General Questions

Warm Questions

• For those who registered for programs no longer offered, what will happen? Will there be a chance for parents to re-register to make a different selection in the registration process? RE-Registration?
  Yes. The counselors will be sending our registration forms in May.
• I like the focus on HS prep. What specifically will 8th graders be doing to prep them for HS courses?
  The curriculum increases in rigor with each grade level. One of the expectations of any middle grades program is teachers teach students how to be organized and manage a course load effectively. Counselors also support teachers in this task through workshops, group work and in some cases individual support.
• What are options for music in middle grades besides band?
  Band is the only program design for middle grades at Hilburn. We still hope to offer another option if Mrs. G’s schedule allows.
• Good job on after school- what is the plan for next year (still in-house)?
  Thanks! Yes, we will continue in-house next year.
• How can we get sports started for middle grades?
  Only the School Board can make this decision.
• I’m glad to hear the music program is expanding- At what grade will band start to be offered?
  It is funded for middle grades only, but schedule permitting, we would like to continue offering band in 5th grade.
• I’m very impressed with what my son has learned in art as a KG student. Is art going to continue to be offered?
  Yes, art will continue to be offered PreK-5, with the hope to maintain iArts in 6-8 this fall.
• On the slide show only mention of K-5 music, Spanish, PE, Tech, What about 6-8th? No programs are offered for those students.
  Music, PE and Art are required program elements for all WCPSS elementary programs. The other items are unique to a smaller number of schools. We are excited that we can offer them to our students! Middle grades will also have Spanish, Band, Health/PE, CTE.
• K-8 seems to be working well with Leesville athletics program. Will this continue?
  Yes. We hope more Hilburn students will participate with the addition of 8th grade!
• Additional support greatly appreciated. How will this need be accessed and communicated?
  We’re not clear about what this question means. Please contact an administrator.
• Where will 8th grade classrooms be located?
  8th grade core classes will be located in the new building and on the blue hall, along with the other middle grades core classes.

Warm Comments

• Very happy to see emphasis put on TA support as well as intervention/other teacher support.
• Great technology program. Ms. Wright & Mr. S offer projects that are fun and educational. My children love them!
• Hilburn website is a great tool- PLEASE increase all communication there! No more class parent emails, instead please direct everything to website for centralized communication.
• 6th grade has an exceptional teaching staff. They are very motivation and nurturing while pushing students to their best!
• The library program seems strong. Kudos to Ms. Freeze.
• Love the new 7th grade teachers!
• Thank you Principal Ford and staff for being so open and clear. I appreciate the communication.
• Love the clearly articulated purpose and aligning the programs with it.
• 7th grade teaching team is excellent. ELA class has been particularly enriching.
• Band and Mr. Hobbs, Great excellent job.
• Love the longer time for specials (instead of only 30 minutes).
• Love the I-Arts program. Would like to see more visual arts added to program.
• Dana Mann was a full time IRT right? She would be an excellent IRT since there is now funding for it.
• Mr. Hobbs has been excellent and very patient with the kids. Thanks for your dedication.
• My kids like the Hilburn after school program better than the Y.
• We appreciate the staff’s energy and enthusiasm! Hilburn is a special school and we recommend it to other parents.
• Great Media program k-5. Media compliments class assignments well. Ms. Freeze provides interesting reading activities for all her classes.
• There is an every present demonstration of commitment to the kids. Always. Kudos!
• Great music program. Very impressed with the students growth and ability.

