

Reimagining Cranford Public Schools

Why Reimagine Cranford Public Schools?

It is clear that the Cranford Public School District is high performing. Nevertheless, our goal should always be to work collaboratively to find ways to enhance our programs and provide even greater opportunities for our students.

The idea to reimagine Cranford Public Schools emanated from exploring how to implement a full day kindergarten program, as well as other strategic planning initiatives, while also trying to address commonly identified areas of growth throughout the district, such as equity.

What is this all about and how can I join in the discussion?

In order to carry out some of the community developed strategic planning initiatives, as well as address many of the topics that have been repeatedly brought up by various stakeholder groups, the District will be holding a series of community meetings to join in a conversation about Reimagining Cranford Public Schools.

Topics will include:

- Implementing Full Day Kindergarten (no tuition) at four K-2 schools, while maintaining the neighborhood school model
- Creating one comprehensive 3-5 grade school
- Creating one comprehensive 6-8 grade middle school
- Establishing Career Academies at Cranford High School
- Creating a referendum to upgrade and enhance facilities

This is simply a proposal and the District desires and appreciates community input. Collaborative conversations with numerous stakeholders will ensure that community values and desires are considered.



Please join us for community meetings to discuss the Reimagining Cranford Public Schools proposal. The community meetings will be held at Cranford High School on October 30, November 28, and December 17. All meetings will take place at 7:00 pm.

What are the benefits to reimagining Cranford Public Schools?

Cranford Elementary Schools K - 2

- Four K-2 schools, each with full day kindergarten (no tuition), while maintaining the neighborhood school model
- More stable and equitable class sizes
- All schools will have a dedicated art room, music room, and updated multimedia centers
- All Elementary Schools will have equitable space and resources

Cranford Intermediate School Grades 3 - 5

- One focused 3 - 5 grade school, resulting in better opportunities academically, socially, and emotionally for students
- Initiatives and programming solely focused on grades 3-5
- Opportunity for all Cranford students to build relationships with one another earlier
- More stable and equitable class sizes
- Greater equity and consistency across the District
- Greater opportunities for staff: a stronger professional learning community, more time for common planning and collaboration, opportunity for departmentalization (establishing teacher specialists)
- Balancing grade levels will allow for more efficient utilization of existing staff, which directly impacts the number of staff needed to implement full-day kindergarten

Cranford Middle School Grades 6-8

- One focused 6 – 8 grade school, resulting in better opportunities academically, and socially and emotionally for students
- Initiatives and programming solely focused on grades 6-8
- More stable and equitable class sizes
- Provides for a True Teaming approach: Faculty will specialize in a particular grade level and work as a team to better focus on curriculum and students
- Greater opportunity to interact with all Cranford students grades 6-8
- Opportunity for new and improved scheduling options that provide greater focus on student academic and social and emotional needs, including advisory periods, time for students to attend clubs and activities in the middle of the day, opportunities to take part in whole school events, and time to get extra help from teachers during the day. A new schedule would also provide greater elective choices and pathways
- Greater equity and consistency across the District
- Greater opportunities for staff: a stronger professional learning community, more time for common planning and collaboration
- Balancing grade levels will allow for more efficient utilization of existing staff, which directly impacts the number of staff needed to implement full-day kindergarten

Cranford High School - Building Career Academies

- Get more out of the High School experience by participating in a Career Academy:
 - Greater focus on preparation for College and Careers
 - Spend part of the day pursuing your passion, while taking required academic courses
 - Work with students with common interests in a small learning community
 - Opportunity to earn industry recognized credentials
 - Participate in clubs focused on a specific career
 - An Advisory Board full of industry professionals would advise each academy to make sure students are being guided by the latest and greatest industry standards
 - Structured Learning Opportunities, i.e. internships
 - Opportunity to earn college credit in high school through various pathways which could be customized to accommodate each student. If so desired, students could even take their senior year on a college campus, earning credit for a full college course load. Student could graduate with a high school diploma, already completing their first year of college.
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Anticipated Frequently Asked Questions

What about transportation / traffic?

Although the law states that students who reside over 2 miles from grades K - 8 must be bused and students who reside over 2.5 miles from a high school must be bused, the District is seriously exploring busing all students, grades 3-8 who attend a school cross-town. The District in partnership with CPD, CFD, and COEM will create a transportation task force that will conduct a traffic study to create the safest and optimum way to transport students to and from school while minimizing the impact to residents.

Additionally, the use of bus transportation could improve traffic by reducing the amount of cars on the road during arrival and dismissal times.

Will there be redistricting / will the zones change at the elementary level?

There will be some shifting in the zones at the elementary level which will create greater equity and space at each of the elementary schools. The lines for BAS and BPS will shift, meaning some BAS students would attend BPS. The lines for WAS and the new LAS school (former HAS) will shift somewhat to maintain balanced section sizes and allow for equity of space and resource.

How much will this cost?

Initially the District will discuss this proposal with the community to see if there is interest in moving forward. We do know that the cost of this proposal would be less than building 8 classrooms on four different sites and hiring the staff to implement full day kindergarten (In fact, if we build 8 classrooms on four different sites through a referendum, there would not be enough money in the budget to provide appropriate staffing.). The Reimagining process balances class sizes, by grade level, ensuring a more cost-effective use of resources. Balanced grade levels will allow for efficient utilization of existing staff, which directly impacts the number of additional personnel needed to implement full-day kindergarten. These savings will also limit the cost of a much needed referendum to make improvements throughout the district.

How will this impact staff?

We do have duplication of services and inefficiencies throughout the district that this reimagination process would address. However, the plan is not to eliminate staff, but repurpose individuals as new opportunities will also be created.

When will this initiative go into effect?

If the community is supportive of this initiative, the target date for implementation would be the 2020 - 2021 school year.

What items will be included on the Referendum Proposal:

We are refining the list and soliciting ideas from the community, but we are looking at items, such as:

- Innovative Science Labs @ CHS
- Interactive Media Centers Districtwide
- Enhancing Performing Arts Spaces Districtwide
- Exploring accessibility options @ CHS
- Exploring AC options