

# Acceleration Schools

## APPROVED ACTION

District staff will bring proposed waivers to the CCSD Board of Trustees in February to provide leaders of 15 Acceleration Schools greater autonomy; approved waiver requests will be forwarded to the State Board of Education for approval.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- CCSD Policy CN mandates Board action to address chronically low-performing schools.
- In 2018, CCSD had the highest number of State-identified low-performing schools in the state.
- 15 CCSD schools have been identified by the District as Acceleration Schools, meaning they need to “accelerate” the academic growth rate in order to catch up students who are behind.
- These schools need experienced leaders and waivers from any regulations that are preventing them from trying innovative approaches to produce higher-than-average student achievement.
- State Legislature passed a proviso in 2019 allowing districts to create “schools of choice”, basically allowing more than one “school of choice” which is the terminology that allowed the CCSD/Meeting Street partnership.
- Schools of Choice can request waivers from the S.C. Department of Education to allow them more flexibility for innovative approaches while maintaining the school’s status as a district public school.
- An Acceleration School will not necessarily be a “partnership school.”

## SCHOOLS IDENTIFIED

- **Morningside Middle** (92% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, CSI School among state’s Title I lowest 5%
- **North Charleston Elementary** (91% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, CSI School among state’s Title I lowest 5%
- **Chicora Elementary** (96% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, CSI School among state’s Title I lowest 5%
- **Mary Ford Elementary** (95% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, CSI School among state’s Title I lowest 5%  
*(transitioning to Early Childhood Center)*
- **Edmund Burns Elementary** (97% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, CSI School among state’s Title I lowest 5%  
*(transitioning to Meeting Street)*
- **North Charleston High** (90% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, CSI School among state’s Title I lowest 5%
- **Hunley Park Elementary** (79% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, Priority School among state’s lowest 10%
- **Memminger Elementary** (83% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, Priority School among state’s lowest 10%
- **Sanders-Clyde Elementary** (97% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, Priority School among state’s lowest 10%
- **Pepperhill Elementary** (86% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, Priority School among state’s lowest 10%
- **Stono Park Elementary** (94% poverty), 2018 Unsatisfactory rating, Priority School among state’s lowest 10%
- **Mitchell Elementary** (96% poverty), 2019 Unsatisfactory Overall and Achievement ratings
- **W.B. Goodwin Elementary** (89% poverty), 2019 Unsatisfactory Overall and Achievement ratings
- **Simmons-Pinckney Middle** (98% poverty), 2019 part of low-performing K-12 feeder pattern
- **Burke High** (94% poverty), 2019 part of low-performing K-12 feeder pattern

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Acceleration Schools were identified as potential partnership schools (see Solicitation For Interest for related information).
- Examples of possible waiver requests could include: length of school day/week/year; teacher certification requirements; curriculum regulations; and educator evaluation processes.

# Partnership Solicitation For Interest

## CURRENT STATUS and APPROVED ACTION

- The Board of Trustees received an update on January 13 that the solicitation vetting process was ending with none of the respondents being recommended for partnership contracts as turnaround school operators at this time. The District and schools will continue with the identification of possible waivers from some state regulations and subsequent requests from the CCSD Board of Trustees to the State Board of Education without contracting with external turnaround school operators.
- Three partnership proposals have submitted program implementation plans and are continuing through the process as “partners” – not turnaround school operators:
  - Engaging Creative Minds with Sanders-Clyde Elementary
  - College of Charleston Teacher Residency with an elementary school TBD
  - University of Virginia Schools of Business and Education Leaders in Education with schools TBD
- The Solicitation/turnaround process resulted in 10 other proposals for managing a school. Those were sent to a vetting committee comprised of board members, parents, and educators. The report to the CCSD Board was to not bring forward any of the proposals, as was mentioned above.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- State Legislature passed a proviso in 2019 allowing districts to create “schools of choice”, basically allowing more than one “school of choice” which is the terminology that allowed the CCSD/Meeting Street partnership a few years ago.
- Schools of Choice can request waivers from the S.C. Department of Education to allow them more flexibility for innovative approaches while maintaining the school’s status as a district public school.
- CCSD Board/Administration issued a Solicitation for Interest seeking individuals or entities with a proven track record of improving student achievement in low-performing schools (school turnaround).
- The Solicitation was to attract entities that could possibly manage the school as a public school (not privatize) with the school’s attendance zone and student body remaining as it currently exists. These schools would be required to demonstrate stronger student success rates than is currently the case.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- All requested waivers from state regulations will be approved by the CCSD Board of Trustees.
- Parents and educators will be involved in this process.