Cool Questions

• Why are so many movies being watched in music class?
  This is a perception question. Please contact Mrs. G. if you have questions about her classroom. Thanks!
• Why are class sizes increasing from high teens in lower grades to mid 20s?
  One of the purposes of Hilburn’s great programming was to fill an underenrolled school. The program has been very successful! In K-3, class sizes can be anywhere up to 24 students each by law.
• Will we still have 2 assistant principals given? We’ll have a full-time IRT position?
  Hilburn has one assistant principal position for the fall. We will have one fulltime IRT as well.
• When there are lots of behavior issues in classrooms, how do you ensure teachers get necessary support to still give focus on kids who are paying attention?
  Teachers are professionally trained to handle situations surrounding student behavior and motivation. Support staff, including counselors and administrators, also help as needed.
• Why inconsistent email communication? Specifically next year’s funding.
  This was a miscommunication. PTA and the school work closely together to support students needs, and sometimes mistakes happen. We apologize for any confusion.
• How is AIG program changing?
  AIG services will expand since we will have a fulltime AIG teacher next year. The district is changing service delivery; this will be communicated to parents in the fall by Mrs. Stavros once schools receive all of the information.
• What will the physical arrangements be for the middle school classes?
  They will be housed in the new building and the blue hall.
• How is intervention support being expanded in 6-8?
  A fulltime interventionist can serve more students, plus Math and ELA teachers will offer an intervention block.
• Where are the months of employment coming from for the additional staff or hours?
  Staffing increases are related to growth. As our student population continues to expand, so too does our staffing.
• When will we have a grading system that more accurately depicts individual student achievement rather than an arbitrary list of objectives which may or may not be addressed?
  The School Board establishes the grading policy. News media says they are working on it this summer. Stay tuned!
• AIG and 5th grades use very old and slow desktop computers in the library. What can be done to improve the speed of these machines?
  New machines would be great! The district “refreshes” computers every 5-8 years. Anything fast than that would have to be funded by the PTA or grants.
• Will there be enrichment programs for the middle school grades for children who are consistently high achievers? (not just in math)
  Research shows that ‘enrichment’ should happen through differentiation in the classroom on a regular basis, rather than old-fashioned ‘pullout’ programs. Please contact your
child’s teacher or our AIG teacher, Ms. Stavros with specific questions. We hope the addition of some new clubs in this area will support students as well!

- Can you detail options for middle school? I.e., clubs, sports, etc
  We are not permitted to field any “home” sports teams without School Board approval. Club information will be available in the fall. We expect these opportunities to expand. Parents can also sponsor clubs; please see an administrator if you are interested!

- Will we lose 5th grade band next year?
  We hope to continue band in 5th grade, schedule permitting. The schedule is finalized over the summer.

- What is the technology plan and growth for school?
  New computers for the middle grades students arrive in the final wave this summer. The district currently has no plan for buying new ones in the years ahead. We will be working with Middle School Programs this fall on a business plan to sustain technology in future years.

- Why are teachers at Hilburn not more involved in the PTA?
  We are not sure what is meant by “involved” - or the percentage of staff that are active members vs. the percentage of parents that are active members. We do know that Hilburn’s school community is quite vibrant!

- What are ways that we can deviate from a uniformity that comes with common core so student’s individual needs can be met?
  Common core allows for differentiation. If you don’t believe your child’s individual needs are being met, please schedule a meeting with the teacher.

- Middle school sports plans for own teams?
  This would require action by the School Board, as it was never part of the original design of Hilburn’s unique program.

- With more students coming to Hilburn next year, how will we handle the larger enrollment?
  We have it covered. Even if we reached upwards of 800 students this fall, it still pales in comparison to the nearly 930 students we accommodated in 2007-08.

- What will the role of NCVPS at the middle school?
  Unknown at this time. We will share any update as we receive them.

- Would it be possible to post teaching methods in use for the major subject areas? E.g. math concepts
  Major concepts taught, ie. curriculum strands, may be most easily seen in the Common Core “at a glance” documents available for each grade level.

- What was the confusion on paper drive needed/not needed a while back? And what was the confusion with losing funding/not losing funding? Please address parents on this.
  This was a miscommunication. PTA and the school work closely together to support students needs, and sometimes mistakes happen. We apologize for any confusion.
• What is the future of common core? It has been a bumpy road with all of the different ways to do things? 
  This is a state and national political issue that we know better to address here. 😊
• When the 6th grade was added, they ate lunch at 10:45. When the 7th grade was added they ate lunch at 10:15. Please tell us you will not be having the new 8th graders eat at 9:45. What is the plan? 
  The schedule for the next school year will not be finalized until this summer, as is typical.

Cool Comments -

• Please continue to improve and promote website updates and communication. i.e. Calendar
• Tell people what is changing as soon as possible so people can make their choices and be prepared.
• Please stop these meetings where parents are managed into not actually communicating go back to “popcorn Q&A” for actual answers to our questions.
• Please do a better job about updating the website especially the calendar.
• Confused about inconsistent email communication about funding and reaching out to school board.
• Don’t like ABCD day, confusing.
• Change to a modified school calendar.
• Middle schooler’s don’t get to use MAC lab, they want to use it.
• Please work on setting up more chairs for function nights. There is never enough space for all the attendees which is a great problem to have.
• Too much movies/shows/screen time in music and Spanish.
• This meeting format is not helpful- being here in person should mean questions in person.
• AIG services available not communicated.
• Please over communicate with parents (administration and teachers) we want to know what is going on.
• Lack of clubs, need to help students excel.
• Would like to see middle school grades take advantage of the wonderful collection of literature in the Hilburn library.
• We need more and different school electives. Let our great teachers be creative.
• We need a dedicated 3rd grade reading specialist given the ramifications of “read to achieve”.
• I can see why it was very difficult to show growth with such minimal intervention.
• When a student takes the test at the beginning of the year and shows the know >80% of that grade levels standards, it is difficult for them to show growth when it was not possible to attend the “single subject acceleration” next grade level class because of
scheduling logistics and also have minimal direct differentiated instruction given. (the only acceleration given was some worksheets to work on independently)

