

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the March 8, 2022 Board Meeting
Mindy Turner	<p>I currently have a 6th grader (South) and 4th and 1st (Dryden) and I completely support full day kindergarten. What I do not agree with is the idea of moving the 5th graders to the middle schools. I cannot imagine my 6th grader starting middle school a year earlier. The difference between the emotional maturity of a 5th grader and 8th grader is huge. I feel it would be a safety concern to have kids that could potentially be 4-5 years apart in age together on busses and in the hallways. These kids need to remain in elementary school through 5th grade. Many districts don't even have 6th graders in their middle schools! This is not the best option for our kids. Adding on to the current schools, or utilizing Dunton makes more sense for the long run.</p>
Diana Giacalone	<p>Dear School Board Members,</p> <p>I would like to express my concern for the potential full day kindergarten program that is being considered right now in District 25. All of the options for expansion currently being considered are all very disruptive to the students and very expensive for the taxpayers. One of the advantages of neighborhood schools is that siblings and neighbors are in the same place. Moving the youngest or the oldest students from the elementary buildings would be very unfortunate and cost a lot of money on additional bussing.</p> <p>More importantly, I am concerned about the motivation behind these considerations. The students of District 25 are doing very well academically and are quite prepared for first grade with the current half day program. Children who are five need a lot of unstructured play time which can be provided in an all day kindergarten program but why should we pay teachers to supervise play time? Unstructured play is critical to the cognitive, physical, and social emotional development in young children, I don't think this is up for debate. What is up for discussion is the need for a full day kindergarten program. Many surrounding districts do have a full day program however something that attracted me to this school district is the half day kindergarten program. Our youngest learners should be spending the other half of their school day at the playground, on playdates, shopping with an adult, at the public library, visiting with grandparents, helping in the kitchen, bouncing a ball, playing with siblings... the list goes on. I enjoy providing my children with these experiences and other parents do too.</p> <p>Families have the choice of where to live and as is, our schools are bursting at the seams. The half day program has not deterred people from moving into this district. If there are some families who need the full day program for child care purposes then let's provide a childcare program for those families in need, not spend millions of dollars to alter a program that is not broken and not necessary. Some families, like mine, appreciate this extra time with their little ones. How many times have we all uttered the words, "they grow up too fast?" Let's not make it even faster by getting them into a full day program even younger.</p> <p>Thank you for taking careful consideration of all opinions before making a decision on this topic.</p> <p>Sincerely, Diana Giacalone</p>
Holly Dunkel	<p>Though I could support full day kindergarten I do not support 5th graders at the middle schools.</p>
Jessica Camp	<p>I support full day kindergarten, but do not support 5th grade moving to middle school.</p>
Sara Campbell	<p>I believe moving 5th grade to junior high is not the right answer here. 9 year olds in a building with 13/14 year olds feels like too big of an age gap both in years and development as well. Some of your younger elementary school kids have already had a shortened elementary experience given</p>

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	the covid situation- moving them earlier would cut their elementary experience too much in my opinion. Please don't consider this option.
Michelle Monhaut	I do not support 5th grade moving over to the middle school. If that means half day Kindergarten has to continue I'd rather have that than my 5th grader at TMS.
Kristen Alm	I am in favor of the district offering full day kindergarten, but I do not support 5th graders moving to middle school. Thank you.
Lindsay Nugent	While I agree full day kindergarten in District 25 is necessary, I do not think moving 5th graders from their elementary school to their assigned middle school (Option 3) is the best idea. I would even call it irresponsible. Many districts, including 15 right next door don't move students to the middle school level until 7th grade. There is a huge difference in physical development, emotional development and lifestyle between 10/11 year olds and 14 year olds. I think back to the things I was exposed to as an 8th grader at Thomas, and cannot fathom my daughter, who will be in 5th next year, learning about or being exposed activities, words and ideas. You said that 5th grade would be separated from 6th-8th, with different arrivals and dismissals, but there will be too many instances of influence. They don't need to get any older any faster. Not to mention the inconvenience it would create for parents trying to get their kids in K-4th to elementary and a 5th to middle school at the same time. Please consider Option 1, which checks the full day kindergarten box and keeps 5th graders at their current elementary school. I also believe the presentation showed it was the most cost conscious.
Renee Klues	<p>While I fully support FDK in D25, please don't make our kids grow up faster by moving 5th grade to the middle schools! This feels like the wrong option for many reasons.</p> <p>Additionally, looking at Patton specifically, I would like to know why the plans don't include a larger gym and commons area. Those are both already too small and adding more students will make that even worse. If you're going to invent in adding on to schools, I think issues like this should be addressed instead of only building a couple more classrooms.</p>
Sherilyn Martinez	While I support the implementation of full day kindergarten I do not support the option of moving 5th graders to junior high. That is not in the best interest of our fifth graders. Please do what is best for all of our students and choose a different option.
Carrie Holt	I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposal to move 5th graders to middle school to make space for FDK. I feel 5th graders belong at the elementary school. They should not be pushed to into a middle school situation before they are ready. In fact there is research that 6th graders perform better on tests and have higher self esteem when at elementary school as opposed to a middle school. If 6th graders are not developmentally ready for middle school, than 5th graders are definitely not ready.
Dana Wehrheim	<p>Hello, and thank you so much for the opportunity to make a comment regarding the decision to transition to whole/full day kindergarten. I feel it necessary to begin by stating that for both my husband and me, our opinions on this matter are not colored by concern about a property tax increase. We believe in taxes and respect and appreciate their necessity, and the necessity for increases, for building and maintaining the community in which we want to live and in which we want our children to love being raised.</p> <p>With that said, I do object to whole day kindergarten being instituted in Arlington Heights. It seems as though making the transition to whole day kindergarten is more of an answer, a solution to the question, "Is this what is desired by working parents?" more than it is an answer or solution to the question, "Is this what is best for our children?" I am absolutely sympathetic to how challenging it can be to arrange excellent childcare, but I don't think this problem should be at the heart of this matter.</p> <p>We must consider, first and foremost, what is most developmentally appropriate for our children, and I am not convinced that whole day kindergarten is best of that having fifth</p>