# District 10 Middle School Merger

## APPROVED ACTION

West Ashley Middle School and C.E. Williams Middle School will merge with all District 10 middle school students (grades 6-8) located on the new C.E. Williams Middle campus that is opening in August 2020. This was approved by the CCSD Board of Trustees on January 27, 2020, as a follow-up to an earlier decision to merge the schools in August 2020 with West Ashley (or suitable location) housing grade 6 and C.E. Williams housing grades 7-8. The CCSD staff will engage with District 10 stakeholders to develop a long-term middle school plan by June 2020. The Board will include any associated facility needs as part of the November penny sales tax referendum for capital projects.

## EXPECTED BENEFITS

- Equitable offerings across for all D10 middle school students to support both the arts and advanced academics.
- Opportunity to create a new sixth grade academy to offer a safe and nurturing transition for elementary students moving into their first year of middle school.
- Closer proximity to West Ashley High for access to high school courses and the new West Ashley Center for Advanced Studies opening in 2021.
- Better access for all District 10 students to athletic fields, fine arts facilities, and extracurricular activities.
- Better planning between middle school teachers and high school teachers in the same subject area.
- Use of high school teachers to deliver some advanced academic courses at middle school.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

	Current Student Demographics		
<b>C.E. Williams Middle 6-8</b>	50% White	38% African-American	54% Poverty
<b>West Ashley Middle 6-8</b>	38% White	55% African-American	75% Poverty
<b>Total District 10 Grades 6-8</b>	41% White	46% African-American	64% Poverty

- Students from Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary (majority White) and St. Andrews Math & Science Elementary (majority White) partial magnets feed directly into C.E. Williams despite being closer to West Ashley. Conversely, students from at least one predominantly African-American neighborhood must go past C.E. Williams to get to their zoned school at West Ashley.
- The District 10 Constituent Board has attempted to rezone the attendance areas for better balance, but neighborhood geography makes that nearly impossible. The District 10 Board recommended the consolidation into one middle school attendance zone.

# Buist Academy

## APPROVED ACTION

Buist Academy's entrance criteria and school configuration will be changed beginning with the 2020-21 school year as follows:

- Phase-out grades K-2 as follows: kindergarten (2020-21), first grade (2021-22), and second grade (2022-23). Beginning in school year 2023-24, Buist will operate as a grades 3-8 school. No new students will be accepted in grades K-2 at Buist.
- Expand grades 3, 4, 5, 6 by one class per grade in 2020-21. For 2020-21 only, give priority to students scoring at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on MAP Reading and Math who are zoned for an elementary school in Charleston County with a poverty index equal to or greater than 80 percent.
- Develop prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year new admissions criteria for third graders and keeping the current level of academic standards and is the same for all elementary school students.
- Entrance criteria will come back to Board.
- By 2024-25 expand middle enrollment to four classes per grade.
- Review county-wide academic magnet data and entrance criteria annually in order to ensure changes are producing results consistent with Board goals of quality and fair representation of student populations.
- All applicants from throughout the district will be screened to determine eligibility.

## PURPOSE FOR RECOMMENDED CHANGE

Buist Academy's current mechanism for identifying gifted students for acceptance prior to kindergarten is not educationally sound. Additionally, it has resulted in a K-8 school with only 8% African-American students and 12% students in poverty – not representative of CCSD as a whole and not inclusive of students from various backgrounds who could perform in a school setting designed for students who score at or above the 75<sup>th</sup> national percentile academically. The District can provide a responsible mechanism for identifying gifted students prior to third grade that will result in more students from diverse backgrounds being able to take advantage of high quality gifted and talented programming – while continuing to maintain Buist's track record of high academic achievement.

## EXPECTED BENEFITS

- Maintain the high expectations of the students entering Buist while expanding the number of seats.
- Provide underrepresented groups with access to high quality programs.