- It would be great to see more smiles on the faces of adults working at Hilburn.
- The only 6th grade teacher who updates Power school in a timely manner is Ms. Bass. The delay makes it hard to keep track of my student’s progress.
- Need consistent school to home communication (i.e. edmodo, website posting) for the grade teams (especially for middle school)
- Please address the email that went out from PTA president vs. the email (info) from Mr. Ford.
- Provide an education/administration glossary “PTL” was used in presentation without definition.
- Library “I Forgot My Book” area is filled with worn/abused books. These discourage students from learning to appreciate books and care for them. Give the kids who forgot attention to look through a book they like and learn how to use library skills.
- I completely understand the decision re: global language, specifically Chinese. However I am frustrated that my child has spent 2 years of time in Chinese that is essentially wasted.

Global Schools Program

Warm Questions

- How much time in the schedule will be devoted to foreign language? More than 2 days @ 20 minutes? Please?  
The master schedule for the new school year is under development; these details will be shared in the fall.
- How are we meeting needs of ESL (Hispanic/Mexican) who takes Spanish which is their 1st language? Shouldn’t they be taking an English class?  
All families have the right to choose program options for their children.
- Time devoted to language more than 2 times for 20 minutes?
- What can parents do to save the Chinese program?  
The decision to supplant Chinese and invest further in Spanish is a site-based decision based on the reasons stated at the meeting.
- Is it possible to suggest to Wake County Schools that Mandarin be offered in high school?  
Certainly!
- What can we do to bring K-8 Mandarin back to Hilburn for 15’-16”? Who to lobby?  
The decision to supplant Chinese and invest further in Spanish is a site-based decision based on the reasons stated at the meeting. The decision was not about funding; it was about students not being able to be competitive with their peers upon entering high school.
• Will children that have taken 2 years of Chinese be put in beginning Spanish or taught w/others in their class that have Spanish experience?
  Language classes at the elementary level are introductory. Please contact Mrs. Quintana with questions specific to her classroom.

Warm Comments

• Happy to have had the opportunity to learn Chinese and about Chinese culture. Sad that it is over.
• We love language program. However very unclear in manner it will continue.
• I like seeing artwork done by students in the hallways. How about some more?
• I strongly support the CTE option to band and am very thankful that it will continue for 6-8 for students to grow in that application instead of forcing all students to one elective, like band especially if they don’t have interest/skills in band.
• Impressed seeing globalization in the early grades.
• Agree to focus on one global language and to do it well, instead of 2 choices with not going deep.
• Mandarin has been a feel good class for my child. Thank you Miss Snow. We’ll miss you!
• My son is in the 4th grade and he is learning Mandarin Chinese, he is learning a lot of the culture.
• I like the focus on one language using the leveled course method.
• Leveled foreign language classes sound good going forward.
• We loved Mandarin. I am sad we are letting it go, even though I understand why.
• Love that we still have global languages at the elementary level because many schools do not.
• Focus on Spanish is a great choice, given the ability to continue advancement in high school.
• Excited about the Spanish focus.
• I agree with your plan Spanish. Makes sense given your explanation.
• I agree with the Spanish plan. However, Latin provides an excellent foundation for all languages that may be taken in high school.

Cool Questions

• Global Language Chinese! When will Wake County High Schools be adding Chinese? Hilburn could dovetail with that timeline.
  The future is full of wonderful possibilities! We wish we knew the answer to this one.
• How can we be a global ed. school when only offering/language choice? Chinese class is about much more than language.
  The other schools in the Global Schools network also offer one language.
• Define Global Goals for K-5 expectations for each grade defined and presented at the beginning of the year. Each grade level has a geo-global focus, through which the curriculum is taught throughout the year. For example, Kindergarten has North America, First Grade has Oceania, etc. The Spanish language component is offered to all students. More information about the Global Schools Network may be found on the WCPSS website.

