

To: ACMS Community
Re: Proposed ACMS-NCS Merger
Date: October 4, 2010

Last school year our school and the Neighborhood Charter School (NCS) spent several months drafting a charter petition proposing to merge our two schools into a single K-8 school with two campuses in order to realize enhanced educational, operational, and financial benefits. Following the approval of the merger charter petition for the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School (ANCS) by the governing boards of ACMS and NCS this past March, the petition application was submitted to the Atlanta Public Schools as the local authorizing agency for review and approval. The Atlanta Board of Education approved the merger charter petition in July, and the petition is now with the Georgia Department of Education awaiting final approval (anticipated in December).

In an effort to provide the ACMS and NCS school communities with pertinent information regarding the proposed merger on a consistent basis, communication updates about the process have appeared regularly in each school's Courier. These updates come from the principals and board chairs of each school and highlight any relevant information regarding the merger process since the last update. Previous updates can be accessed by reading the November 5, November 19, December 3, December 17, January 7, January 21, February 11, March 4, March 18, and July Couriers in which they appeared. Below is the latest information update:

In addition to joint meetings of the ACMS and NCS Governing Boards, the schools are also working towards the K-8 merger by collaborating on a "Merger Transition Taskforce". This taskforce is co-chaired by Leslie Rowe and Doug Blackmon, parents of students at both schools, whose professional experiences lends themselves to helping to identify key steps in the transition process. The other members of the taskforce are the two principals (Matt Underwood and Jill Kaechele), governing board chairs (Michelle Blackmon and John Wright), and the schools' director of business and operations (Cherie Ferrell). Each of these members of the taskforce will be working with specific teachers, staff members, parents, and/or community members to manage critical aspects of the transition process. Some of this work has already begun, and work on other components will unfold throughout the school year.

Regular updates on the work of the Merger Transition Taskforce will appear in the schools' Couriers as well as at governing board meetings. The October 20th governing board meeting will feature a full overview of the plans of the Merger Transition Taskforce. The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM in the ACMS library.

We will continue to provide updates on the approval of the charter petition by the state and on the merger process as appropriate. In the meantime, please feel free to contact any of us with questions you may have.

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