

The Lincoln School Committee supports moving forward to March Town Meeting with a Community Center design concept that provides:

1. Replacement or renovation of all three existing obsolete “pods.”
 - a. We do not support advancing the so-called 50% option that will cost taxpayers more in continued high energy and maintenance bills and the higher costs of postponing inevitable reckoning with Pod C
2. Safe pedestrian and bicycle pathways keeping children from car traffic and parking.
3. Clear and adequate traffic patterns, parking and pick-up lanes
4. Retention of LEAP, Lincoln Extended-day Activities Program, in the Hartwell area.

Why we support LEAP as part of the Community Center Project

After-school care is an essential service for many of Lincoln’s families. As many as 100 children attend LEAP in the afternoons. The Lincoln School Committee and District Administration value our long history of partnership with LEAP to provide participating students a high-quality, cost-effective, on-campus program without negatively impacting school operations.

Our current administration led by Dr. Parry Graham and our previous superintendent, Dr. Becky McFall, both have acknowledged that, if necessary, we could accommodate after-school care in the school building, but school operations would be negatively affected for many reasons:

- There is no block of empty classrooms that could accommodate LEAP. Some grades do have fewer sections this year than the spaces provided in the new building, but these unassigned rooms are at different grade levels, not near each other, and this varies from year to year.
- Teachers do not leave their classrooms when students leave, and instructional materials and projects are often kept out over a course of days. Using occupied classrooms for LEAP would make transitioning every afternoon difficult and create friction with teachers.
- Common areas, such as the gyms, are regularly occupied by school enrichment and recreation department programs.
 - Some school systems supervise children in the cafeteria for hours after school – hardly the quality of care and enrichment provided by LEAP for generations of Lincoln children – and can restrict the number of available spaces.

- Operating extended-day programs in the school would inevitably involve the already stretched time of school principals and may require adding administrative staff.
- Operational and security issues arise when an outside organization operates in school space. For example, LEAP (and Recreation Department Summer Camp which uses LEAP space outside the school year) ideally would not operate on the same computer servers as school proprietary and private technology systems.
- Locating LEAP in the Community Center area and alongside the Parks and Recreation Dept allows smooth transitions and supervision of our extended-day students as they participate in community and recreation department programs, attend sports practice, music lessons, and rehearsals before families arrive to pick them up.