



Middle School Configuration Community Forum



October 3, 2018

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City School District of Albany Vision, Mission and Goals

Vision Statement

The City School District of Albany will be a district of excellence with caring relationships and engaging learning experiences that provide equitable opportunities for all students to reach their potential.

Mission Statement

We will work in partnership with our diverse community to engage every learner in a robust educational program designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for success.

Goals

- Increase **student achievement**
- Enhance the delivery of **quality instruction**
- Build our **leadership capacity** and increase **accountability**
- **Empower families** to support the success of their children
- **Partner with our diverse community**



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Historical Context: Grade Configuration Phase 1

Sixth grade at both the elementary and secondary levels (mid-1990s)

Grade Configuration Steering Committee Phase 1 (2015-16)

- All sixth-graders in middle school
- Grade 6-8 model for middle school

Key rationale:

- Academic performance
- Students entering middle school in grades 6 and 7 creates two years of challenges for students and academic programming
- Middle-school principals strongly recommended that three years is the minimum needed to build relationships with students and put them on track to success at Albany High School

Note:

The Phase 1 work had determined that sixth-graders belonged in middle school. However, even with the new Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence, the district does not have enough space to serve all sixth-graders in middle schools.



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Historical Context: Grade Configuration Phase 2

Grade Configuration Steering Committee Phase 2 (2016-17)

The second Grade Configuration committee reviewed a large number of options for a fourth middle school or a third larger middle school to address this problem. The committee recommended two options to the board in September 2017.

- Rejected ASH and TOAST as being too small
- Rejected Giffen because using it as a middle school would leave the South End with no elementary school
- Rejected using Arbor Hill as a much bigger, 800-seat middle school, with a consensus that 650 is the maximum number for a good middle-school program
- Rejected building an entirely new school because of the substantial cost (about twice the estimates for the various renovation options), and the lack of an appropriate available site
- North Albany and Arbor Hill were the preferred options because they offered the most space and a middle school on the north side of the city



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Historical Context: Additional Information

Board requests additional information (October 2017-April 2018)

After careful consideration of the recommendations of the Grade Configuration Phase 2 committee, the board asked for two new items of information:

- An updated demographic study
- A feasibility study of options based on the work of Phase 2 committee, including construction costs, operating costs and transportation impacts

Notes:

- The new demographic study suggested that while middle-school enrollment would continue to grow, it would not grow as much as anticipated in the prior 2015 study.
- Four elementary schools still have sixth-grade students (about 250 total)
- Seven options were presented to the board in April 2018: Options A, B, C, D, E, F and G



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Historical Context: Considerations

Board requests additional considerations (May-September 2018)

- Community meetings held to receive input
- Board eliminates options B, C and F (all of which had Arbor Hill as a middle school)

Note:

The community felt strongly that Arbor Hill needed to maintain its long-time role as a neighborhood elementary school, and that the walking distance to North Albany would be problematic for the large number of impacted students

- Board eliminates Option G (which allowed for two small schools of 375 seats at North Albany and O'Neal)

Note:

While the least expensive, this option provided almost no flexibility should enrollment grow naturally or via a charter-school closure



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Remaining Options

Board remaining options (September-October 2018)

That leaves options A, D and E from the feasibility study. They are similar in many ways:

- All anticipate a middle school at the current North Albany site, with the majority of the elementary students there going to Arbor Hill
- All anticipate Arbor Hill becoming a larger elementary school to accommodate the former North Albany students beginning in 2022-23
- All would require a new home for the Albany International Center at North Albany beginning in 2023-24
- All would be enrolled via a feeder system that is balanced based on the academic performance of the elementary schools
- All anticipate that the soonest we could occupy a new middle school at North Albany would be the 2023-24 school year because of the need for a public vote, architectural design, State Education Department approvals, etc.



