



# LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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SUPERINTENDENT

March 16, 2011

To: School Committee  
From: Mickey Brandmeyer  
Re: Recommendations for METCO enrollments and adjustments to grade level organization for 2011-2012

Last November, during the presentation of the Preliminary Budget for FY12, I indicated that enrollment projections would require supporting 3 sections of kindergarten and 4 sections of grade 1. This structure was designed to provide the appropriate number of seats for incoming students and to comply with the Class Size policy.

Each year, after the budget is established, we continue to monitor enrollment data to assess if earlier projections remain valid or need adjustments. The Class Size policy also requires the Superintendent submit an updated enrollment projection and proposed section adjustments, if necessary, prior to May 1<sup>st</sup>. This memo shall serve that purpose.

Initial projections indicated the need for 3 sections of kindergarten and 4 sections of grade 1. The kindergarten projection was based on census data received from the Town Clerk's Office, which had not updated the report with the most recent census information. It originally indicated that 36 Lincoln resident students were age eligible for kindergarten for the 2011-2012 school year, to that we added 6 Boston resident students who would enroll through the METCO program for a projected average class size of 14.

We had also projected the need for 4 sections of grade 1. This was based on an October 1, 2010 kindergarten enrollment of 55 students and a cohort survival rate of 1.11%. Four sections of grade 1 in 2011-2012 would result in an average class size of 15.8.

Using updated census data, information the school has received from area preschools, employee requests for enrollment, and inquiries from families intending to move to Lincoln, we have revised the projections significantly.

## METCO Enrollment

Lincoln is authorized to maintain a METCO enrollment of 91 students and has a policy of enrolling at least 2 METCO students per section, kindergarten to grade 8. It is important to maintain the enrollment target of 91 since this is the number that the METCO grant is calculated on. Last year, and again this year, there are a significant number of METCO students who are applying to private or examination schools. It is likely that some of these students will build on their success at Lincoln School and be admitted into a private or exam school in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Last year the School Committee supported enrolling a larger cohort of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. While their transition to Lincoln School has been generally successful, it was more challenging than anticipated.

Recently, we reported on the district's achievement gap and acknowledged that Lincoln School's Students of Color do not attain, on average, the same performance scores as their White and Asian peers. Historically, Lincoln has not accepted METCO students in the intermediate or middle school grades. We are recommending that we re-establish a commitment to accepting students only in lower grades, typically in kindergarten and grade 1 but generally not after grade

3. The school principals, METCO Director and Special Education Coordinator all agree with this guideline.

Therefore, given the shifts in enrollment from the Fall to present and the district's commitment to both the METCO program and enrollment of employee's children we are recommending the following adjustment in next year's classroom configuration.

1. That we **add** a fourth section of kindergarten; accept the enrollment requests for 5 children of employees and increase the number of METCO student by 8 for a total of 14. The projected enrollment will be 57 with an average class size of 14.25, providing 15 available seats for the students who are currently undecided about enrolling (19) and move-ins. I believe that the number of available seats should be sufficient to meet the final enrollment for kindergarten.
2. That we **decrease** the number of budgeted grade 1 sections from 4 to 3 and do not enroll additional METCO students at this grade. The projected enrollment will be 60 with an average class size of 20, resulting in close enrollment to preferred class size at this grade.
3. That we **maintain** the budgeted number of second grade classrooms (4) and accept 4 additional METCO students and the employee request establishing a projected enrollment of 72 students for an average class size of 18, providing 12 available seats for students who may move to Lincoln this summer.
4. That we **maintain** the budgeted number of third grade classroom (4) and accept 4 additional METCO students and the employee request establishing a projected enrollment of 69 students for an average class size of 17.3, providing 15 available seats for students who may move to Lincoln this summer.
5. That we **maintain** the budgeted number of sections grades 4 to 8 and do not enroll additional METCO students in these grades. While it is likely that some of the current 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who have applied to private or exam school will leave the district, we will continue to monitor class size. If the number of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students drops next year I will direct the Principal to revise the 7<sup>th</sup> grade schedule in a fashion similar to the revisions approved for grades 6 and 8 and to use available staffing accordingly.

This recommendation will not require funding not already included in the School Committee approved budget for FY12. Additional instructional assistant hours for kindergarten will be included in the district's full-day kindergarten grant application.

The attached spreadsheet provides background information regarding enrollment projections that are associated with these recommendations. The calculations assume that the School Committee approves this recommended scenario.