High School System Design:
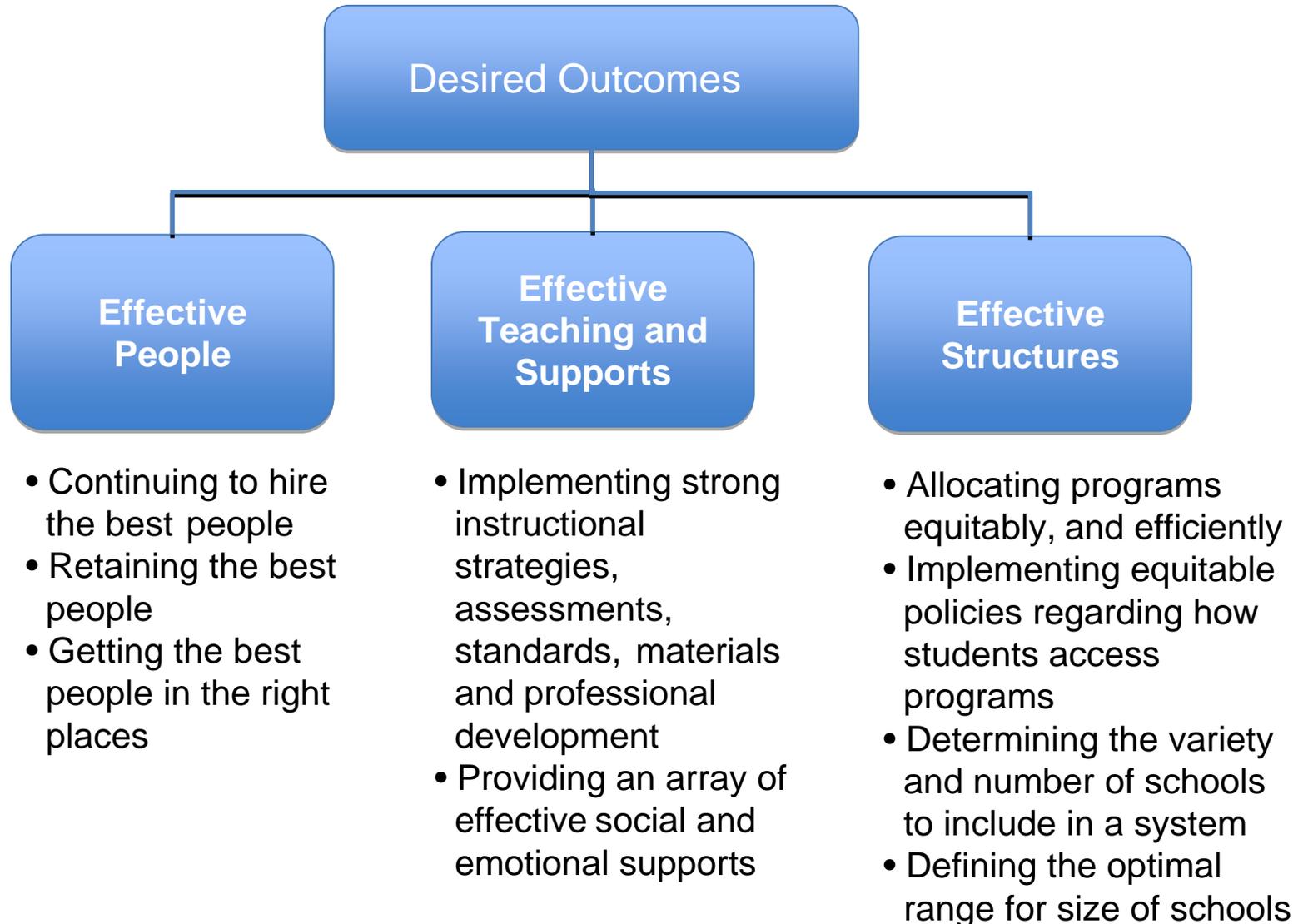# Conceptual System Models

March 2009

DRAFT

Setting the Context

Desired Outcomes – High School System Design
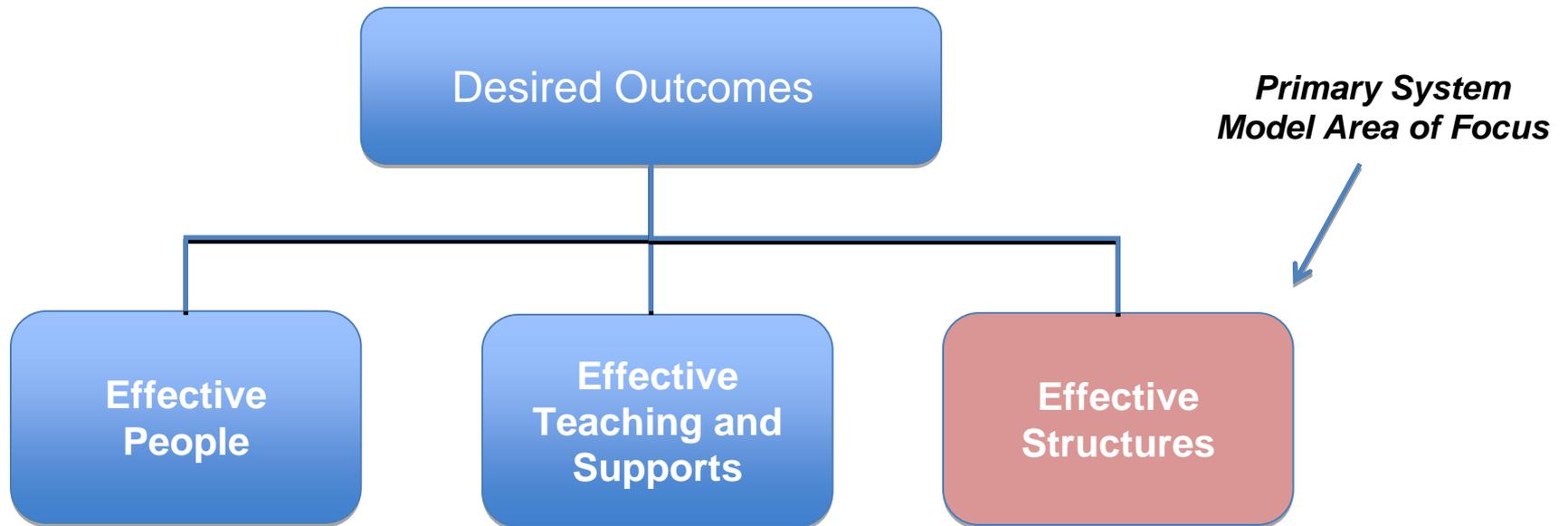
What we need to do…

1. Increase student engagement

2. Close the achievement gap

3. Reduce the drop-out rate/Increase the graduation rate

4. Ensure every school and program is in high demand by students and staff

What it would take to reach our desired outcomes?

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │    Desired Outcomes     │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
         ┌───────────────────┼───────────────────┐
┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
│  Effective   │    │    Effective     │    │  Effective   │
│   People     │    │ Teaching and     │    │  Structures  │
│              │    │   Supports       │    │              │
└──────────────┘    └──────────────────┘    └──────────────┘
```

- Continuing to hire the best people
- Retaining the best people
- Getting the best people in the right places

- Implementing strong instructional strategies, assessments, standards, materials and professional development
- Providing an array of effective social and emotional supports

- Allocating programs equitably, and efficiently
- Implementing equitable policies regarding how students access programs
- Determining the variety and number of schools to include in a system
- Defining the optimal range for size of schools

Where are we focusing? What will a "system model" address?


```
            Desired Outcomes
                   |
      +------------+------------+
      |            |            |
  Effective    Effective    Effective
   People     Teaching and  Structures
              Supports
```

Primary System Model Area of Focus

Why focus on structural reform?

1. Higher concentrations of high needs students in fewer schools
  – "Higher needs" students include special education, free and reduced lunch, ELL, and academic priority designated students. In general, students of color are over-represented in these groups.

2. Temporary declining enrollment at the high school level
  – PPS high schools are expected to lose about 1000 students by 2015 (PPS high schools lost 905 students over the past two years)