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Options A/D and E/E-Plus

Board follow-up steps (September-October 2018)

Options A, D and E

500-seat North Albany Option (formerly Option A/D)

- Renovate North Albany to house a 500-seat middle school
- Retain a middle school at O'Neal with 500 seats (Option A) or 375 seats (Option D)
- Renovate either Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons to house the AIC

650-seat North Albany Option (formerly called Option E/E-Plus)

- Renovate North Albany to house a 650-seat middle school
- Complete a new demographic report in the fall of 2020 and at that time decide where the AIC would go in 2023-24
- If the expected enrollment is smaller than currently anticipated, AIC would move to O'Neal; no additional construction needed.; three middle schools of 650 each.
- If the expected enrollment is as large or larger than currently anticipated, AIC moves to either Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons, freeing up O'Neal to remain a middle school



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Enrollment Projections: Grades 6-8

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Enrollment Projection</u>
2018-19	2,041 (Current 6-8 enrollment includes 258 sixth-graders in elementary schools)
2023-24	2,030 (Anticipated Occupancy Year)
2024-25	2,033
2025-26	2,107
2026-27	2,136
2027-28	2,144

Note:

The district's enrollment grew by nearly 1,400 students from the 2008-09 school year through the 2017-18 school year. Most of that growth was due to the closure of five charter schools (four of them middle schools), and a significant increase in the city's refugee and immigrant population.



MS Proposals: 500-seat/650-seat North Albany Options

	500-Seat NAA Option (Formerly Option A/D) Four Middle Schools	650-Seat NAA Option (Formerly Option E/Plus) Three or Four Middle Schools
North Albany Academy	500	650
Hackett Middle School	650	650
Myers Middle School	650	650
O'Neal Middle School	500/350	AIC/350/500
Arbor Hill Elementary	4-deep ES	4-deep ES
Tony Clement Center	40 middle-schoolers (175 total enrollment 7-12)	40 middle-schoolers (175 total enrollment 7-12)
Albany International Center	60 middle-schoolers (175 total enrollment 6-12)	60 middle-schoolers (175 total enrollment 6-12)
Possible new location for the Albany International Center	Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons	O'Neal or Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons
Total capacity	2,400/2,250	2,050/2,550
Estimated construction costs at NAA and Arbor Hill	\$26.5 million – \$27.3 million	\$27.2 million – \$28.5 million
Estimated construction costs at Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons for the Albany International Center	\$3.65 million	\$0 if three middle schools are sufficient, and AIC moves to O'Neal. \$3.65 million if four schools are needed.



MS Proposals: Comparisons

	500-seat NAA Option (Formerly Option A/D)	650-seat NAA Option (Formerly Option E/Plus)
Maximum Capacity	2,400 Myers: 650 Hackett: 650 NAA: 500 EON: 500/350 AIC/TCCE: 100	2,550 Myers: 650 Hackett: 650 NAA: 650 EON: 500 AIC/TCCE: 100
Possible three middle school solution?	Very unlikely. With only two 650-seat schools it's very unlikely that we'd have small enough enrollment to have all middle-schoolers in three schools. The maximum capacity at three schools would be 650+650+500+100 (at specialty programs) = 1,900	Possibly. It's an option if enrollment is only a bit lower than the current demographic report. The maximum capacity at three schools would be 650x3+100 (at specialty programs) = 2,050 Current projections are that this would not work for most years. A new demographic report in a few years will give us more information to finalize a decision.
Possible four middle school solution?	Yes. It requires it.	Yes. It's an option if enrollment is high enough to justify it.

