

**For Immediate Release**

November 7, 2019

**Contact**

Erica Taylor, 843-937-6303

# **Board to discuss broad range of recommendations**

**Office of Strategy and  
Communications**

**Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Erica S. Taylor**  
Chief of Staff

**Charleston, SC** – Charleston County School District (CCSD) and its Board of Trustees have spent the last year gathering information and listening to a variety of stakeholders about the future of the schools that our students will attend for years to come. The [Shared Future Project](#), which took place last year, gave us our start. Mission Critical Action teams in four constituent district areas worked from March until June and provided possibilities for the future of key parts of our school district. The Board of Trustees then merged the feedback and recommendations into potential projects and conducted listening sessions throughout the district. School-level meetings were held in several schools that could be impacted by the proposed changes.

CCSD would like to become a school system where student achievement and academic growth are found in all schools, rather than remaining content to be the average between very high performing schools and very low performing schools. In order to make that happen, we must (1) expand access to our programs to a more diverse student body without sacrificing high quality, (2) expand and improve programs for our most needy young children to ensure that they start school ready to learn, and (3) engage highly talented staff members to lead high needs schools and, if feasible, use partners to help bring about improvements.

The initial steps to start that process will be reviewed by the Board at the upcoming Committee of the Whole Meeting on Monday, November 11, 2019 when they discuss the list of recommendations culminating the work that began over a year ago. The Board will determine the timeline for approval of any changes, keeping in mind the time that parents, students, and schools will need to prepare for the upcoming year.

The following recommendations will be considered:

- Transition Mary Ford Elementary to an Early Childhood and Family Engagement Center as a model for universal preschool for 4 and 5-year-olds

- In the next penny sales tax program, relocate and construct a new Ladson Elementary and convert the current school to an Early Childhood and Family Engagement Center
- In the next sales tax program, combine Lambs Elementary, Hunley Park Elementary, and W.B. Goodwin Elementary on one campus and create an Early Childhood and Family Engagement Center at one of the current campuses
- Approve the list of 15 Acceleration Schools that would focus on more rapidly increasing student achievement and seek greater flexibility and autonomy through waivers from some state regulations
- Approve a process for vetting applicants for innovative schools or programs, and open a second round solicitation
- Revamp the District's gifted program to ensure that at least the top 5% of students in all schools are served; determine funding needed to provide more equitable middle school honors courses
- Establish an Advanced Academic Program at West Ashley High School in partnership with the College of Charleston
- Return the fifth grade at Haut Gap Middle to the area elementary schools, making Haut Gap a 6-8 school
- Merge Constituent District 10 middle schools by putting all sixth graders at West Ashley Middle and all seventh and eighth graders at C.E. Williams Middle
- Make changes to the partial magnet programs throughout the District:
  - James B. Edwards Elementary, Jerry Zucker Middle, and Mitchell Elementary become special program neighborhood schools that accept additional students through the transfer process;
  - Make Haut Gap Middle an advanced studies constituent magnet for District 9 and eligible District 3 students, with preference given to D9 students;
  - By 2021, eliminate the partial magnet status of Sullivan's Island Elementary and establish a neighborhood school zone;
  - Utilize Laing Middle as a D1 and D2 constituent magnet;
  - By 2021, work with the D10 Constituent Board to analyze the impact of eliminating the partial magnet status at St. Andrews Math & Science Elementary;
  - Work with D10 Constituent Board to create an attendance zone for Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary and continue the school as a constituent magnet
  - Continue North Charleston Creative Arts Elementary and Jennie Moore Elementary as creative arts constituent magnets with attendance zones in D4 and D2, respectively;
  - Continue the Advanced Academic constituent magnet at E.B. Ellington;
  - Grandfather all students attending partial magnets through the end of the 2020-21 school year with transportation provided.
- Make changes to Buist Academy grade structure and application process:
  - Phase out grades K-2 by the 2023-24 school year;

- Expand grades 3-6 by one class per grade beginning next year
- Expansion classes would give preference to students at the 75th percentile in Reading and Math from schools with a poverty index above 80%
- Create K-2 Advanced Academic countywide magnet at Memminger Elementary with priority to D20 students; add kindergarten in 2020-21
- Develop new admissions criteria for Academic Magnet High School
- Study the feasibility of creating one Montessori Middle School to house grades 7-8 from Murray-LaSaine, James Simons, Malcolm C. Hursey, and Montessori Community for 2020-21; study the feasibility of a 7-12 Montessori school
- Combine Minnie Hughes Elementary and E.B. Ellington Elementary on the Ellington campus beginning with the 2020-21 school year
- Develop a report by February 2020 on the feasibility of merging or rezoning all schools with fewer than 500 students within the next 3-5 years in order to improve opportunities for students

For more information, please visit the District's website, [www.ccsdschools.com](http://www.ccsdschools.com), and click on the BoardDocs [link](#).

###

#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD), a nationally-accredited school district, is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 87 schools and specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.