• How much of the lack of growth can be contributed to the growing pains of the Global Studies/STEM program vs. the implementation of the common core curriculum? It is difficult to quantify this, especially since many of the skills inherent in the STEM program are not measurable on a multiple choice test. However, we do know that lack of focus of the curriculum means lack of focus in teaching and learning. We continue to streamline our program to maximize resources and effect on student success.

• Is Mandarin the major cut from the budget for next year? Mandarin wasn’t cut from the budget. It was discontinued based on the reasons shared at the meeting (see powerpoint and above comments).

• If our child is targeting a magnet high school, how will you make him/her competitive with students coming from a magnet middle school? Speaking Mandarin? Speaking Mandarin doesn’t make a student competitive in entering high school (though there are many other benefits!), but a record of academic excellence in rigorous coursework does. That is our focus.

• What will be done to help students that participated in the Mandarin program the past two years catch up in Spanish? Ms. Quintana and her teammate, yet to be hired, will have this covered.

• If a child takes Spanish in the first year do they have to take the same subject next year? We’re not sure what this question is asking. Spanish is offered at an introductory level in elementary grades as elsewhere. We hope to offer leveled courses in the middle grade, schedule permitting.

• My daughter is in the 1st grade. She gets all 3s in Spanish, but we are not seeing any appreciable growth in her language acquisition. What can we do about this? This is a question for the teacher. Please contact Ms. Quintana with any questions about her program and classroom.

• The Chinese program really set Hilburn apart- what if my student has no interest in Spanish? Then no foreign language for him/her? By the way Raleigh Charter does offer Chinese as well as Broughton and other high schools in the future. We believe there are many things that set Hilburn apart: K-8, STEAM, Spanish, Band, etc! Raleigh Charter is not part of WCPSS, so we can’t look to them for program preparation. Most Hilburn families feed into Leesville and Sanderson HS.

• This program seems to change each year. How long will this program, described tonight, be in force?
Nothing is ever certain, but we believe we are fine-tuning a program with staying power for years to come.

- Would there be elective choices other than Spanish if we lose Chinese? Given that we are a small school with limited resources for electives I believe that losing Chinese would be a big mistake.
  
  Spanish is the only global language Hilburn will offer moving forward.

- What will be done to allow students with strong Spanish to obtain the ability-level instruction despite their age/grade?
  
  Ms. Quintana differentiates her lessons based on student abilities. Please contact her with questions specific to your child.

Cool Comments

- Would not be in our children’s best interest to drop the Chinese language program. 1. To be truly global, kids must be exposed to cultures and languages that are very different from their own. 2. Younger ages are the best years to introduce language. Studies show that if a language is introduced before puberty they will never speak fluently. Even if they stop speaking and start again later, they have a better opportunity to be fluent if they spoke the language before age 12. 3. Chinese will be the language of the future. Job opportunities are greater. 4. High schools need to add Chinese Magnet schools are aware of this such as Broughton. 5. Chinese makes Hilburn special losing this just makes Hilburn the same as other schools language wise.

- Wish that the foreign language programs were not being narrowed down to 1 language.

- Loss of Chinese is a big dissatisfier. More and more, businesses are leveraging resources in China and this course offering started kids on the path for future success. We are losing our role as an educational leader.

- WCPSS should start offering Mandarin in high school.

- Keep Chinese this cannot be a global studies school and only offer Spanish. Chinese might not be offered in HS today but it is only a matter of time. Also, if you start learning any language in K by 9th grade you will be beyond a HS level anyway. I gave up my seat at another school for next year so it is frustrating that you would announce this so late in the year.

- Spanish program 2x a week. Not enough. Will this be any better in the future? Especially for kids who have prior experience.

- K teacher not embracing Global by refusing to learn to pronounce a child’s first name. “It’s too hard for me to say so...” unacceptable.

- Hilburn is losing a key difference by giving up Mandarin.

- I am disappointed to see Mandarin Chinese leave Hilburn. That’s one of the things that really stood out to me and was different from other schools. It teaches the kids about different cultures and I think it’s still important to have, even if they won’t use it in high school.
• We need Spanish 3 times per week. Twice a week is not enough.
• I have a child who has taken both the Spanish program and that Chinese program, and our experience has been the Chinese program has been a better program.
• Very disappointed about the discontinuation of Chinese. This is a very important elective for my son and motivates him academically.
• Would like to see more work come home from Global languages. Don’t see what they’re doing in class.
• Understand that global language decision but really technology jobs, etc are in Asia. Isn’t there time to develop a HS mandarin program?
• My daughter is unable to take a language because of curriculum assistance.
• Upset not Chinese
• Big mistake taking away Chinese
• Language it is learning about global cultures, it would be a big mistake to lose this unique opportunity.

