

Barton School, High School Class of 2014 HS Choice Survey

We have summarized and organized your questions as best we could, and provided answers we know. Some questions have been referred on to MPS. The comments you made were forwarded to MPS as well.

Please direct additional questions to Trish Clarke, 8th grade transition coordinator, at patricia.clarke@mpls.k12.mn.us or 612.668.3593, or 8th grade Leadership Council parents (Andrea Breen, Peggy Clark, David Curle, Megan Cummings-Krueger).

Can my student arrange shadowing as an excused absence if they were absent on the day of the MPS school tours? What if my student wants to shadow at a private or charter?

Students shadowing at non-public high schools or who missed the tour and schedule a shadowing date in MPS will have excused absences. Parents should call or write a note to Jennie in the Health Office. Students should check with their teachers so they know what they'll be missing.

What are the criteria for being admitted to IB at Southwest? Is applying to IB different than putting Southwest as first choice?

There are no entrance criteria for any MPS HS program. Southwest's materials for the 2010-11 school year only feature IB, although they have a long history of Arts and Humanities programming. The IB Programme is for 11th and 12th grade. Southwest is in the process of submitting an application for a MYP (Middle Years Programme) for the 9th and 10th grades. All students at Southwest have the opportunity to take any course offered. When submitting a choice for Southwest, you are choosing the building.

How many spots, if any, will be available to Washburn area students at Southwest?

Short version: There should be about the same size freshman class next year, and there are 104 freshmen at Southwest from the Washburn area (28%). 27.5% of the Southwest school is from the Washburn attendance area. 33% of the entire Washburn area is currently at Southwest, but has been steadily decreasing over the last several years. Almost half o

Long version: No specific quotas have been provided. The presentation MPS staff has prepared for Board discussion about high schools is posted at http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/hs_overview_nov09.pdf. At the bottom of page 4, there is a note that Southwest will probably have the same number of incoming freshmen as this year (432). Washburn attendance area students without siblings already at Southwest are 6th priority (http://highschoolchoice.mpls.k12.mn.us/Assignment_Protocols.html). Historic enrollment information is at http://studentaccounting.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/attend_live9_12_f09_k_8areas_crosstab.pdf. Southwest attendance area has 331 registered 8th graders in MPS, and historically about 60-65% of those students choose SW.

Bryn Mawr attendance area also has 43 registered 8th graders, and they have in attendance area priority to Southwest. Historically, 8-30% of their students choose Southwest. There are between 3 and 12 students from 1D/A4 at Southwest this year in each grade.

There are 100-140 students from the WHS attendance area in each of the SW grades now. There are 408 currently enrolled 8th graders in MPS who live in the WHS attendance area. Some of these students have siblings already at Southwest. If every potential Washburn 8th grader put Southwest as first choice, your odds would be about 1 in 4 or 5.

Private and charter school students are not included in the MPS data, some of whom enter MPS at high school. There may be 25-30 of these students who will be in the attendance area seeking placement.

A request was submitted to determine the number of out of area siblings there might be at Southwest.

Students who live in high poverty areas in the northwest quadrant of the city are 5th priority, and will now receive a bus. To date, 8-12 students are enrolled in each grade at Southwest from this placement group.

There are 2059 students currently enrolled in 8th grade in MPS.

If you want Southwest, you must put it first on your choice card.

How many slots in each school, how many pathways potential, how many in each attendance area, etc. How large will classrooms become?

There is information for the 07-08 and 08-09 years on HS configurations and program selection if you are interested. The current year enrollment data is posted for school buildings. We have asked for the breakouts by programs and feeder schools for the 09-10 school year.

High school classrooms are budgeted at 34, but they vary from building to building based on student choice and available compensatory education or Title 1 funds to support students in poverty.

MPS maintains a reserve fund to hire more teachers after fall enrollments are final in order to adjust for class size.

When looking at the map that was mailed to me earlier it's hard to tell whether we are in the South district...if not, we're right on the border.

Enter your address in the high school choice site to verify your attendance area and options:
<http://highschoolchoice.mpls.k12.mn.us/>.

