

Newton County Schools

Theme School Frequently Asked Questions

Revised March 18, 2009

1. Where will the theme schools be located?

The primary (K-3) theme school will be located in the current Fairview Elementary School building. Students currently zoned to attend Fairview will be zoned to the new elementary school, Live Oak, on Kirkland Road. The intermediate (4-8) theme school will be located in the current Clements Middle School building. Students currently zoned to attend Clements will be zoned to the new middle school, Liberty Middle School, on Salem Rd.

2. How will the theme school be different from what we already do? Are we not doing many of these things in our schools already?

The primary difference will be the focus on parental involvement and, in the middle school, student leadership.

3. Will students, teachers and parents sign contracts for a commitment? Will the contracts specify the results of not following through with commitment?

Everyone involved will sign contracts committing to the theme school requirements and concepts. Consequences for non-compliance with the contractual agreement are necessary and will be determined. A committee will work with the administration to design a parent/student contract that will be required of all parents and students who choose the theme school.

4. How will volunteer hours be determined – must the hours be completed with students or can they be accomplished through school activities?

A committee of parents will work with the administration of each theme school to design the details of volunteer requirements. The general belief is that volunteer hours can be earned by either working with various school activities or through working with student groups or individuals. Some volunteer work can be completed at home and will not require parents to be present in the school.

5. Will there be additional academic conferences required between parents and teachers?

Yes, parents and teachers will be expected to conference regarding student progress more frequently than the traditional two times per year. A committee will work with the administration to design communication protocol.

6. Will pre-kindergarten be provided at the elementary theme school in the Fairview Elementary building?

No, pre-kindergarten will not be available at this time. Pre-kindergarten programs are allotted by the state for each system.

7. Will siblings of children selected to attend a theme school be given priority?

Siblings will be given first priority. Siblings (twins/triplets) who share the same birth date will be considered as simultaneous placements at the option of the parent/guardian. If a family has one child who is in middle school and one child who is in elementary school, both children will be accepted if either child is accepted. Separate applications must be completed for each child applying to attend one of the theme schools.

8. Will transportation be provided by Newton County Schools?

Fairview Primary Theme School: Transportation of students will be provided on a limited basis within the super zone, but cannot be determined or guaranteed until students are enrolled in the theme school. For students enrolled in the theme school from **outside** the super zone, transportation will be provided on a limited basis to and from designated stops throughout the district.

Clements Middle theme school: Transportation to the theme school will be provided on a limited basis to and from designated stops throughout the district.

9. What if one wishes to rescind a child's application?

The deadline to rescind an application (or to change one's mind about attending a theme school) is April 3, 2009.

10. Are there special admissions requirements for students applying to attend the theme school?

Both the Fairview Primary and Clements Intermediate Parent Involvement Theme Schools will have the same admission requirements as all public elementary and middle schools within the district. Neither discipline records nor grades will be excluding factors for acceptance of an applicant.

11. Will special education, gifted and ELL students be allowed to apply to attend the theme schools?

Yes. However, it is unknown at this time if it will be possible to house all special education exceptionalities. Depending on the number of ELL students who enroll in each theme school, a decision will be made as to whether or not an ELL program will be offered.

12. Will all the same athletic programs that are currently in the Newton County middle schools be offered at the Clements Intermediate Theme School?

Yes, as long as there are enough interested students to form teams.

13. Will the curriculum that is taught at the theme schools be any different from what is being taught currently at the elementary and middle schools in Newton County?

State law requires that the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) curriculum be taught in all public schools. It will be up to the parent committee and the theme school principal to decide if curriculum above and beyond the GPS will be taught.

14. Will third grade children who attend the Fairview Primary Theme School be given priority placement for fourth grade at Clements Intermediate Theme School?

Yes

15. Will school staff members' children be allowed to attend the theme school following NCSSE BOE policy?

Georgia state law states that school staff members can enroll their children at the school in which they work; therefore, staff members who work at either theme school will be allowed to enroll their children even after the theme school application deadlines have passed.