K–8 Program

Warm Comments

• Love the mentoring between middle and elementary grades
• K staff have done a tremendous job in spite of no full time IA’s
• Excellent 3rd grade teachers. Very informative and dedicated during a hard year.
• Middle school teachers very responsive answering email messages.
• Very pleased with additional instructional support especially in the middle grades.
• First grade field trips have been great fun!
• Great teachers
• Thanks for being open about the changes coming to Hilburn.
• Happy to hear there will be full time I.A.S in kindergarten.
• Love k-8
• Love the small class sized offered at Hilburn.
• Thrilled with the FT and PT instruction in K and 1st grade
• Teachers need more support they are awesome and deserve a happy work environment
• Love the comfort I feel when my son is here on campus. I know that all of his teachers care about his well being and success.
• Math is excellent at the k-level specifically with problem solving.
• The staff in the main office- their smiles and welcoming attitudes are so appreciated.
• I appreciate the continuity of k-8 and the small school feel
• I like the idea of dedicated teacher assistants in 1st grade
• Mrs. McAnarney is fabulous
• Good job keeping us informed about what is going on in school.
• Looking forward to differentiated math and ELA classes 6-8
• I like the idea of offering high school level courses in the middle school grades
• Smart lunches. Thank you
• I’m happy as far as how much my son has grown this year and glad to see assistants will be in 1st grade next year.
• Reading comprehension at the k-level has been very good specifically reading and writing sentences.
• The k-8 model is great
• Integrated school for K-8 not two schools under one roof
• I love the small class sizes and teacher/student ratios
• It’s great that high level classes are offered for kids who need it (as long as they are complete with proficient teachers who have time to collaborate with HS teachers)
• The first grade teachers are stretched too thin and yet remain good natured
• K-8 loves the way it was handled integrating the grade levels one at a time
• The carpool situation has improved dramatically
• Happy to be a part of a Prek-8 program like how the grades can work together (wish there was more of it) but like how it tempers middle school stuff.
• Kindergarten TA’s go the extra effort to fill multiple positions. They are gems.

Warm Questions

• With the expanding grades what will the class sizes be like?
  Families will continue to make personal life decision throughout the summer, so schools don’t know exactly what to expect for class sizes until August. Of course, they change throughout the year as families move in, move out, etc.
• Why don’t we shorten the school day to focus on the core curriculum and realize that we do not want common kids?
  We think this is a rhetorical question. The School Board sets each school’s hours.
• If there isn’t significant growth why Hilburn instead of traditional middle school?
  Hilburn did not meet growth for the past year, but there are so many other measures of success whose benchmarks we have exceeded. The differences between Hilburn and a traditional middle school are too vast to list here.
• Kindergarten last year was small #’s which helped in learning. Is there a way to keep class sizes smaller? We are at 24 in 1st grade.
  24 is the limit set by the state, and the number at which schools earn a teacher position. Schools are expected to accommodate the students which they are assigned, and the numbers per grade level vary greatly from year to year. We will know more about class sizes in August.
• Literacy extra help: how many additional instructors over how many classes? Or how many minutes/class?
  The master schedule for the fall has not yet been developed. Schedules for support staff are based on documented needs for students and district criteria for service delivery.
• Where will the 8th graders be housed?
  All middle grades core classes will remain in the new building and on the blue hallway.
• Will the additional instructional support in middle grades be a study hall format or more structured instruction?
  Study halls are a waste of instructional time! Intervention support classes will be instruction-based.
• When will cognitive development be considered when teaching these programs? Will professional development be provided to ensure developmental stages are considered in curriculum?
  The understanding of the nuances of cognitive development is part of the professional training of teachers in college and graduate school. Additional training on the implementation of the Common Core, STEAM strategies and other best practices is part of the school’s and district’s professional development plans.
• Who will be teaching the HS level courses in Middle School? Will they be qualified HS teachers with experience or online courses?
  Teaching rosters have yet to be set for the fall because hiring for open positions is just commencing in May. The state requires that all teachers have certification for the courses they teach.

