

How Do You Really Feel about SLCs?

The New Schools at Carver paved the way with the small learning community (SLC) format, which breaks traditional schools up into clusters of smaller schools with different student bodies, staff and academic themes. This school year, all APS high schools made the switch to SLCs in hopes of curbing the drop out rate and increasing student achievement. VOX asked SLC veterans and newbies what they think of the learning style.



"Small schools give students an advantage when it comes to the small setting. Students can easily receive help from teachers. They know your name; you have a personal relationship with teachers and the principal. However, you don't get to be involved with students in other schools. You miss out on a normal high school experience."

—Tequia Taylor, senior
Carver School of Early College



"We can't interact with other students in the other schools. In fact, the only connections we have between the schools are through ROTC and sports programs. The fact that I'm going to graduate with strangers really bothers me!"

—Quanza Bynum, sophomore
Carver School of Health and Science



"I don't like it. I feel as if the changes are unnecessary. Having the ninth graders cordoned off from the rest of the students robs them of the essential bonds that most ninth graders form with upperclassmen. When I was in the ninth grade, I formed friendships with students who were in higher grades. To this day, I still talk to them. I look to most of them for advice, and I am thankful I met them. This wonderful feeling is what the changes to this school take away from others. And I do not like said changes one bit."

—Precious Alston, senior
Washington Senior Academy



"I think Washington's changing into smaller schools [without] facilities to implement it. The administration is paying more attention to the freshman class and making sure they assimilate into high school more than the seniors, and I don't think it's fair. Washington needs to keep in retrospect that we are senior's and we have been waiting years for this."

—Chelsea Falcone, senior
Washington Senior Academy



"It's straight, but at the same time it is not. I'm undecided. I really don't know how I feel about it."

—John James, junior
Washington Senior Academy



"I feel that small learning communities are very beneficial to all students."

—Yeaisha Parrott, junior
Washington Senior Academy



"In ninth grade I thought it was cool because each school got to do what they wanted to independently. Later I realized that the setup wasn't that great because you can't see anybody from the other schools. The worst part about the small schools is that if you have two different passions, you're stuck! You can only pursue one."

—Tyerell Collins, senior
Carver School of Technology



"I personally feel they should not have done it [our] senior year, but it can be effective as long as they don't treat the children as if they are in middle school. I feel students need some type of leeway for high school."

—Sharaye Jenkins, senior
Washington Senior Academy



"At first, when I was in ninth grade, I thought small schools were a good idea. Classes were small and teachers seemed to care a lot about students, but everything is taking a turn for the worse. From ninth grade to 12th grade, the violence on campus has been constantly increasing because there is not enough security on campus. Students are often scared to even go near the other schools on campus. I believe if we had more interaction between schools on campus, violence would greatly decrease because the separation causes too much hostility between students of different schools."

—Caylan Griffin, senior
Carver School of the Arts



"I don't like the fact that you don't get to interact with other students. I think we should have more activities for the whole campus."

—Rakeyta Clark, senior
Carver School of Early College



"I think students should have a choice between a traditional high school and a small school. There is so much isolation from students and resources and just being able to learn from other people. I think everyone should have the experience of a small school for the first two years of high school, so they can have time to find themselves and in the last two years they should be able to branch out and have a traditional high school experience."

—Javon McLester, senior
Carver School of Technology



"I think it sucks. We are all separated from each other. I think we should go back to the way it was, with one principal."

—Carey Cheney, senior
Washington Senior Academy



"I like the small schools because we get individual attention and my principal pays lots of attention to the students."

—DJ, Carver School of the Arts