

SOLVAY SCHOOLS

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Reconfiguration FAQs

- 1. How will students be transported?** Prekindergarten (PK) students would not ride the bus with 5-8 graders. They would have a delayed start time which would allow unimpeded pick-up/drop-off at the side entrance at Solvay Middle School (SMS). PK students would ride with other elementary children in the AM; they would be dropped off after the Solvay Elementary School (SES) stop. In the afternoon, PK students would be picked up on a separate run (which would be accommodated by consolidating routes or adding an extra driver through grant funding). Fourth grade would also be transported with other elementary students. (Note: Many districts do not transport PK students at all.)
- 2. How long will PK students be on the bus?** No longer than 45 minutes (which is currently the maximum).
- 3. What will the bathroom set-up be at SMS?** PK would have a designated bathroom across from the cafeteria. The toilet sits at 17 inches in that bathroom; one urinal is 16 inches. The toilets in elementary classrooms are 15 inches tall; however, the toilets/urinals in the communal bathrooms at SES (across from the cafeteria, for example) mirror the exact same measurements as the SMS bathrooms (17 inches and 16 inches, respectively). Regardless, the State Education Department (SED) recommends a “platform” for sinks. (Sinks/fountains at SES are about 30 inches tall; the sink at SMS is 32 inches but depth of the faucets could be an issue.) We would have standing platforms at sinks which are 8-10 inches off the ground. SED did not recommend any modifications for toilets because most students use standard sized toilets at home. However, we will have stools available in each bathroom for toilets. We currently have stools for sinks available in three out of four classrooms.
- 4. Will there be additional personnel available for PK?** We will be hiring an aide to assist with toileting and hand washing. We may need to fund an additional driver for the PK bus run.
- 5. Will any staff need to travel?** English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers may need to travel to SES to provide support but they have done so many times in the past based on student need.
- 6. Will band be available for 4th grade at SES?** Yes - we would have our part-time band teacher serve 4th grade students.
- 7. Where will PK eat meals?** Both breakfast and lunch would be served in classrooms.
- 8. Will playground modifications be needed at either site?** At SES, no adjustments would be needed. Most people actually agree that the SMS playground would be safer for PK students. The tallest slides at SES stand at approximately 10 ft. and 15 ft. We had to transport younger students to the hospital on more than one occasion because of falls from those slides. SMS slides are only about 6 ft. tall. PK students can use the climbing platforms and rope ladders. The monkey bars and sliding handle would be a non-issue because students wouldn't be big enough to reach. Two swings are currently adjusted for small children; we may want to adjust 1-2 more swings at SMS. We could also look into adding some small playground pieces through capital project funding in the future.

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9. **Will rooms at SES be configured by grade level?** Yes – K-2 on the first floor; 3 & 4 on the second.
10. **Are there any accountability issues for teachers and administrators?** No - PK teachers are not subject to the same accountability rules as K-12 teachers and PK does not count toward an administrators Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). However, 4th grade does have APPR accountability and the APPR applies to both teacher and administrator.
11. **Will PK have space for physical education (PE)?** Yes – PK would be able to use the small gym.
12. **Does switching allow room for growth in both schools?** The switching of programs allows for the same enrollment bubbles at SES. It would also free-up at least 4 classrooms at SMS. We would be able to still have space for a parent resource center and storage for PK. (With declining enrollment, there may be space to expand the PK program to 3 year olds as funding is available in the future.)
13. **Will there be time for collaboration between PK and K teachers?** Yes – there would be time on staff development days and time during the annual student placement day. We would also provide resources/time for teachers to come together during the year outside of contractual hours.
14. **Will parking be an issue?** The switch should not cause additional parking issues – (parking is limited at SES but could accommodate a small number of travelling teachers).
15. **How/when would the move occur?** Teachers moving classrooms would be given time to pack and unpack materials. Maintenance and custodial crews would facilitate the move after the end of the school year in summer of 2017.
16. **What about Academic Intervention Services (AIS) staffing?** A Title I AIS teacher would be assigned to SES (based on student need).
17. **Is there an impact on the OCM BOCES Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) program?** No impact.
18. **What are the benefits of moving 4th grade?** Research suggests that middle school transitions tend to be extremely difficult for children and achievement often suffers as a result - 4th graders would be in a more appropriate, “nested” environment which could support greater social/emotional and instructional benefits.
19. **Will speech be available at SMS for PK students?** PK students typically are serviced by the county; but, generally speaking, any service/support students receive at SES can/will be delivered at SMS.