

Middle College Background and FAQ

The Middle College Model

Locating schools on or near a college campus is integral to student motivation and success. Proximity fosters enduring collaborative partnerships and mutual accountability. Students are treated as college students and see themselves as college completers. The organizational structure reflects the shared responsibility of the high school, college, and school district for student outcomes. High schools and colleges create curriculum alignment that leads to high quality educational and employment opportunities. Middle and Early College High Schools, not located on the physical campus, maintain a transparent and robust interaction with – and access to – college facilities, classes and faculty for the teachers and students of the high school. Relationships among administrators, faculty, and staff at the secondary and postsecondary levels, as well as business representatives, parents and members of the community all work to support student success.

Middle College at SSSC (now High Point)

In late April 2012, Gary Oertli, president of South Seattle Community College, informed SPS that Middle College would need to vacate the space they were using there because the college needed the space. SPS asked for space at the Duwamish branch of SSSC or a portable but were advised that there was no space anywhere on SSSC campus.

Before closing the site altogether, Seattle Public Schools decided to find a location to keep it open one more year to allow transition time to find school placements for returning students. The Boren building was first considered, however K-5 STEM was selected to occupy that site. In August 2012, Seattle Public Schools identified classroom space at the High Point Neighborhood house and leased it for one year only. However, the site remained open for two additional years. This spring, SPS took action and implemented a transition plan for the returning Middle College students for the 2015-16 school year. Middle College at High Point is not considered a stand-alone “program” but rather a part of Middle College High School, which is comprised of Middle College Northgate, Middle College Seattle University, and Middle College University of Washington.

Middle College High Point FAQ

Why is this decision just being announced with the school year almost over?

High Point was a temporary lease while SPS assessed transition to other Middle College sites. The district leased the site from The Seattle Housing Authority.

What was different between this year's review of projections and a similar review last year? What were this year's projected numbers compared to the past?

High Point ended the 2013-14 school year with 58 students. The 2014-15 projection for High Point (generated by the district's Enrollment Services department) was 60 students and the site was staffed to accommodate those numbers. On Oct. 1, enrollment had dropped to 50 students. At the beginning of February 2015 (the beginning of the second semester), enrollment dropped again to 36 students, which is a continuation of a multi-year decline in enrollment.

How much money does the district project will be saved by closing this program - lease, staff costs, etc.?

- Lease costs: Approximately \$28,000.00/year
- Staffing: Salary plus benefits for 2.2 FTE staff

Has any marketing/outreach been done to try to boost numbers, rather than just shut the program down?

Yes. In order to seek out potential student enrollment, Middle College High Point has been marketed in a number of ways. This includes:

- High school counselors – ongoing referrals
- Enrollment Services – ongoing referrals
- Interagency Academy – ongoing referrals
- Case managers for social service agencies, Juvenile Court and DSHS – ongoing referrals
- Seattle Schools Truancy Specialists – ongoing referrals
- ELL and International Programs departments – ongoing referrals
- Word of mouth – many students enroll through word of mouth, but this year we have had decreased enrollment.

What will happen to the staff that has been specifically working at High Point?

Current staff at High Point will be displaced (per Seattle Education Association's Collective Bargaining Agreement) to positions at the other Middle College locations or to other SPS positions depending on their area of endorsement and highly qualified status at the secondary level.

What options remain in the West Seattle area for the population served by this school?

Students were notified by letter of their options. They are as follows:

- Option to attend one of the other Middle College sites (Northgate, U.W. campus, SU campus)
- Option to attend your home attendance boundary high school
- Option to return to your home school district high school (For those currently attending SPS on an out of district transfer)

Can I get help to decide what option is best for my current Middle College High Point student?

Yes! Please contact Cindy Nash, Middle College principal at cortega@seattleschools.org.