  – Enrollment is expected to increase again (by 2020, we will be on par with 2009 enrollment).

3. Aging infrastructure
  - PPS (K-12) has extremely outdated infrastructure; a facilities upgrade is needed
  - However, more definition around high schools is needed before proceeding with a long term capital improvement plan / facilities bond.

Introduction to system models

These models have been intentionally designed to operate at extremes so that distinctions are more easily made. Thus, the model that is ultimately selected could look different than any model contained within these pages.

Also, system models need not be mutually exclusive. It is possible to take one component of one model and add it to another model. In essence, the development of the models are simply an exercise to encourage the collection of innovative ideas.

DRAFT

Decision Points Across System Models

1. **Large school size vs. small school size**
   - Larger schools generally offer more programs and opportunities and a less intimate community
   - Smaller schools more easily facilitate relationship-building and social cohesion across faculty and students

2. **Depth vs. breadth of programmatic opportunities within a school**
   - For example, within a school, is it better to offer five languages at a beginning level or is it better to offer one language from beginning up to a very advanced level?

3. **Rights to Neighborhood schools vs. total choice (no attendance boundaries)**
   - Choice allows students to pick the school or program that best fits their individual needs
   - Neighborhood rights enable a strong local community to build around a school and proximity to home for students

4. **Balancing Diversity**
   - High concentrations of high-needs students are being concentrated in fewer schools
   - How aggressive should we be in creating mechanisms that curb this trend?

Model A – Large Campuses with Themes

Overview

A wide array of programs and courses all every campus

Every student regardless of the zip code in which they reside will have access to many opportunities, courses, programs and extracurricular activities. All campuses will offer students a rich array of college credit bearing opportunities, including IB or AP as well as dual credit. In order to have greater breadth and depth of programmatic opportunities, average campus size will need to increase.