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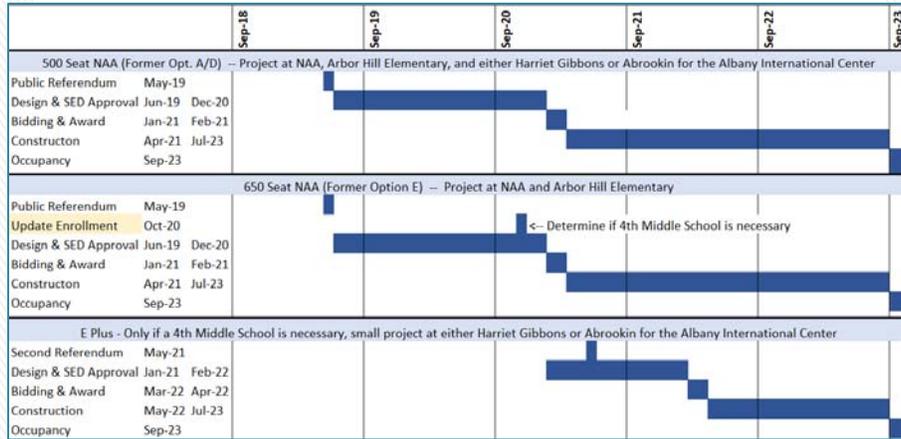
MS Proposals: Comparisons

	500-seat NAA Option (Option A/D)	650-seat NAA Option (Option E/Plus)
Construction cost implications	\$30.15 million (\$26.5 million plus \$3.65 million to renovate Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons)	\$27.2 million, which adds 150 more seats than the 500-seat NAA Option indefinitely. An additional \$3.65 million to renovate Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons if needed based on the 2020-21 demographic report.
Operating cost implications (500-seat middle schools are more expensive to operate on a per-student basis than 650-seat schools due to staffing requirements)	Higher. Two 500-seat schools would be \$31 million. The cost estimate is reduced to \$28.2 million if O'Neal's middle-school capacity is lowered to 350.	Lower. \$24.7 million if three 650-seat middle schools is sufficient. If a fourth 500-seat school is needed and fully occupied, operational costs increase to \$31.9 million. However, if only 350 seats were needed in the fourth school, operational costs would be similar to the 500-seat NAA Option with O'Neal at 350 students.
Other considerations	Fixed and certain. Decisions are made now and implemented by 2023-24 if voters approve in May 2019.	Flexible, but more complex. Includes a May 2019 vote for work at Arbor Hill and North Albany, and a second smaller referendum in May 2021 if additional work is needed at Abrookin or Harriet Gibbons. All schools still would open in 2023-24 if voters approve.

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Proposed Implementation Timeline



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Proposed Implementation Timeline: Arbor Hill and North Albany

If voters approve the facilities referendum in 2019, the new middle-school configuration would be in place for the 2023-24 school year. However, Arbor Hill Elementary School and North Albany Academy would have changes sooner.

Arbor Hill Elementary School

- Expansion would begin spring 2021
- Students and staff would be completely separated from construction at all times
- New facilities would be ready for the 2022-23 school year

North Albany Academy

- Elementary students (pre-K through grade 5) would relocate to the expanded Arbor Hill Elementary beginning with the 2022-23 school year
- Albany International Center would remain at North Albany until all middle-school construction is completed. Students and staff would be completely separated from construction at all times
- New middle school would be ready for the 2023-24 school year; Albany International would relocate to its new location at this time

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Next Steps

We want your input!

There are three more public meetings in October for all families and community members to learn about the two proposals and provide feedback:

- **Tuesday, Oct. 16** – William S. Hackett Middle School, 6:30-8 p.m.
- **Monday, Oct. 22** – Arbor Hill Elementary School, 6:30-8 p.m.
- **Wednesday, Oct. 24** – Pine Hills Elementary School, 6:30-8 p.m.

You can reach us here as well:

- Use the **Feedback form** at albanyschools.org
- Contact Board President Anne Savage: asavage@albany.k12.ny.us
- Director of Communications and Operations Ron Lesko:
 - rlesko@albany.k12.ny.us or (518) 475-6065
- Send us comments by postal mail:
 - City School District of Albany, 1 Academy Park, Albany, NY 12207 (Attn: Board President Anne Savage)

Board of Education decision Nov. 1

The board will take all feedback into consideration and plans to select a final option at its Nov. 1 meeting at North Albany Academy. The meeting begins at 7 p.m.



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Questions and Discussion



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