Where are the statistics about individual schools' drop-out and graduation rates, etc. that used to be readily available in the "school report cards." I can find these numbers for the district as a whole on line - with the disclaimer that they include the alternative high schools so the actual number for each of the big high schools is much lower, etc. I also wish that information about diversity, enrollment, test scores, etc. was more accessible. You really have to search hard online to find this information. Another question/concern is how to share with each other about charters and other options we have. My child hasn't identified that one thing he just loves yet - he's not an orchestra kid or a sports kid or even a chess club kid. I know that these kinds of identities can form the "extended family" at big high schools that keeps kids from falling through the cracks. As a result I have deep misgivings about the big schools for him at this point.

There is a push button on the HS choice site with some of this MPS information:
<http://highschoolchoice.mpls.k12.mn.us/HighSchool.html>. Each school also has this information available on the MDE (Minnesota Department of Education) website, as required by statute. Information about privates and charters is also available at MDE.

How are the schools' diversity, student bodies, etc., expected to change with this new change? A basic idea?

In addition to the HS analysis recently prepared for next year's enrollment (link listed above), there is also information from the racial impact statement about projected demographic shifts as a result of CSO in Board agenda packets over the summer.

Will my student automatically be able to go to South because of attending Barton Open?

You must submit a choice card, and will need to put South Open as your first choice. Those who choose it first will probably fill all available Open seats. Barton and Marcy students have first priority for the available seats for South Open. Barton students have no special priority for All Nations or Liberal Arts, unless there is a sibling already in one of those programs. South and Roosevelt attendance area (zone 2) students will have higher priority to South Liberal Arts than zone 3 (Washburn/Southwest area) students.

Can we choose South High Open as the second choice?

Those who choose it first will almost certainly fill all Open seats.

We are trying to figure out the best strategy for choosing a school. The school our student really wants isn't one that seems likely. What to do?

You should put your first choice first. Over 80% of the students who submit a choice card get their first choice.

Will there be buses for transportation to and from school? If they choose South are they guaranteed bus service?

Busing is available for students who live more than 2 miles from the 2 HS in their zones, North High, and South Open or All Nations (NOT South Liberal Arts).

At the last district meeting, they indicated we would get busing to South or Southwest (We are within walking distance of Washburn.)

The Kenny and Windom neighborhoods were switched from the Washburn attendance area to the Southwest attendance area beginning in 2010-11. The change was made because the Kenny school is the only community school south of 54th Street and west of 35W. The entire Kenny elementary attendance area was designated to a single HS, in order to maintain similar pathways for students from the same neighborhoods. You may choose Washburn as a zone 3 school with busing if you are more than 2 miles away. You may choose South Open as a pathway school with busing if you are more than 2 miles away. You may choose South Liberal Arts as an out of area choice. You may choose South All Nations or North Summatech as a citywide option with busing if you are more than 2 miles away. Your attendance area school is southwest, and you will receive busing if you are more than 2 miles away.

Who are the bus passes for?

MPS is negotiating with MTC for bus passes for existing grandfathered HS students who might lose district transportation. This idea was used experimentally over the summer, and is currently in use with the alternative HS. Early indications are that this program is successful, with minimal disruption to the MTC system, and very few lost passes. As this information becomes available, we will pass it along. There has been no indication of how much families might be expected to pay for the passes. The passes are good for rides at any time on MTC, and students must meet certain requirements in order to keep the pass operational.

Are there going to be carpool options for families who think 2 miles is a long walk, or who need to arrange transportation to South Liberal Arts?

All carpool options would be parent led. Each school has a parent organization that you should consider joining to connect with others who can help support each other with transportation needs.

Any idea when we will get the forms to sign up? Due date?

All families should have received a HS booklet in the mail by now. You may complete the application on paper and mail it in, or on line. If you need a booklet, call the Placement Office, email them, or stop and pick one up. Forms are due January 31, 2010. There are lots of extras at school if people need them. The online application is available and is user friendly.

Will residential location be a point of consideration when the district decides between my student's magnet school choices? (IE: living in S Mpls but looking at South Open and North?)

South Open and North are both citywide magnets. Barton and Marcy Open students have a higher priority to South Open than community school or other magnet school students. If you put North or South Open as first choice, you will probably get that first choice.

Are there strategies that could help in getting into the first or second choice of schools?

If there are more requests than available seats, placements are made by lottery based on the assignment protocols. If you are in the attendance area of the school you choose, you have the best chance of getting into that school. Historically, South and Southwest are over-requested, so whichever is your true first choice should be the first choice on your card.