A focus on personalization in the 9th and 10th grades

In the ninth and tenth grades students will be placed in "academies", in which students are placed in cohorts and take three of the same subjects together with the same set of teachers. Particular focus will be paid to students at-risk to not graduate (i.e. academic priority students).

Up to 3 career pathways per campus

In the 11th and 12th grades, students will choose a focus from at least 3 career pathways for their electives. For example, a school might have a thriving arts, healthcare and engineering program.

Students are assigned to their neighborhood school, but have some flexibility to transfer.

Students are assigned to their neighborhood school but can choose to attend a different campus when space allows. One district wide magnet program with a CTE focus will draw students from the whole district.

Model A – Large Campuses with Themes

Description

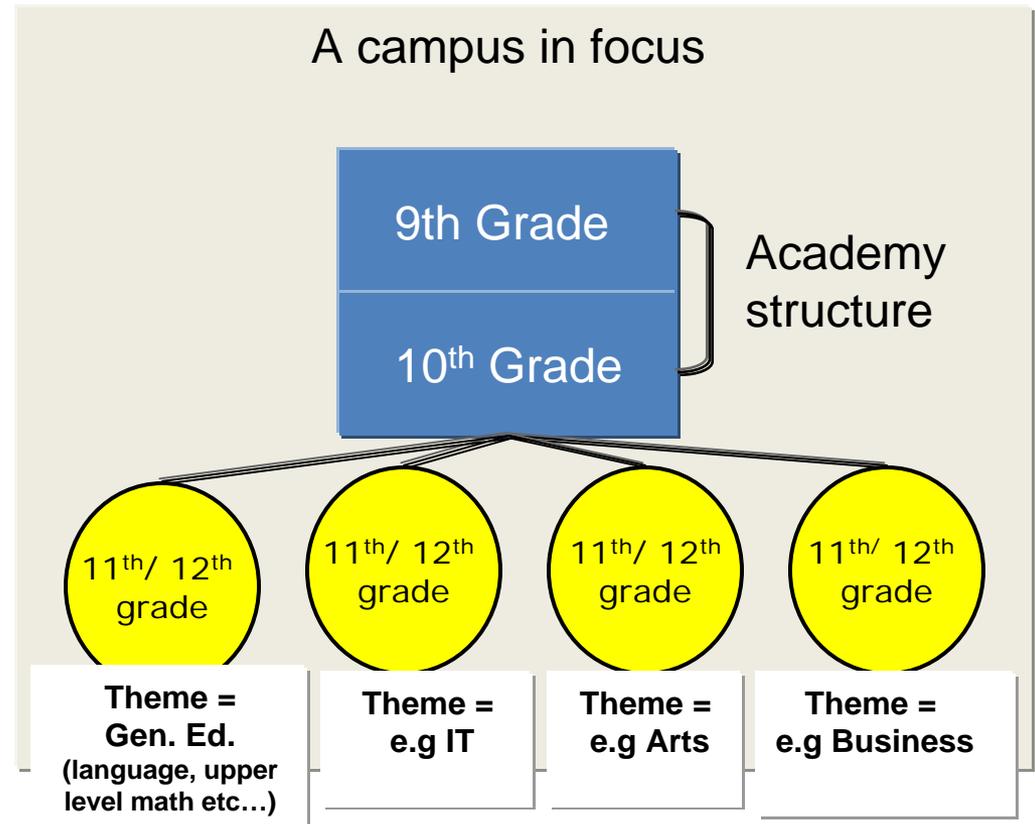### How are programs accessed?

- Students given a guarantee into their neighborhood school.
- Students allowed to transfer to other schools when space allows.
- Students able to access wide array or courses (art, music, a college credit bearing opportunities and multiple career pathways) *on the actual campus site that they attend.*

How are programs resourced?

