

# EXTRA EXTRA

The Latest News on The Carroll School Expansion

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The Carroll School

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## Expansion Highlights

Carroll will thrive as a two-campus school. Many schools maintain multiple campus operations, and we expect to benefit from what they have learned about these opportunities and challenges. To be sure, Carroll is one school with one mission, one philosophy, one set of beliefs, and one integrated approach to helping bright children with language-based learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. There is a hierarchy to attend to as Carroll grows and improves on two campuses: ethos (the character of our community); students' education, faculty effectiveness, and communication; academic shared services, such as tutoring, language focus areas, math, NCLU; the multis programs, including Bounders, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Woodworking, Physical Education, Yoga; and non-academic shared services.

Mary Dolbear, Carroll Trustee and the Head of Buckingham, Browne & Nichols' middle school, has taught us that in some ways it is best to keep the academic day quite the same as it is currently. She comments that "this will support important human factors that benefit from security, predictability, and safety in the known" as we make huge changes in physical space next year. Further, she stated that there is a balance between this stability and the incredibly



wonderful opportunity Carroll has to maximize this opportunity for change and improvement.

The challenges of living in two locations three miles apart are fairly obvious, such as connection, communication, continuity, and philosophy. Parents have expressed concerns that Carroll will lose some of its essence as a result of the changes. The administration and faculty are determined that we will use this opportunity to strengthen the core of our School. For example, this winter's Everyone@One professional development program is devoted to the roots of Orton-Gillingham and structured language instruction. Additionally, as we analyze what needs to change, we are redoubling our commitment to aspects of Carroll that should never change,

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## Timeline

### December *(Accomplished)*

- Planning activities begin for the campus, program, admissions, and marketing

### January

- Decisions about the physical space complete (at least those decisions necessary for opening in Fall 2010)
- Reconstruction work begins
- Faculty Committees underway
- Admissions season in full swing

### February-April

- Program Design Work continues
- Hiring of Faculty

### May-June

- Begin the move onto the Lower School Campus
- Engage Students and Faculty in the Process
- Work with Parents' Association on Logistics
- Enrollment Picture Coming into Focus

### July

- Renovation Work Complete

### August

- Physical Preparation of Lincoln Middle School Campus
- Physical Preparation of Waltham Lower School Campus
- Open School on Two Campuses

*Children with dyslexia tend to look at the world differently. Isn't the world lucky they do?*

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such as our belief in the ability of our students and in the transformational role of our teachers and tutors.

Yet the opportunities offered by Carroll's transformation are countless. For example, programming on two campuses with adequate space for each division of the school is a glorious activity that enables teachers to integrate more movement and arts into the core of the academic program, tighten associations among teachers and tutors, and construct grade level teams and inter-grade level communication.

## Emerging Themes

As we include the faculty and staff in planning a two-campus Carroll School, various major themes emerge. We have been careful to explain that lots of thinking is going on right now, but very few immutable decisions have been made. We know that first through fifth grades will be in Waltham, and the middle school will remain in Lincoln. Other than that, we are collecting wisdom on scores of other topics, and there are strong themes emerging:

### **1 Philosophy-Be mindful of when it is important to function as one school and when it cumbersome and counter-productive to try to function as one.**

Example: Carroll is one school in philosophy, teaching approaches, belief systems, leadership, and student profile. Carroll should function as two independent daily programs without the burden of adhering to the schedule of the other campus except at the start and end of the day.

Example: Find ways to keep all-school traditions such as Fall Festival, International Fair, and occasional assemblies, but don't attempt to pull the whole school together on a weekly basis.

When is a two-campus operation one school and when is it two distinct entities? A committee led by Allison West is examining ways that we will function as one school in places such as Fall Festival, International Fair, occasional assemblies, and faculty/staff meetings. We expect there to be one Parents' Association with sub-committees for lower and middle school. We will establish a task force to manage and monitor the operations of a two-campus Carroll. And finally, we know that the administration will exist on both campuses, meet as one, and work to ensure strong cohesion.

Mary Dolbear's comment is that "Academically we follow one set of belief statements but we function mostly separately from 8:15-3:15."

### **2 Stability-In a climate where the location of so many functions (classrooms, tutorials, academic administration) are changing, keep whatever we can stable and familiar.**

Example: Obviously, every physical space on the Waltham campus will be new to us, and the middle school will also occupy all of Storrow House and the Spaulding Building. This will be both exciting and unsettling. In the face of this change, it makes sense to leave the daily schedules as similar to their current routine as possible next year.

### **3 Functionality-Don't shuttle people (i.e. students and faculty) between the two campuses, except where essential or important.**

Example: There is a temptation to move children and teachers back and forth between the campuses to give everyone access to everything. Evidence from other multi-campus schools is that this would be a mistake. We should build a multis program on each campus that is specific to the developmental levels of lower school children or of middle school children.

We expect that children will move about for specific reasons (Bounders, all school events, occasional assemblies, Big Brother/Big Sister concepts), but in general we do not plan to orchestrate this type of shuttling. Likewise with faculty, we are not asking faculty to work on two campuses.

### **4 Opportunity-Balance the opportunities for change and improvement with the human need for predictability and security.**

Example: One of the great revelations of Carroll's two campus planning exercises is that we have an opportunity to improve everything that we know doesn't work quite right about our current reality. We know that scheduling students into content and multis classes is a complicated and imperfect process. We want to improve that. We know that teachers and tutors often teach at different grade levels, which gives them a split allegiance to grade level teams of colleagues. We want to improve that. And the list could go on.... We need to be careful not to change too much too fast.

### **5 Consistency-Keep the educational program in the same student-teacher ratios and class sizes.**

Example: Carroll's commitment to public funding for families requires us to meet certain Department of Elementary and Secondary Education standards. One example is that class size cannot exceed a ratio of 8:1. Carroll does better than that ratio in many, many of its academic offerings. We do not intend to change that. Essentially, every time we bring in three new students, we hire another teacher. We will continue to do that. Class size at Carroll has not been a function of physical space limitations; it is a philosophical commitment to educating our students in optimal environments.

