



## HCC Update March 2023

### What is the current state of HCC?

Three years ago, the district announced it was planning to sunset the HCC program and instead serve all kids in their neighborhood schools. The 2023-2024 school year was supposed to be the last year that Cascadia (and other HCC elementary schools) took on 1st graders. Under this timeline, after the 2023-2024 school year, Cascadia would be a split school; we would bring in new students in kindergarten and 1st grade from the neighborhood while also accepting HCC students if we still had that grade of HCC students at the school. Once an HCC-designated student was at Cascadia they were supposed to be able to stay through 5th grade.

After this plan was announced, the pandemic upended schools. In order for Cascadia to serve students from the neighborhood (or become an option school), the zones of most elementary schools in North Seattle would have to change. **This has not happened.** Cascadia is planning the 2023-2024 school year with grades 1-5 all HCC. **If the plan is implemented according to the timeline,** Cascadia will welcome kindergarten, and maybe 1st grade students and other students (?) from the new boundaries or option criteria and HCC kids (new and returning for the existing HCC grades in the school) for the 2025-2026 school year.

The school has not received any updates as to what the 2024-2025 school year will look like. We do know that all students at Cascadia will be able to stay at Cascadia through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. We also know that as long as we have an HCC grade, students can transfer into Cascadia for HCC. We have not received any more updated information from SPS about what our school configuration will be.

HCC in Seattle Public Schools (SPS) for elementary includes:

- Math taught 2 years ahead using the same curriculum used by the rest of Seattle schools students (your 1st grader at Cascadia will have a 3rd grade math book)
- ELA (English language arts) taught one year ahead
- All other subjects taught on grade level

Kids leaving an HCC elementary (having finished 7th grade math and 6th grade ELA in 5<sup>th</sup> grade) go into 8th grade math in middle school and 6th grade ELA (that is not a typo - the district has them repeat a year).

Many students who are found to be HC are being encouraged to stay in their neighborhood schools. Neighborhood schools vary in the support available for HC students; some parents report their neighborhood school offering little to no support to these learners. SPS does not offer any guidance or standards with regards to what supports schools should provide for HC students.

Regardless of AL or HC status, students who remain at their neighborhood school for elementary school, they must take 6th grade math in 6th grade.

### **How are students found to be eligible for HC Services?**

SPS has moved to a universal screening model. Under the current guidelines, students must take the MAP testing at school (guidelines for students coming from out of district differ), and teachers and parents must complete a questionnaire about the student's learning style. There have been some inconsistencies in students who are HC eligible and those who are not, so if you or your teacher believe your child may need HC services, we recommend contacting the advanced learning department.

For a more thorough discussion of HCC in Seattle Schools, including HCC eligibility standards, see the Cascadia PTA website:

<https://cascadiapta.org/>

For specific information about current HCC and Advanced Learning guidelines, see the Seattle Schools Advanced Learning Department Page:

<https://www.seattleschools.org/departments/advanced-learning/>