- Model presumes large schools would have enrollment sufficient to support the program

A campus in focus

9th Grade

10th Grade

Academy structure

| 11th/ 12th grade | 11th/ 12th grade | 11th/ 12th grade | 11th/ 12th grade |

Theme = Gen. Ed. (language, upper level math etc…)

Theme = e.g IT

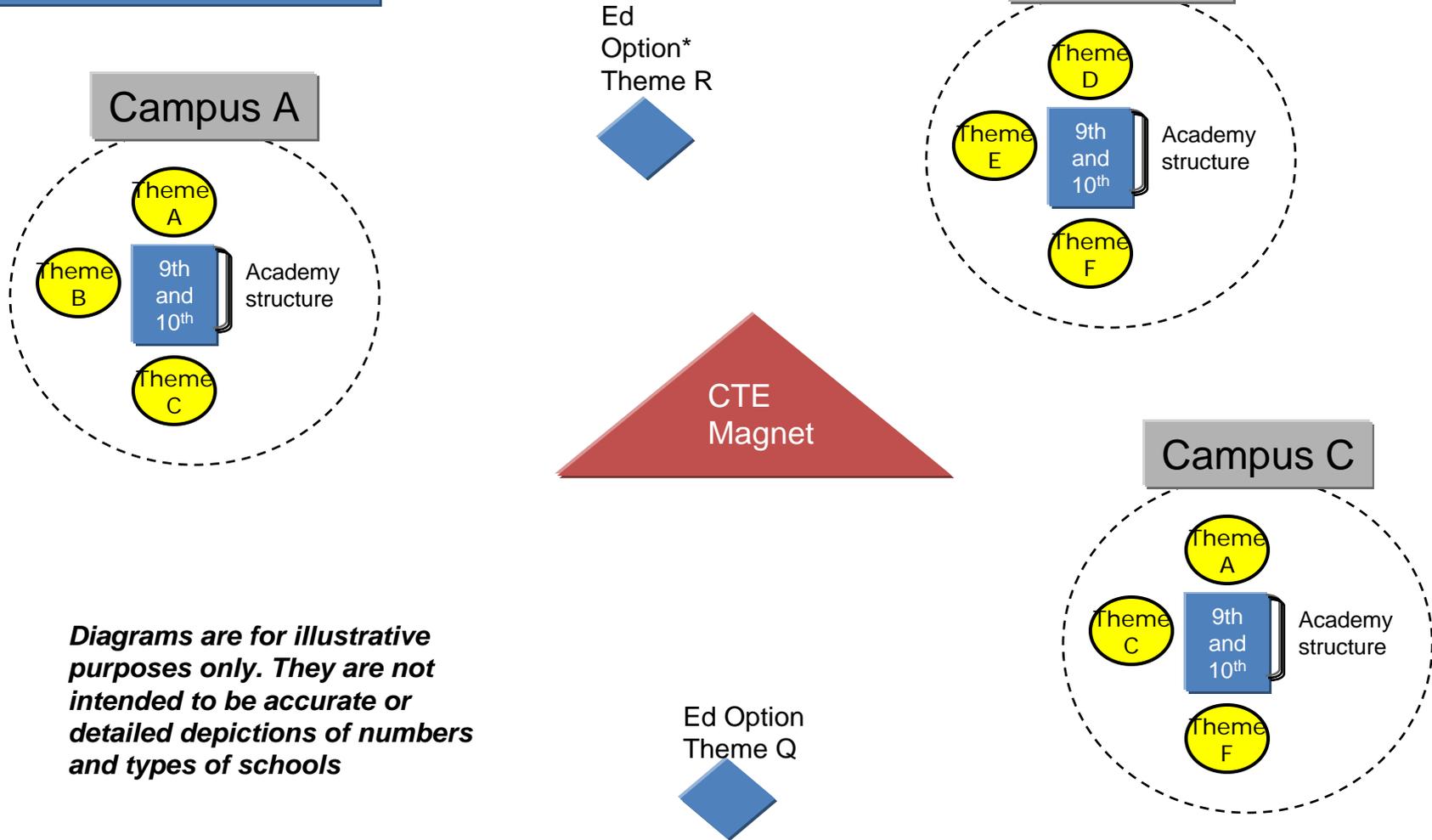**Theme = e.g Arts**

Theme = e.g Business

What are key strategies to ensure that all campuses are in high demand and reflect a balanced and diverse population?

Strategically place engaging and high demand programs at schools that have not traditionally attracted large number of students.

Model A – Large Campuses with Themes

System Diagram

Campus A

Theme A
Theme B
9th and 10th — Academy structure
Theme C

Ed Option* Theme R

Campus B

Theme D
Theme E
9th and 10th — Academy structure
Theme F

CTE Magnet

Campus C

Theme A
Theme C
9th and 10th — Academy structure
Theme F

Ed Option Theme Q

Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. They are not intended to be accurate or detailed depictions of numbers and types of schools

* Ed options include alternative and charter schools

Model A – Large Campuses with Themes

Decision Point	Where this model lands

– Size of campuses (small vs. large)

Small (200) — *Big (2000)*

– Depth vs. breadth of programmatic opportunities

Breadth — **Greater depth and breadth provided due to increased size of campuses** — *Depth*

– Neighborhood only vs. total choice (no attendance boundaries)

No choice/ neighborhood only — *No attendance boundaries*

– Balancing diversity

Status Quo — *Aggressive mechanisms to balance diversity*

Model B – Strong Schools Close To Home

Overview

Strong Schools Close to Home

This model is built on the notion that in every strong community is a strong school. Building strong neighborhood schools aligns well with Portland's values and will ensure that all schools have enough enrollment to offer high quality programs. Students may not have the option to go to other neighborhood schools but this restriction will encourage all who live nearby to invest their time, energy and resources in creating a quality school close to home.

A similar and wide array of programs and courses per and across schools

In order to ensure true equity, similar elective courses and programs are offered at every neighborhood school.

3 System-wide Magnet Schools Reflecting the Values of Portland

PPS builds or redefines three schools centered around specific themes. For example, PPS could launch three schools with the following themes: K-12 performing and visual arts; environmental studies and international business with a special emphasis on Mandarin Chinese. These schools could be flagship programs that reflect the values of the city and attract students from neighboring districts. As focused programs, they will be smaller than the neighborhood schools and feature depth over breadth.

