

## Details of JK Mid-Year Pilot Project

**1. This pilot project would involve a small number of families.** Based on CPS lottery data on rising JK students, it is estimated that there are not more than 25-35 families with children born in April, and it's likely that fewer than half would be interested in moving their children into CPS JK mid-year.

**2. There are many empty JK/K seats.** As of August 8, 2016, there were 56 empty seats in CPS JK/K classrooms, including 36 in non-SEI, non-immersion classrooms; 7 in immersion classrooms, and 15 in SEI classrooms. Since some parents who are registered in August do not actually enroll their children in September, it is likely there are more seats available as of the October 1st enrollment count. *Last year (2015-16) there were 100 empty JK/K seats on Oct. 29th.*

**3. Empty seats are in under-chosen schools in low-income neighborhoods.** Of the 36 empty seats in non-SEI, non-immersion classrooms, 30 are in the under-chosen schools of *Kennedy-Longfellow (15 seats), King Open (9 seats), and Fletcher-Maynard (7 seats)*. The base neighborhoods of these schools--East Cambridge, Wellington-Harrington, and The Port--have three of the lowest median household incomes in Cambridge.

**4. Under-chosen and under-enrolled schools in low-income neighborhoods have more unstable enrollment than fully enrolled schools in higher-income neighborhoods.** The school with the largest number of empty JK/K seats (KLo) has the highest rate of kindergarten-to-1<sup>st</sup> grade attrition (kindergarten students not returning for first grade): One-third did not return. In addition, 30% of KLo JK-5 students left mid-year, replaced by only 17% of new students. *Students leaving mid-year or not returning the following year makes it very difficult to create a stable community of students and families.*

**5. Cambridge is committed to economically balanced and integrated schools.** The three schools with the most empty JK/K seats have the higher than average percentages of low-income students. These schools would benefit from more Paid Lunch families. Higher income schools with empty seats due to under-enrollment of FR Lunch students would have the opportunity to enroll more low-income JK students to achieve greater balance. Research has shown that low-income students benefit from going to low-poverty schools, and are disadvantaged by going to high-poverty schools.

**6. Advertising this small pilot project would not be difficult.** *The FRC would recruit families with April-born 4-year olds via whatever method they found easiest for this pilot year: 1) Advertise the program beginning Monday, November 14, 2016, via the same methods used to advertise the JK/K regular lottery. Or 2) Simply contact eligible parents who entered the 3/4- year old lottery in the past two years. Parents would be required to apply by Friday, December 16th, 2016, providing a 5-week application window, and students would begin on January 4, 2017, 3 days after the December vacation. If there were more applicants than empty seats, they would be made available via a lottery. Though neighborhood preference would not be observed for the initial pilot year, sibling preference and controlled choice requirements would be observed.*

**7. Mid-year enrollment of new JK students would not be disruptive.** CPS teachers are used to changes in enrollment as parents move schools when they come off wait lists, new families arrive mid-year in this highly transient city, and enrolled families leave Cambridge mid-year. *Last year, the entire King Open School was moved into a new building mid-year, including JK and K students.*

Kindergarten teachers could provide advice on the best way to transition in new JK children. One possibility would be to set a cap of 3-6 children per classroom, with staggered start dates.

**8. Parents who accept an empty seat would not be able to re-apply for the kindergarten lottery.** Mid-year JK parents would be under the same restriction as other parents who enroll their children as JK students--they can put their name on waitlists for other schools but may not re-enroll in the lottery.

**9. Some seats would be reserved for mid-year families with students who turn four-years-old before March 31st.** The number of seats reserved for other families moving into the district in winter/spring would be based on the number of JK families who enrolled after January 1st during the previous 2015-2016 school year.

*As a small-scale pilot project with no budget implications, this experiment would give CPS the opportunity to observe the effect of inviting parents of children born after March 31st to apply mid-fall for empty seats, and to determine if this has a stabilizing effect on under-enrolled schools. Most importantly, it would ensure that public school resources were being used to benefit as many young children and their families as possible in the second half of the 2016-2017 school year.*

	Empty Seats as of 08-24-16	% FR Lunch in 2015-2016	% ELL 2015-2016	% K-to-1 <sup>st</sup> Attrition 2015-2016	% Mid-Year Exits (Churn) 2015-2016	% Mid-Year Intake 2015-2016
Amigos	0	28%	5%	5.9%	4.8%	2.1%
Peabody	0	45%	5%	4.4%	4.6%	2.5%
Baldwin	1	38%	6%	6.0%	8.8%	5.0%
Cport	2	42%	5%	4.3%	13.3%	10.6%
FMA	7	67%	12%	14.0%	14.2%	18.8%
FMA-SEI	15	"	"	"	"	"
King Open	9	46%	7%	11.7%	12.3%	5.1%
KO Ola	6	"	"	"	"	"
G&P	1	44%	35%	14.0%	23.2%	16.0%
G&P-SEI	0	"	"	"	"	"
Haggerty	0	35%	7%	10.0%	6.1%	2.3%
Tobin	0	40%	3%	10.0%	21.5%	18.3%
KLo	15	56%	19%	33.9%	29.5%	17.1%
KLo-SEI	0	"	"	"	"	"
King	0	46%	12%	15.9%	10.6%	5.6%
King-CI	1	"	"	"	"	"
Morse	2	47%	6%	10.9%	13.0%	7.6%