students will be moving schools. Every student deserves a school where they can thrive socially, emotionally and academically. We will be developing individualized support plans to make these moves easier for families.

www.kcpublicschools.org/blueprint
blueprint2030@kcpublicschools.org
Rev. Oct. 17, 2022
4. **How will this plan impact my students’ bus ride to and from school?**
   School bus assignments are made each year based on current enrollment and shared with families in August. We know some families will live farther from their new schools than their old school and students that previously walked to school may need to become bus riders. As a result, there will be increased route times and riders on some buses. There will most likely be an increase in bus routes by 2-3 buses due to increased overall ridership.

5. **Who should I contact if I have additional questions or concerns?**
   Submit your questions/concerns through the Let’s Talk feature on our website at [www.kcpublicschools.org/letstalk](http://www.kcpublicschools.org/letstalk), email us at blueprint2030@kcpublicschools.org, or join us for an upcoming community chat. (Details available at [www.kcpublicschools.org/blueprint](http://www.kcpublicschools.org/blueprint)).

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**Facilities/Bond**

1. **How were schools selected for consolidation or closure?**
   Our planning consultant, MGT, evaluated several factors and provided recommendations for consolidation or closure based on:
   - Enrollment, recruitment and retention
   - Equity
   - Projected future demographic trends
   - Facility conditions/operational costs
   - Geographic location
   - Academic performance

2. **Who is MGT? How did they arrive at their recommendations?**
   MGT Consulting Group provides solutions for complex issues with specialization in PK-12 education, higher education, and state & local governments. In our region, MGT has worked with KCPS (2014), Hickman Mills School District, and St. Louis Public Schools. MGT arrived at their recommendations after an extensive examination of our system and review of past assessments. The majority of the assessments were compiled in Phase 1 of Blueprint 2030 by third parties, including Hanover Research, Mass Insight and ACI Boland Architects.

3. **What is your strategy for successfully passing a bond?**
   KCPS would not have regained accreditation this year without the support of the community. Schools cannot do it alone; we need partners and public education allies to succeed. We have been actively working on our bond strategy for the past year and look
forward to sharing more information with our community once the Board has voted on these Blueprint 2030 recommendations.

4. **If a bond is not successfully passed, how does this impact the Blueprint 2030 plan?**
   Our goal is to pass a bond in the next couple of years. However, even without a bond, the cost savings of closing some buildings will allow us to make investments in others, creating future-ready learning spaces for students at schools where consolidation has occurred.

   Other parts of our plan, like building a new-construction elementary school and opening a south zone middle school, will rely on the support of Kansas City taxpayers. We dare to believe we can make the case to our community for the future of all children.

5. **How are you going to manage your closed buildings? How will they be used? If there are plans for future use of building, what will you do for those?**

   KCPS launched its Repurposing Initiative in 2011 to promote the redevelopment of closed school sites and return them to community use. We have since sold 21 of these buildings. Our old schools have been turned into affordable workforce housing units, a community-designed neighborhood park and other projects that benefit Kansas City. This fall, our innovative approach received national recognition from the American Planning Association in the form of a Planning Excellence Award.

   Our schools have always been and should always be community spaces. We will continue this important work in partnership with community organizations throughout the Blueprint 2030 process. Together, we can honor the history of our schools while creating spaces for our community.