Model B – Strong Schools Close To Home
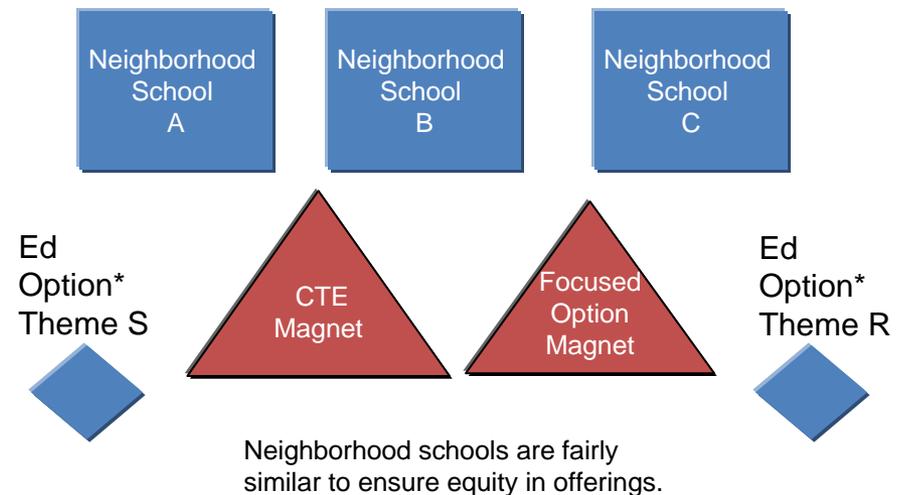
How are programs accessed?

- Students attend assigned neighborhood school unless they opt to attend one of several magnets with no attendance boundaries.

- Students able to access art, music, a college credit bearing opportunity and at least one career pathway on the actual campus site they attend.

- Elective course offerings, will vary slightly, if at all across schools.

- Includes several magnet schools without attendance boundaries with a fixed number of transfer slots per year.

What are key strategies to ensure all campuses are in high demand and reflect a balanced and diverse population?

How are programs resourced?

- Assigning students to neighborhood schools will Increase enrollment at under enrolled schools. These schools will then have enough students to fully fund programs.

Neighborhood School A

Neighborhood School B

Neighborhood School C

Ed Option* Theme S

CTE Magnet

Focused Option Magnet

Ed Option* Theme R

Neighborhood schools are fairly similar to ensure equity in offerings.

Assigning students to neighborhood schools will increase enrollment and thus allow for more programmatic opportunities at currently under-enrolled schools. Fleeing from specific neighborhood schools to the magnets can be prevented by ensuring that slots to magnets are divided by geographic region and fixed in total number.

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Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. They are not intended to be accurate or detailed depictions of numbers and types of schools

Model B – Strong Schools Close To Home

Decision Point	Where this model lands

- Size of campuses (small vs. large)

Small (200)   *Big (2000)*

- Depth vs. breadth of programmatic opportunities

Breadth   *Depth*

- Neighborhood only vs. total choice (no attendance boundaries)

No choice/ neighborhood only   *No attendance boundaries*

- Balancing diversity

Status quo   *Aggressive mechanisms to balance diversity*

Model C – Regional Flex

Overview

Students can access a vast array of programs within their region

Students can travel to schools within their region to access IB or AP and dual credit as well as all career programs in all major industries and interest areas.   Transferring between regions is limited.

Different types of schools offered in every region - including a small thematic school with smaller class sizes and an alternative program

Every student has unique needs and interests; these differences will be addressed by having different types of schools (i.e. small school with lower class sizes) within every region. That way PPS can address the unique needs of students in a way that is reasonably close to their home.

All schools will have something special to offer because funding is allocated by student enrollment per cluster

The principal or executive director of the region ensures programs are distributed in a way that would attract strong enrollment at all sites/schools within the region. Teachers may also be shared across different schools to ensure that all students have access to opportunities such as art, music and library services.