### **Elementary and Middle Schools with 80% of higher poverty rating in 2019-20:**

Memminger Elementary, Edith Frierson Elementary, A.C. Corcoran Elementary, Mt. Zion Elementary, Charleston Development Academy, Pepperhill Elementary, St. James-Santee Elementary/Middle, Pinehurst Elementary, W.B. Goodwin Elementary, E.B. Ellington Elementary, Charleston Progressive Academy, North Charleston Elementary, Meeting Street at Brentwood, Minnie Hughes Elementary, Stono Park Elementary, Jane Edwards Elementary, Matilda Dunston Elementary, Mary Ford Elementary, Midland Park Primary, Chicora Elementary, Julian Mitchell Elementary, Sanders-Clyde Elementary, Edmund Burns Elementary, Jerry Zucker Middle, Military Magnet Academy, Northwoods Middle, Morningside Middle, Simmons-Pinckney Middle, Baptist Hill Middle, Deer Park Middle.

# Memminger Elementary International Baccalaureate Magnet

## APPROVED ACTION

- Memminger will serve as a countywide IB magnet with a K-5 advanced academic component. Additional kindergarten students will phase in effective 2020-21. The attendance zone will remain in place unless future revisions are made by the constituent board
- Magnet eligibility will be based on kindergarten readiness assessments, with students who score “ready” eligible for admission.
- Class representation will be as follows: D20 students receive seating priority. Allocate half of the remaining seats to eligible students zoned for schools with a poverty index of 80% or higher and half to eligible students zoned for Charleston County Constituent Districts other than D20.
- Students will matriculate to Buist automatically if they meet eligibility criteria, which will be established by the start of the 2020 school year.
- The Board will review county-wide academic magnet data and entrance criteria annually in order to ensure changes are producing results consistent with Board goals of academic quality and fair representation of student populations.
- A school naming committee will be convened.

## EXPECTED BENEFITS

- Students will receive differentiated instruction through curricular acceleration, enrichment, and extended learning opportunities.
- The implication of research related to best practices is to group gifted students instructionally by subject area for advanced curriculum work that would be flexibly organized and implemented based on students’ documented level of learning within the subject area.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Continuation of the fee-based program for 3-year-olds at Memminger may have to be reviewed in future years based on the school’s K-5 enrollment.
- It is the district’s intent to provide the advanced academics, IB component through grade 5. A program for gifted students will be provided per state and local guidelines, beginning in grade 3.

### **Elementary and Middle Schools with 80% of higher poverty rating in 2019-20:**

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Charleston County School District / Board of Trustees

# Academic Magnet High School

## **APPROVED ACTION**

- To develop new entrance criteria for Academic Magnet High School for 2020-21 based on a revised point system as stipulated below:
- Thirty percent of the designated 9<sup>th</sup> grade seats at AMHS will be offered to applying 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who meet the admissions criteria and also are zoned for a middle school located in Charleston County that has a poverty index of 80 percent or higher. For 2020-21, the 80 percent poverty schools include Simmons-Pinckney Middle, Morningside Middle, Northwoods Middle, Baptist Hill Middle, Military Magnet Middle, St. James-Santee Middle, Charleston Development Academy, Jerry Zucker Middle and Deer Park Middle.
- An additional point will be given in the scoring rubric to students matriculating from an accredited middle school located in Charleston County, including accredited private or home-schooled programs.
- All remaining applicants will be rank-ordered by criteria score to fill the remaining available seats. In the event of a tie, students with the same score will be selected by lottery until seats are filled.
- The unseated applicants will be placed on a waitlist in their criteria rank and lottery order. Waitlists will be maintained through the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the following school year.
- Continue the “Top Two” program that admits the top two students from every CCSD middle school who meet entrance criteria.
- Refine and continue the ACE (Advancing Charleston Excellence) “bridge” program to support high-achieving middle school students from subgroups that are underrepresented at Academic Magnet High School.

## **RATIONALE FOR CHANGE**

Since its inception, admission into Academic Magnet High School has centered on academic achievement. The score of 85<sup>TH</sup> percentile on a nationally normed achievement test has been a component since 1987. Eventually, the inclusion of a writing sample, teacher recommendation, and GPA have formed a matrix that is used to assess a student applicant’s potential for success at the school. The matrix has proven to be a reliable indicator of students’ academic success at the school, and the school is performing at a very high level. However, AMHS’ current student body has only 4% African American students and 8% of students in poverty, which is the lowest poverty index of any high school in the state. Some changes to the acceptance criteria and admissions priorities are recommended to provide access to students representing the totality of Charleston County School District – while maintaining the high standards of academic excellence that the school represents.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- The district is revamping gifted programs in every elementary school and assuring at least 5% of students in each school are served.
- The Board is committed to ensuring students in all middle schools with enrollments of at least 600 students are provided equitable access to Honors courses in the four core academic areas (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) that would better prepare them for advanced coursework in high school.