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	<p>graders in a middle school setting is best. Admittedly, it has been many years since I was working as a teacher and involved in this discussion/transition at my own school, but I do recall that at that time, there was very little research supporting the notion that whole day kindergarten was best. I remember administrators and proponents citing research and literature, but it was specific to how children from low-income communities who were considered at risk for failure fared in a whole day program versus a half day program, but that is not relevant here.</p> <p>Is there current research supporting the long-term benefits of whole day kindergarten for children in a community like ours? Additionally, have we spoken enough to the current kindergarten teachers, and do we know if they believe children like those they have been teaching the last several years would thrive in a whole day environment? My family moved to Arlington Heights from Chicago just over a year ago, and when we moved, we were thrilled that our children would attend a half day program rather than a whole day like that in Chicago. I see the joy and the love my children have for learning and for their school, and I truly believe that in large part, it is because they had/are having an appropriate kindergarten experience that honors who they are at five-years-old. Similarly, I want them to continue to love learning and feel safe in their school and attend fifth grade at their elementary school, not in a middle school setting, where developmentally, sixth, seventh and eighth graders are quite different.</p> <p>Thank you again for this opportunity, and I wish you the best in making this tremendous decision.</p>
The following comments were received after the submission deadline and not included in the March 8, 2022 Board Meeting.	
Melissa R	Please consider other options other than moving 5th graders to middle school in order to accommodate full day kindergarten. I strongly disagree with that being an option. I feel it will be more harm than good for 5th graders. Even though I am for FDK, but not at the expense of our 5th graders. There has to be a better option.
Tiffany Sieroslowski	The IS Program should NOT be moved to Ivy Hill School, related to an ethical and legal standpoint. Ivy Hill already supports a high number of students in marginalized groups, Multi Lingual Learners, Students of Color and Low Income families. If the IS program is moved there, a significantly large population of students with disabilities will also call Ivy Hill home. The issue of placing high needs and marginalized groups of students in one school is in direct conflict with any diversity, equity and inclusion values we regard as a priority.
Elisa Raugstad	Please do not allow 5th graders to move to Middle schools. There are better options for placing full day kindergarteners, without disrupting 5th graders in the Elementary Schools.
Hilary Bartels	Please keep our 5th graders in elementary school where they belong.
Katie Zabor	I am not in favor of 5th grade additions to Thomas and South middle school. I believe 5th graders are best served to stay in elementary schools.
Elizabeth Choporis	<p>I'd like to express my concern regarding one of the proposed options for accommodating full-day kindergarten within District 25. While I do not feel full-day kindergarten is a necessity, I do understand that it will likely happen for our district. However, I am very concerned with the option of moving the 5th graders to the middle schools.</p> <p>I strongly believe that moving 5th graders to the same building as middle school students will be a detriment to their development. The adjustment to middle school is a major life change and 5th graders are still only 10-11 years old. Regardless of if they're kept separate from the 6th-8th graders, they will be in a middle school building. That alone will cause a shift in them. Children are already growing up fast, there's no reason to speed</p>

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	<p>up the process. A 10 year old has very different needs than a 14 year old and they should not be lumped together.</p> <p>The other concern I have is that the kids in our neighborhood are not bused to South. It's over a mile for many of us and every child needs to cross Arlington Heights Road. I grew up in this neighborhood and I went to South. I'm well aware that although there is a light and crossing guard at Park St., many kids thought it was "cooler" to cross AH Rd. at any place other than the light. This is incredibly dangerous at any age but I certainly don't want my 10 year olds even offered the chance.</p> <p>Families have a choice of where to live and choose Arlington Heights knowing that District 25 has half-day kindergarten and K-5 in the elementary schools. Please do the right thing and keep our 5th graders at their elementary schools, they should not be the ones to sacrifice in order to add full-day kindergarten.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>