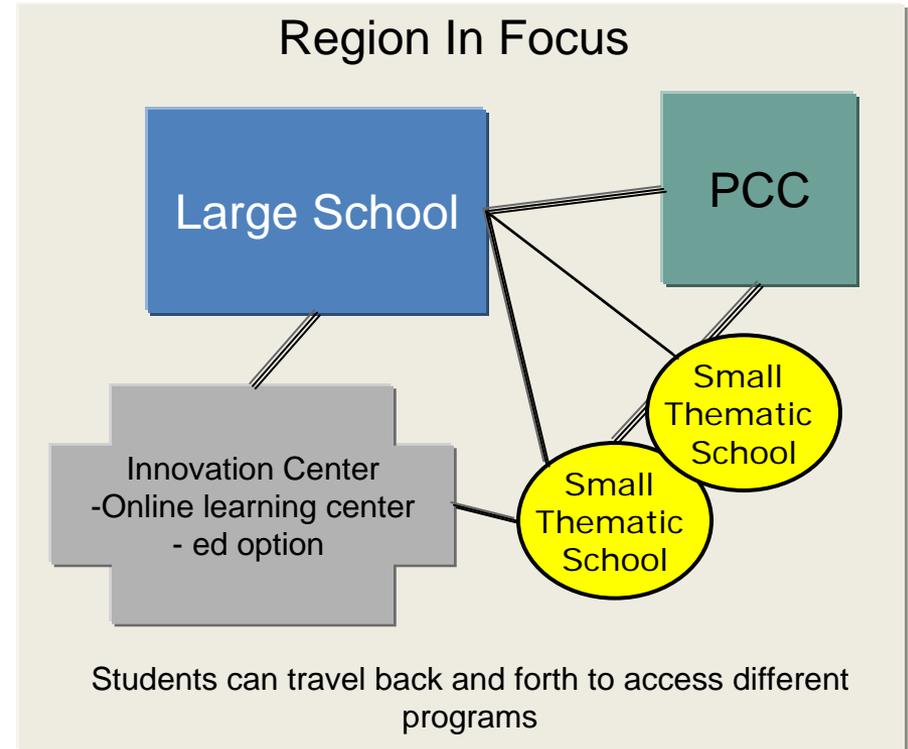
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Model C - Regional Flex

How are programs accessed?

• Students rank their top choices within a region; if demand exceeds supply for a particular school, students are assigned to their second choice.

• Students able to access art, music, upper level math and world language, a college credit bearing opportunity and multiple career pathways within the region.

• Students encouraged to travel to other schools within the region for part of the day to take courses not offered at their assigned school - schedules and calendars are common across a region, and regions include online and proficiency based credit options

• Programs placed strategically to ensure that all regions have a range of appealing options for students.

• Programs that regions cannot sustain on their own will be offered in a central location, such as facility specific and resource intensive CTE.
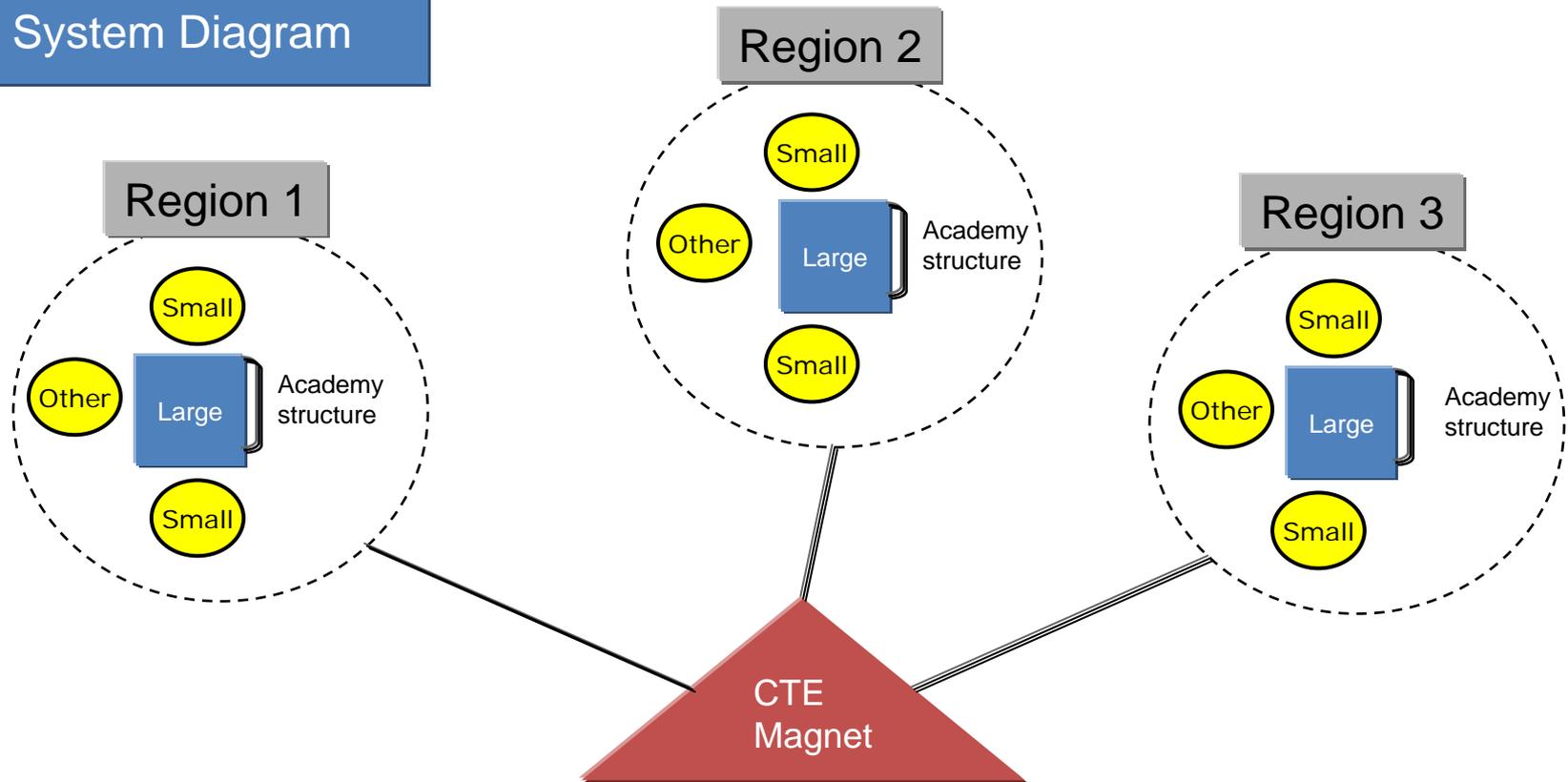
Region In Focus

Large School

PCC

Innovation Center
-Online learning center
- ed option

Small Thematic School

Small Thematic School

Students can travel back and forth to access different programs

How are programs resourced?