Charleston County School District / Board of Trustees

# **Constituent Magnets**

(changed from Partial Magnets)

## APPROVED ACTION

- James B. Edwards Elementary, Sullivan’s Island Elementary, Jennie Moore Elementary, and Laing Middle will become District 2 constituent magnet schools maintaining their current attendance zone unless future changes are made by the Constituent Board.
- North Charleston Creative Arts and Zucker Middle will become District 4 constituent magnet schools maintaining their current attendance zone unless future changes are made by the Constituent Board..
- Ashley River Creative Arts and St. Andrew’s Math & Science will become District 10 constituent magnet schools, with St. Andrew’s maintaining its current attendance zone and Ashley River creating a small attendance zone including around 25% of current student enrollment. Each will maintain their attendance zone unless future changes are made by the Constituent Board.
- Mitchell Elementary (District 20) and E.B. Ellington Elementary advanced academics (District 23) will become constituent magnet schools maintaining their current attendance zone unless future changes are made by the Constituent Board..
- Haut Gap Middle will become an advanced studies constituent magnet school for eligible District 3 and District 9 students. Eligible District 9 students receive seating priority.
- Transportation will be provided for all constituent magnet schools from within the constituent district. Any out-of-constituent district student impacted by the Board action can stay in their school until they age out (“grandfathering” provision). District staff will bring to the Board an estimate of the cost of providing transportation.

## RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

Recommendations regarding “partial” magnets have been refined over time as Board members and district leaders received feedback and more carefully examined the advantages and disadvantages of existing partial magnet programs. The Board approved changing these schools from “partial” to *Constituent Magnets* and clarifying that Constituent Magnets serve one (and in a few cases multiple) constituent districts. These schools have an established attendance zone with additional seats available for students who reside within the designated constituent district(s). Eligible students apply for available seats and, if necessary, a lottery will be used for selection. Students who reside outside the designated constituent areas may apply using the district’s transfer request process and will be admitted if seats are available and transfer criteria are met.

**COUNTY-WIDE MAGNET SCHOOLS** are also a choice in CCSD. Countywide magnet schools do not have attendance zones, and any Charleston County student may apply to attend. They are: Academic Magnet High School, Charleston County School of the Arts, Early College High School, Buist Academy, Charleston Progressive Academy, Military Magnet Academy, Clark Academy, and Memminger International Baccalaureate Elementary.

Charleston County School District / Board of Trustees

# Early Childhood Education

## BACKGROUND

High-quality early learning provides a firm foundation for overall student achievement and is an essential driver for reaching first grade readiness standards.

Last Summer, the Board of Trustees directed the District Administration to redesign CCSD early childhood education, including: conducting an effectiveness audit of preschool-first grade literacy and math; establishing a service model for learning programs and redesign of the program based on the audit; and analyze the progress over time of students who participated in the program.

An Early Childhood Project Team has been working since September to develop a comprehensive plan for evidence-based, high-quality pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs to substantially increase all learners' readiness for first grade.

The need for strong preschool and kindergarten programs is especially strong in Constituent District 4 (North Charleston) where many students start school behind academically.

#### **APPROVED ACTION**

- District Administration will create the Mary Ford Early Childhood and Family Engagement Center, a model for 4 year olds (child development) and 5 year olds (kindergarten) with universal preschool and family engagement center at Mary Ford Elementary opening in Fall 2020. Current students in grades 1-5 at Mary Ford will be zoned to attend Chicora Elementary. Chicora's child development and kindergarten students will be zoned to attend Mary Ford. The center at Mary Ford will also serve eligible Early Head Start (ages 0-2) and Head Start (age 3) with certified teachers.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- The Mary Ford Early Childhood and Family Engagement Center is designed as the first of the new early childhood education programs.
- The Board of Trustees approved combining Lambs Elementary, Hunley Park Elementary, and Goodwin Elementary on one campus on the upcoming 2020 referendum list of building needs. After the new elementary is completed, one of the three schools vacated would be converted into the second Early Childhood and Family Engagement Center in District 4.
- The Board of Trustees also approved adding a new Ladson Elementary to the upcoming 2020 referendum list of building needs. After the new elementary is completed, the current Ladson facility would be converted into the third Early Childhood and Family Engagement Center in District 4.