Cool Questions

• Please describe the targeted student for the AIG role. All students, high performing students.
  Whoa, this is a small question with a big answer. Please contact Ms. Stavros for questions related to your child’s individual needs.
• Lack of full time IA’s in K this year, why?
  Nearly an entire class of Kindergarten students did not show up this fall, which meant TA positions needed to be converted at the last minute to fund all 4 Kindergarten classes. The result was shard TAs in Kindergarten – but also low class sizes (18 or fewer). 24 is the normal class size.
• Why are there no IA’s in K, 1st, 2nd? Where are those allotments?
  TA funding is based on a formula; not one for every class in K-3. Each year, the administration team is expected to maximize available resources and match them with greatest needs based on data and Hilburn’s school improvement plan.
• How do you plan to catch the Chinese students up with their fellow class mates? My child has spent 2 years with Chinese lessons and now she will be going into Spanish next year with kids how have had Spanish for 2 years. Ms. Quintana and her yet-to-be-hired teammate will have this covered.

• How will the instructional assistants be shared/split in first grade? Will it be 1 I.A. for 2 classes? This is unknown as of May, but we will be able to share this information in the fall once class sizes and grade level configurations are much more certain.

• How will Hilburn be competitive as middle school with electives- while it is a small school? Hilburn’s program was never designed to offer the same number and scope of electives as a large middle school. There are too many benefits to Hilburn’s program to list here, but we believe that students who are critical thinkers and outside-the-box problem solvers will be most competitive in high school – and in life.

• How are you going to handle logistics of additional students for carpool, etc? First, we hope students will take advantage of the bus. Second, Hilburn housed nearly 930 students in its past, so we’ve ‘been there’ before. Carpool took much longer in those days, but such is the result when more parents opt to use it. Each family has the right to make their own choices.

• Can Mandarin come back with more funding? Do other elementary schools have it? The decision about Mandarin was not a funding issue. Only a couple of other schools have it.

• Can you group kids together in lower grades (K-2) in subjects by ability? High reading/math group. Simply answered, yes. But there are other considerations. Talk to your child’s teacher about his/her specific needs.

• What options will be available to the students who are not interested in band? Scheduling options have yet to be determined for the fall. The counselors will be sharing registration forms soon.

• Will the middle grades have clubs available? Yes! Details about club options will be shared in the fall. Parents are welcome to sponsor club opportunities as is common at all middle schools.

• Why was Mandarin started if not offered in high school? Is teacher being laid off? Mandarin was part of the original program design by a previous superintendent. Ms. Gao is being reassigned to another school within the district. We will miss her!

• What about extra-curricular clubs for lower grades? Elementary-level clubs are a great idea! Parents/PTA would need to sponsor them as they cannot be funded by the school. A staff member would serve as liason. If you have an idea, please contact an administrator!
• What people were asked when it was decided that large collaborative efforts are responsible for student achievement and success? When are individual student needs more important than collaboration?

Balance is key in all things teaching, and in life. 😊 In short, the answer is: the best mode of learning is situational and dependent upon student and teacher skillset; available resources; research-based best practices, practicality and pacing of the curriculum, and adherence to the school’s STEAM mission and values (to name a few).

• What are plans to hire 8th grade teachers? 4 new ones? More? Fewer?

In its inaugural year, based on numbers and scheduling needs, Hilburn will hire an 8th grade ELA teacher and an 8th grade Math teacher for the upcoming school year. Existing middle grades teachers will teach science and social studies courses. As student numbers increase the following year, the 8th grade team of teachers will also expand.

• How do teachers and administrators account for the large disparity between 3rd graders with no opportunities to get (4’s) and who score in the 98th and 99th percentiles on national tests?

This is a system and state-wide concern. The only reasonable approach is to focus on each individual student’s needs. Please talk with your child’s teacher about specific questions related to his or her growth. Meanwhile, teachers and staff are working at the school level through the SIP process, focusing on data and matching interventions to mitigate this larger trend.

• What about enrichment for k-2 students who are above grade level?

Intervention support includes enrichment opportunities for students, based on need.

• What kind of programs are you going to offer for kids who are top performers in their class to challenge them to go deeper?

Teachers know to offer learning activities within the classroom specific to their challenge level. Talk to your child’s teacher about how he or she is modifying instruction to ensure your child is challenged individually.

• Very discouraged this year with teachers ability to differentiate and provide learning for top performer. How are you going to differentiate those who are top performers in the lower grades before they actually test?

Differentiation is not optional, but an expectation. Please see above answer.

• I am confused about AIG. What specifically should I be (have been) see(ing) for my 6th grader?

Please contact Ms. Stavros, AIG teacher, with questions specific to your child.