• Funding allocated on a per region basis allowing for greater sharing of services

• Programs distributed in a non-duplicative manner, which will result in cost savings

• In cases where duplication may be more practical teachers can be shared across the different schools.

Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. They are not intended to be accurate or detailed depictions of numbers and types of schools

Model C – Regional Flex

Region 1
- Small
- Other
- Large — Academy structure
- Small

Region 2
- Small
- Other
- Large — Academy structure
- Small

Region 3
- Small
- Other
- Large — Academy structure
- Small

CTE Magnet

What are key strategies to ensure that all campuses are in high demand and reflect a balanced and diverse population?

Programs will be placed strategically across and within regions to ensure that all schools have something appealing to offer students. There will be specific emphasis on placing accelerated learning opportunities in higher needs schools so as to draw a more diverse population. Students have the right to access courses across the region.

Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. They are not intended to be accurate or detailed depictions of numbers and types of schools

Model C – Regional Flex

Decision Point	Where this model lands

- Average size of campuses (small vs. large)

  Small (200)   *Big (2000)*

- Depth vs. breadth of programmatic opportunities

  Breadth   *Depth*

- Neighborhood only vs. total choice (no attendance boundaries)

  No choice/ neighborhood only   *No attendance boundaries*

- Balancing diversity

  Status quo   *Aggressive mechanisms to balance diversity*

Model D – No Attendance Boundaries (Wake County, NC Replica)

Overview

Equity, Equity, Equity!!!

A student's zip code will no longer be the sole determinant of their ability to access programs. Students, regardless of where they live will have a plethora of schools to choose from and no school will have more than a specified percentage of a particular socio-economic sub-group. Students will be exposed to diversity that better mirrors the real-world and prepares them for a 21st century economy in which cultural proficiency, tolerance and the ability to work with others are crucial skills.

Vast Array of Choice

Each school will have something unique to offer. We will employ a systemic lens to ensure that the district provides high quality options in all major career pathway and interest areas. Because students legitimately have equal access to programs, there will be less duplication of programs and therefore more variety. Students can thus get an in-depth experience in a particular program at their chosen school.

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Model D – No Attendance Boundaries (Wake County, NC Replica)

How are programs accessed?

- Students apply in a lottery to their preferred schools. Students not guaranteed into the school closest to their home.
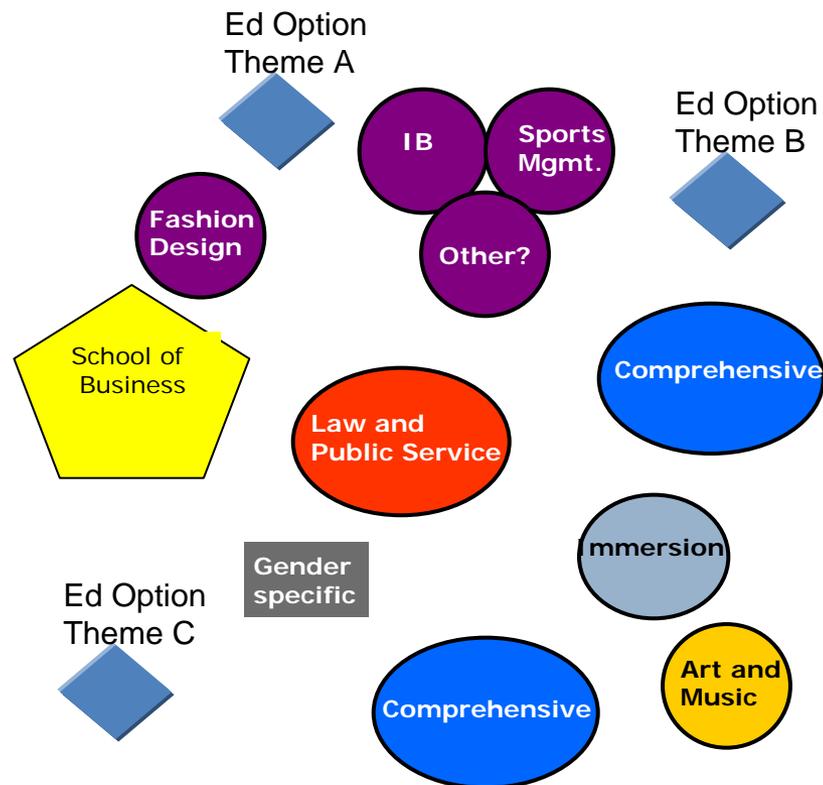
How are programs resourced?