What recourse is available to us if my student doesn't get into their first choice?

Most families get into their first choice, so you should put your first choice first. There is an appeal process if you think there was a mistake made or if something has changed since you submitted your application. Placement letters will be mailed in early March. Appeals will be due April 15.

Should I talk to the Barton teachers who know my child best and ask their opinion of which school might be the best fit? Should I ask if they know particular teachers at certain schools?

Parents can feel free to discuss high school choice with teachers in terms of curriculum; some teachers may have more information than others on how the specific high schools function. Barton staff may know particular teachers at high schools personally or by reputation and it would be a personal decision whether they want to discuss that with people.

Can I talk with other former Barton parents about their family experiences at the high schools? At the open houses I heard a lot of talk about the IB program and how wonderful it is. I'd be interested in hearing other parent's thoughts and ideas on pros and cons of IB compared to open.

The high schools have parents who are willing to discuss their experiences with other parents. We can compile a list of resources and contacts if needed.

What kind of teacher selection will we have?

Students will register for classes. The building staff determines who will teach those classes.

Concerned about any long-term changes to the program at South. How many students are in the South Open program? There is some concern about the district's commitment to the open program at South, how large it will be and if they will continue to hire teachers that teach Open curriculum.

South building leaders and staff are working with MPS administration to redefine the programs there. Central administration is committed to creating a strong sustainable open program that has integrity and will work with the principal and teachers to do that. South's Open program will gradually be reduced in size to approximately 500 students (currently 800+) in order to increase overall program

integrity. The Open Coordinator is working with the Principal and Associate Superintendent of Secondary Schools.

Wonder what is being done to strengthen the Open programs at South, Barton and Marcy, and to get staff parents and students from the three schools to cooperate and coordinate more to strengthen the pathway.

South Open was a subject of discussion at the 12/1 Board work session, along with some broader issues regarding the continuing development work on the secondary reform plan. Several meetings occurred last week with central administration, as well as South staff later that week. Their CSO transition team is forming, and there should be information very soon about the direction of the program and its relationship with the other two programs also in the building: Liberal Arts and All Nations.

Why will all Washburn freshmen be in Honors English and Geography?

It is called Honors for All; the intent is to provide high-level standards/rigor for all kids, regardless of their school preparedness. In addition, the intent is to provide a class with more depth than breadth, and to make it accessible for students with more/less academically prepared backgrounds.

What is the Liberal Arts program at Washburn?

See page 13 of the guidebook, a classic definition of Liberal Arts. Washburn continues its focus on the IB accreditation. Carol Markham-Cousins, the principal, is really open to discussing the specifics with people. The Liberal Arts SLC as a stand-alone program will be phased out by the end of the 2010-11 school year, as will all SLCs in the district.

Will Barton teachers' recommendations carry much weight with the district's placement decisions with respect to AP classes?

Middle school teachers make recommendations for Biology vs. Earth Sciences and World Languages (in our case which level of Spanish). Those are the only recommendations the high schools ask for so the course registration is a decision for the student and the parents to make; the high school counselors can provide information regarding content and requirements. You may want to check with your student's current math teacher to see which math course you should choose during registration.

If my student completes a year at South in the Open Program and then decides to be in the Liberal Arts Program, what is the process and the likelihood they will be able to switch? And, will my student lose busing if I'm not in zone 2?

This question has been submitted to MPS.

What is the process if child wants to change after 1st or 2nd semester?

Consult with the high school counselor if your child feels the need to change schools once they've experienced it.

Will South ever have an IB program?

MPS has made a commitment to IB as a K-12 pathway. There are ongoing discussions with South staff about possibly implementing IB in future years. MPS also has a commitment to Core4 as a district secondary reform strategy (IB, AP, CIS, CTE).

What is the difference with regard to college credit between IB classes and AP classes? (Not the IB diploma but the individual classes).

You should check with individual colleges to determine if any classes your child takes in HS will be awarded credit in their college of choice. Your high school counselor should have a basic, broad knowledge of what is generally true at most colleges.

To District Staff: How do you plan to keep the integrity of AP classes, if you intend to combine them with IB classes at SW (and Washburn)?

This question has been submitted to MPS staff.