

Semester 2 Community Engagement & Timeline

Jacob Hendrickson • hace 5 días • Thursday, Feb 1 at 8:05 AM • **International Community School**

Dear ICS Families,

I am excited to announce a timeline of community engagement work over the next few months. Below you will learn more about our school's history, our strengths, some of our challenges, and a detailed timeline of a plan that includes all of our ICS stakeholders. This is a lengthy email, so I have included a short executive summary at the top and a more detailed description below.

I am excited to engage in this important work with our school and community.

Jacob Hendrickson

International Community School Principal

Executive Summary

- ICS was created in 1997 as a small school focused on integration of subjects, arts and international awareness.
- Our school is a seven-year program (6-12) with high academic standards.
- ICS capacity is 440 students. Due to an increased number of students leaving ICS during the HS years, we have more MS than HS students.
- A vast majority of our students leaving in HS return to their neighborhood school within LWSD.
- Ideal enrollment in the HS years at ICS is 240 students, but we have seen an average of 160 students that are enrolled in 9-12th grades.
- The school is collecting information from all stakeholders as we investigate how we may increase the HS retention of students at ICS.
- Listening sessions with all faculty and small groups of 8th and 9th graders have already taken place.
- Small group parent listening sessions that represent the diverse nature of our population will take place by invitation on February 7 and 8.
- Similar questions that will be asked during the listening sessions will be sent out to all parents for their feedback and insight during February.
- The ICS faculty will look at the data from all stakeholders in March and determine 2-3 potential programmatic actions that would increase HS retention rates.
- All parents and students will be sent a survey asking for their feedback on the potential programmatic actions in April or May.
- ICS faculty will make a recommendation of potential programmatic addition(s) to the LWSD Executive Cabinet.
- The superintendent will share any potential programmatic changes with the school board.
- Any approved programmatic additions would be targeted for implementation starting in the 2026-27 school year or later.

More Detailed Description Below

ICS History, Challenge & Action

The International Community School (ICS) is a public school born of community action where parents and educators came together in 1997 to create and support a small, academically rigorous secondary education program with a focus on international awareness.

ICS has a comprehensive academic program with an emphasis on visual and performing arts, humanities, and international studies. The complex curriculum emphasizes interconnected learning and depth of understanding. Our small size and seven-year program allow for strong long-term relationships between students and teachers. ICS maintains extremely high academic standards while offering core academic areas: humanities, international studies, art, science, mathematics, and a world language.

ICS has a capacity of 440 students but is experiencing a significant decline in enrollment in the high school grades. The incoming 6th grade class is typically 75-85 students and remains steady through 8th grade. During the transition from 8th to 9th grade, approximately 30-45% of the students leave ICS to go to other LWSD high schools. As a result, we added a separate lottery for ICS in 9th grade starting in 2026, which will allow for students who have moved into the district, or whose educational interests have changed, to apply for a high school experience at ICS.

While changes to the lottery are expected to provide a positive technical solution to high school enrollment, ICS is also evaluating their overall academic program as another way to evolve and meet the needs and interests of students in a changing world. Over the last three years, ICS HS enrollment has shrunk to an average of approximately 160 students. Whereas, the potential capacity is 240 high school students.

The ICS Administrative Team is developing a comprehensive process to research academic programs, gather stakeholder input, and develop recommendations for the staff and district office to consider by early Fall 2024. This process includes spending time researching the history of the school, including the founding principles, the original curriculum design, the founding families, and the early mission and vision.

Representative grade 8 and 9 students have already engaged in small group listening sessions with administrators, and administrators have held 1:1 meetings with all faculty members during the first semester. One of the primary goals of these meetings was to help determine what's working and what might help improve educational experiences at ICS with the purpose of both attracting and retaining a greater percentage of students through high school.

Below is a timeline describing the strategic steps the school has taken and plans to use moving forward.

January 2024

- Meet with PTSA presidents to establish diverse and representative listening session groups.
- Timeline shared with ICS Building Leadership Team for feedback.
- Potential parent listening session questions established with the ICS Building Leadership Team.

February 2024

- Communication with ICS families about timeline and process for listening sessions.
- Meet with identified diverse and representative ICS parent groups.
- A survey will be sent to all parents that did not receive an invitation to the listening sessions collecting similar information.

March 2024

- ICS faculty reviews all data from listening sessions
 1. 1:1 meetings with faculty and ICS principal (September 2023)
 2. Grade 8 and 9 listening sessions (November 2023)
 3. Parent listening sessions (February 2024)
- ICS faculty use data to determine 2-3 possible programmatic actions from the school that would potentially increase HS retention rates at ICS.

May 2024

- Survey sent to parents of current ICS students asking feedback on possible programmatic action(s) that might benefit ICS and increase numbers of students in the HS.
- Survey sent to parents of LWSD students in grades 3-5 asking feedback on possible programmatic actions that might benefit ICS and increase numbers of students in the HS.

June 2024

- Survey data shared with the ICS community.
- ICS faculty make recommendations of programmatic action(s) using the ICS Decision-Making Model.
- ICS faculty and administration makes a programmatic recommendation(s) to the LWSD Superintendent.

September 2024

- Superintendent shares any recommendations of programmatic change(s) with the School Board.

October 2024

- Announcement made to the ICS community about any potential adjustments to program that would be implemented September 2026 or later.