

# Briefing Paper: Cascadia Split

## Problem Statement:

Cascadia is temporarily located in the former Lincoln High School building and serves students in the Highly Capable Cohort (HCC). The school will move into its new building at the Wilson Pacific site in 2017-18. The new building is planned to have a capacity of approximately 660 seats, which is not sufficient to serve all of the students currently at Cascadia given the growth the school has experienced. As of September 9, 2016, Cascadia has 749 students currently enrolled for the 2016-17 school year.

## Background:

Students in grades 1-5 who are eligible and wish to enroll for high capable services are assigned to a pathway school based on where they live. Cascadia is the highly capable (HC) pathway school for all students in the north end of the district, which includes students who live in the McClure, Hamilton, Whitman, Jane Addams, and Eckstein service areas. The number of students enrolling for HC services across the district at the elementary level has increased significantly over the past five years, from 691 students in 2011-12 to 1,235 students in the 2015-16 school year. The number of students enrolled at Cascadia, which only serves students HCC students, has increased from 524 students in 2012-13 to 753 students in the 2015-16 school year. It was initially anticipated that Cascadia could fit in its new building, but with the significant growth in the HCC population, all the students currently enrolled at Cascadia cannot be accommodated in the new building. The Decatur building at Thornton Creek is the only building in the district that is available to serve students and not planned to be utilized in 2017-18.

**Table 1: Historical HCC Enrollment by Grade (1-5)**

Grade	October 2011 Actuals	October 2012 Actuals	October 2013 Actuals	October 2014 Actuals	October 2015 Actuals
1	74	84	105	99	122
2	124	133	153	240	225
3	173	203	191	242	309
4	156	221	231	260	283
5	164	172	241	274	296
<b>Total</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>1,235</b>

**Table 1: Historical Cascadia Enrollment by Grade (1-5)**

Grade	October 2012 Actuals	October 2013 Actuals	October 2014 Actuals	October 2015 Actuals	September 9, 2016 Actuals
1	53	68	63	76	65
2	93	88	142	146	129
3	137	138	135	180	194
4	135	153	167	162	191
5	106	150	179	189	170
<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>749</b>

## Shared Value:

We are “committed to equitable access, closing opportunity gaps and excellence in education for every student.” We have a fiscal responsibility to our public.

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### Options:

Actions	Arguments in Favor	Arguments Against
<p>1. Cascadia split with grades 1 and 2 at Decatur and grades 3-5 at the new building at Wilson Pacific</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Cascadia students would have the opportunity to take classes in the new building.</li> <li>• The grade level cohorts will continue to be large.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would require three transitions for students currently in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, and two transitions for all new students.</li> <li>• Transportation would be more expensive since students would not necessarily be attending the school closest to them.</li> <li>• Would increase the number of students on the Thornton Creek campus requiring coordination of schedules.</li> <li>• Families with siblings would not be in the same building.</li> <li>• Would have to function as two schools and would not have a whole school feel.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Cascadia split based on where students live (Geosplit) – Decatur becomes a new HCC pathway school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimizes transportation costs by having students attend the school closest to where they live.</li> <li>• Minimizes transitions for students.</li> <li>• Would create a more manageable size for each elementary school given that Cascadia is currently the district’s largest elementary school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially more challenging to plan classroom configurations for each building such that grade level classes are balanced.</li> <li>• Would increase the number of students on the Thornton Creek campus requiring coordination of schedules.</li> <li>• New principal would need to be identified and funded for new school and this would be new messaging to families.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Cascadia split based on where students live (Geosplit) – HCC is integrated with Thornton Creek</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimizes transportation costs by having students attend the school closest to where they live.</li> <li>• Minimizes transitions for students.</li> <li>• HCC site at Thornton Creek is now modeled like the other HCC sites across the district, integrating HCC and general education students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially more challenging to plan classroom configurations for each building such that grade level classes are balanced.</li> <li>• Would increase the number of students on the Thornton Creek campus requiring coordination of schedules.</li> <li>• There has not been engagement with Thornton Creek families about this possibility.</li> <li>• Thornton Creek is an option school, so enrollment in general education would be limited, but HCC enrollment would not be limited assuming it was still a pathway site.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Cascadia split with grades 1 and 2 at Cedar Park and grades 3-5 at the new building at Wilson Pacific</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Cascadia students would have the opportunity to take classes in the new building.</li> <li>• The grade level cohorts will continue to be large.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would require three transitions for students currently in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, and two transitions for all new students.</li> <li>• Transportation would be more expensive since students would not necessarily be attending the school closest to them.</li> <li>• Would not provide capacity relief to NE schools.</li> <li>• Families with siblings would not be in the same building.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would have to function as two schools and would not have a whole school feel.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Cascadia split based on where students live (Geosplit) – Cedar Park becomes a new HCC pathway school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimizes transportation costs by having students attend the school closest to where they live.</li> <li>• Minimizes transitions for students.</li> <li>• Would create a more manageable size for each elementary school given that Cascadia is currently the district’s largest elementary school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially more challenging to plan classroom configurations for each building such that grade level classes are balanced.</li> <li>• Would not provide capacity relief to NE schools.</li> <li>• New principal would need to be identified and funded for new school and this would be new messaging to families.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>DISTRICT DEEMED THIS IS NOT A VIABLE OPTION</u></b></p> <p>6. Add portables to Cascadia site (4-6 portables) and keep Cascadia as one school at one site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would keep all students currently at Cascadia together.</li> <li>• Would minimize disruption for families if there is a long term solution to manage the size of Cascadia in the near future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master Use Permit is for 660 students.</li> <li>• Space for 10-12 general education buses</li> <li>• Core spaces designed for 660.</li> <li>• Gym space has 2 teaching space.</li> <li>• Narrow hallways</li> <li>• Portables would take playground space.</li> <li>• Only space for 2-4 portables on playground.</li> <li>• As Cascadia enrollment increases, more portables would be needed-which is not possible.</li> <li>• Leaves Decatur unused.</li> <li>• Communities have asked for portables to allow grandfathering for 2017-18 boundary changes. Equity issues with adding portables to Cascadia to keep north end cohort together and not adding portables to allow for grandfathering.</li> </ul>

### Actions/Next Steps:

- Collaborate with the Cascadia PTSA to create and send a survey to families.
- We are seeking input from Small Cabinet, the Cascadia and Thornton Creek communities, SPS Capacity Management Task Force, Advanced Learning, Capital Projects and Planning, School Operations, Transportation, and Enrollment Planning on these options.
- If Cascadia is split, we would need to identify a leader for the school, administrative staff, and other supports for the second site. These staff would need to start planning for the upcoming school year as soon as possible.
- If we are placing portables at Cascadia, those will need to be approved by the Board so Capital can begin work to ensure the portables are ready for the start of the 2017-18 school year.
- The Student Assignment Plan will need to be updated with any decisions that impact the HCC pathways prior to Open Enrollment for the 2017-18 school year. The timeline for Student Assignment Plan changes for 2017-18 is below.
  - End of October 2016: Student Assignment Plan BAR begins routing process
  - November 17, 2016: Student Assignment Plan BAR to Operations Committee
  - December 7, 2016: Student Assignment Plan BAR to Board for Intro
  - January 4, 2017: Student Assignment Plan BAR to Board for Action