• With the additional supports of staff in K-2, will this be in addition to IEP support in class? (there could be 2 assistants helping)

IEP support (special education) is separate from regular education support (TAs). It is certainly conceivable to have more than one assistant in a classroom at one time based on the needs and schedules of the students and staff present.
• With increasing numbers, how will this work logistically? I.e. carpool- will class sizes increase.
  With the addition of 120+ more students this fall, carpool will definitely increase, as will the time parents and students wait in carpool. This is to be expected with a growing program. Class size information won’t be known until August based on families’ choices.

• What do you mean by shared assistants in 1st grade? Is that a guarantee?
  Shared assistants in first grade is a goal for next year. This means that one TA would split his/her schedule to provide instructional support in more than one classroom in any given day.

• What are the plans for middle school electives? Are the choices the same for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade? Will elective choices expand as we move forward?
  Elective choices will be: Band, CTE, Health/PE, Spanish, Intervention, and possible iArts classes as these past two years have seen.

• How is Hilburn supporting students in making appropriate choices for wake county high school options? Next year counselors should be familiar with option, time frames, and process for application.
  The counselors will be well-prepared for the high school registration process. They are awesome!

• The emails for PTA and Principal Ford seemed to send mixed messages. Is the school getting the funding it needs and asked for?
  As noted above, sometimes miscommunication happens even in the best of circumstances. We apologize for any confusion.

• Options for students who don’t want to pursue band?
  Currently in the middle grades, we offer iArts courses. Band is currently an option for 5th graders as well, which is unique among all other WCPSS non-magnet elementary programs.

• Compare K-8 vs. traditional K-5/middle. Your opinion? What you’ve seen?
  Sorry, this question isn’t clear to us. We know the K-8 model will expand in depth and richness of unique student experiences in the years to come!

• Why younger students are not routinely recommended for AIG?
  Anyone can recommend a student for AIG testing in any grade level at any time: teachers, staff, parents, even the student. Recommendations are automatically made by staff based on district criteria. Please contact Ms. Stavros for more information.

Cool Comments

• Could be a little more information/communication regarding AIG program.
• What A/G 6-8 support will be and that there will be A/G support.
• Discouraged with the # of kids in 1st grade who are not reading or writing well (and this holds the middle and higher skilled back) you talked about proficiency yet are these kids
going to be held back at earlier grade (before testing in 3rd) so they can catch up or show their proficiency before progressing.

- Concern about the increase in class size from kindergarten to 1st grade.
- Kindergarten and 1st grade needs T/A’s 1:1 classroom.
- Wish there were full time assistants in first grade
- The first grade teachers are stretched too thin to get to all planned work. Homework is erratic where the kids need consistency.
- I’m concerned about the shortage of assistants in 1st grade classrooms- seems atypical compared to other WCPSS schools.
- First grade really needs TA’s because the wide range of levels in student skills and behavior.
- Concerns about MCLASS its impact on time and how results will be used in K-2 grades.
- K-8 needs more afterschool teaching programs for students falling behind in any particular subject.

**STEAM Program**

**Warm Questions**

- Love the art teacher! So much better than previous year. No mention of arts in presentation. Are you keeping it?
  How could we leave Art out? It will absolutely continue in the years ahead.
- Engineering of the mind camps have been great. Will they continue?
  Absolutely! Look to the school website for more information.
- Why not have more staff in the classrooms on a more permanent basis rather than hopping from class to class and student to student?
  Staff is funded based on student headcount and documented student needs. Schedules are developed to maximize human and material resources for the benefit of many varied students in the course of the day. We always reflect on our progress and how to continuously improve for the benefit of our students.

**Warm Comments**

- Like the use of technology and multi-media in class and projects
- Really like project based learning and engineering model for problem solving. Glad projects are done in school.
- Like the steam project presentations our children can work on and present at steam expos.
- I fully support selection of continuing the Spanish coursework for K-8 based on competitive prep for high school excellence.
- I’d like to see the science and technology aspects of STEAM in the classrooms. For example the science experiments that have been completed.
• I like the NCSU involvement in the school with the STEAM expos.
• My son wants to be a scientist too
• Communication from some specialists has improved this year. Thank you! Ms. Gao, Mrs. Rayner, Mrs. G!
• I have been very pleased with how social studies and ELA have been integrated into STEAM projects
• Projects and expos are great!
• My 6th grader loves band! And he has learned and grown a lot in band. Mr. Hobbs is doing a great job.
• Great STEAM presentation at Ms. Mock’s 4th grade class last time. Very well integrated with learning at the moment.
• The STEAM events have been great fun for the whole family. The activities in the cafeteria are a hit!
• The across the core STEAM projects are excellent!
• The Chinese program currently offered is awesome!
• Way to go on the new art teacher this year!
• Love the collaboration and teamwork with STEAM allowing students to focus on their strengths.
• My son has really been enjoying Ms. Boop’s class this year. She makes social studies interesting to him.
• Stem Process and integrating with projects and learning is excellent. My kids have really grown through this and it equips them well for high school and beyond.
• STEAM programs very open and creative lots of learning for our students as well as parents.
• STEAM projects and presentations are great. It’s great to see teamwork with their classmates.
• STEAM nights twice a year are a great opportunity for students to work on STEAM projects in small groups and apply knowledge of and present different areas. Also they give students the chance to work on communication skills.
• Congrats to all teachers for their effort on preparing and guiding students on their STEAM projects. This is what Hilburn Academy an edge.
• The STEAM expo has been a great experience for my kindergartner. She’s always been excited about all the fun projects and experiences with the STEAM projects.
• The technology special is excellent! Please consider making it an entire days special.
• STEAM projects are great for the kids because they get to do them and explain them, how they did the project.
Cool Questions