- Student enrollment is capped so that schools are roughly equivalent in size (unless there is a specified intention to be smaller) This will allow for roughly equal amount of course offerings.

What are key strategies to ensure that all campuses are in high demand and reflect a balanced and diverse population?

First priority in the transfer process is given to free and reduced lunch students. Each school attempts to fill x% of its enrollment with free and reduced lunch population; once it does so, students who are not free and reduced lunch are given access. Each school focuses on specific areas or focused options–i.e. all schools are known for something. There is limited program quantity at each site so that each school can fulfill its mission and so that programs are distributed more equitably across the district.

System Diagram

Ed Option Theme A

Ed Option Theme B

IB

Sports Mgmt.

Fashion Design

Other?

School of Business

Comprehensive

Law and Public Service

Gender specific

mmersion

Ed Option Theme C

Comprehensive

Art and Music

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Model D – No Attendance Boundaries (Wake County, NC Replica)

Decision Point	Where this model lands

– Average size of campuses (small vs. large)

Small (200)   *Big (2000)*

– Depth vs. breadth of programmatic opportunities

Breadth   *Depth*

No choice/ neighborhood only   *No attendance boundaries*

– Neighborhood only vs. total choice (no attendance boundaries)

Aggressive mechanisms to balance diversity

Status quo

– Balancing diversity

Model E – Magnet Model

Overview

All students have access to a comprehensive high school experience and are guaranteed into their neighborhood school

Comprehensives will offer art, music, upper level classes and college-credit bearing opportunities.

Most or all comprehensives house a focused magnet program within its walls

Most campuses have a special program or magnet. Magnet programs will mostly be based on one of our six career pathway themes (art/communications, natural resources, industrial and engineering, health, human services, business) with a heavy focus on hands-on learning. Magnets will be open district wide, will require applications, and guaranteed slots will not be given to neighborhood students.

A portfolio of small schools is launched as stand-alone magnet programs co-managed with a community partner

These schools will have smaller class sizes, and will focus on only one theme. The schools will emphasize applied academics and project-based learning within both elective and academic core classes. There will be a focus on integrating career pathway content into core academic classes and vice versa.

Model E – Magnet Model

How are programs accessed?

- Students can opt into a stand-alone district-wide magnet school of about 400-700 students or a neighborhood based comprehensive school with a breadth of programs.
- Students have guaranteed access to their neighborhood school, however, in some cases, not necessarily the specialized magnet program with that school.
- Applications to magnet programs based on student interest and qualifications may be required

How are programs resourced?

- Small magnet schools will be opened with a community partner.
- Small schools will not offer many electives outside a stated theme; students who attend these schools, will have consciously opted for less breadth in elective offerings.

What are key strategies to ensure that all campuses are in high demand and reflect a balanced and diverse population?

Admittance into magnet programs will be structured to promote a more diverse population. Also, magnet programs will be launched at traditionally under-enrolled schools first so as to draw more students to these schools.

CAMPUS STRUCTURE #1

Neighborhood school

Comprehensive school – 1200 students

Magnet Program: 400 students

Shared campus
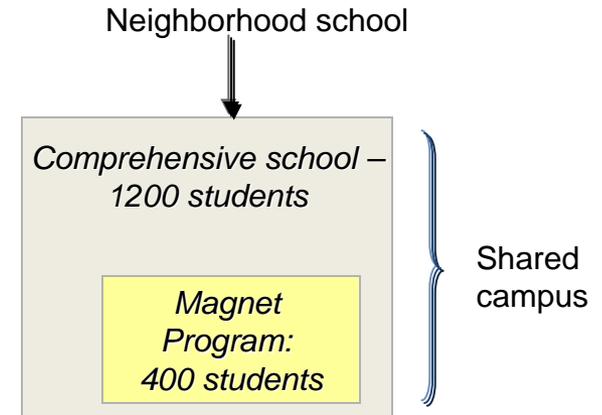
CAMPUS STRUCTURE #2

Stand alone magnet (approx. 400-700 students)

Magnet School	*External Partner*

Industry partners receive free rent from PPS; in return, partners give our students opportunities (i.e. internships, job shadows, site visits, summer jobs, mentors, tutors, scholarships, career days etc…)

Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. They are not intended to be accurate or detailed depictions of numbers and types of schools

Model E – Magnet Model

Decision Point	Where this model lands

- Average size of campuses (small vs. large)

Small (200) — *Big (2000)*

- Depth vs. breadth of programmatic opportunities

Breadth — *Depth*

- Neighborhood only vs. total choice (no attendance boundaries)

No choice/ neighborhood only — *No attendance boundaries*

- Balancing diversity

Status quo — *Aggressive mechanisms to balance diversity*