• Will Hilburn take advantage of rich resources in this area to enhance STEAM program? Guest Speakers? Field trips?
  Teachers continuously look for great experiential learning opportunities for students! Hilburn students are frequently on traditional field trips, and teachers conduct virtual field trips using the great technology we have available in our school. The STEAM staff committee, which also has a parent representative, is always open to new ideas!

• How are project themes determined? School level, grade level, and classroom.
  Grade level teams determine project theme based on their curriculum and geoglobal focus.

• How much of the program is STEM and how much is STEAM? Will there/is there emphasis on arts? How about art itself? Will there be art for grades 6, 7, 8?
  STEM and STEAM are sometimes used synonymously, but the idea that arts are integrated into project design elements is an expectation at Hilburn. Arts courses beyond Band and iArts are not part of Hilburn’s program design.

• Why would Chinese be dropped at this late date, after being offered to incoming students on tours?
  The timing of the decision coincides with school’s notification of available resources for the upcoming school year. Hilburn’s budget is expanding with growth and narrowing its focus to maximize student success.

• What is going to happen to art program?
  Art will remain a staple of the PreK-5 elementary grades program. Band and iArts will continue in the middle grades, but the schedule for the new year has yet to be determined.

• What about art? Do not cut it!
  Please see above.

• Why would Chinese have been initially offered at this school if it is how deemed not essential because Leesville HS doesn’t offer it? Other magnet type HS’s do offer Chinese right?
  Program matriculation into high school was not a major consideration when the “Hilburn solution” was first proposed in 2010-2011. Years later, we’ve needed to focus our lens now that Hilburn students are moving on to high school in another year. We cannot determine what high schools offer for programs, but we can tailor programming based on what we know they currently offer.

• Where did the “A” go in STEM in our mission statement? Why did it get dropped?
  The A was not dropped; the arts are still vibrant at Hilburn. This was Mr. Ford’s oversight; his focus in the PPT was more on the programming details of the slides. He regrets the oversight. 😊

• How much emphasis will there be on STEM projects? It seems the level of effort has dropped from 6th to 7th grade. Is this purposeful?
This is a perception question. The rigor of this year’s 7th grade STEAM projects was amazing! We expect it to increase for 8th grade.

• STEAM nights, in classrooms with multiple presentations going on at the same time, it is difficult to hear the kids and hard for them to make their presentations, any ideas? This is a great problem to have, given the high turnout by parents and community partners. The STEAM Committee is analyzing ways to improve formatting for future Expos.

• What’s the proper balance between group and individual work? (High school teacher has told me students are losing ability to work on own.) Please see a previous similar question for this answer. Balance is key and teachers vary learning format based on lesson design and student needs. However, as a STEAM school, project-based learning is a major mode of instructional delivery.

• Where do the Arts fit in? Everywhere! PreK-5 specials, and Band/iArts as noted above.

Cool Comments

• The STEAM project management is very different from teacher to teacher. They should share best practices, like “don’t let younger kids choose their partners.”
• STEM integration carries a lot by grade and by teacher.
• Sometimes the collaborative learning is taken a bit too far when it comes to percent of grade achievement.
• More integration of STEM process or STEAM presentations I don’t see integration with curriculum.
• K-1 music is described by my child as watching videos and never touching anything to make music.
• STEAM program needs improvement have sufficient materials for the student supply last STEM no batteries for the Solar cars
• 20 minutes for global language is not productive. Need longer consolidated instruction time.
• I’d like to see Hilburn put on a “school play” as part of STEAM program.
• Please protect the arts. (all)