

April 30, 2020

District 10 Families and Community Members,

We would like to inform you of an important decision related to the merger of District 10 middle school students for next year. After careful consideration of the uncertainties related to COVID-19, all District 10 6th graders will be located on the campus of West Ashley Middle School, and all District 10 7th and 8th graders will be located on the campus of the new C.E. Williams Middle School.

At the April 27th CCSD Board of Trustees meeting, District and school administrators were given permission to select the best viable option moving forward with the merger of District 10 middle school students. Given the uncertainties of COVID-19, the Board allowed consideration of the best placement of the merged 6th grade C.E. Williams student body for the coming year. As such, we met with a diverse group, consisting of West Ashley Middle/C.E. Williams parents, West Ashley Middle/C.E. Williams teachers, and district-level leaders to review public survey comments, discuss 2020-21 schooling options related to the pandemic, and discuss a final recommendation.

The Board was clear that the merger of District 10 middle schools would continue, and we considered two options: continue the plan to house grades 6-8 on the new C.E. Williams campus despite the COVID uncertainties; or locate sixth grade at West Ashley Middle for all or part of next year with grades 7-8 at C.E. Williams.

All members of the team recommended creating one school in two locations, housing C.E. Williams' sixth grade students on the West Ashley Middle School campus for 2020-21, while locating 7th and 8th graders at the new C.E. Williams. The group cited various pandemic, logistical, and developmental concerns as the foundation for its recommendation, agreeing that there are so many unknowns that we needed to make the most prudent decision on which we could ensure delivery by August 2020.

The team agreed that creating one school on two campuses will afford staff more actual facility space to provide instruction to students. This will also eliminate the need for hundreds of eighth graders to transition between classes at West Ashley High and C.E. Williams campuses, as would have been required if we kept sixth grade at the new C.E. Williams campus.

By expanding to two school locations for the coming year, there will also be a significant increase in the amount of instructional space for smaller groups of students on both campuses as CCSD leaders consider how to safely deliver instruction to students in the future. Educators will be able to more adequately address the heightened social, emotional, and developmental needs of 6th graders. Many of those needs will be related to unintended learning gaps created by COVID-19's extended school closure.

The physical, emotional, and academic well-being of students remains our top priority as the nation and world face this unsettling pandemic. Given the uncertainties that this pandemic presents, the District administration along with both schools' administrations will move forward

to create one school during the coming year, serving C.E. Williams' 6th graders on the West Ashley Middle School campus and 7th and 8th graders on the C.E. Williams campus.

We are excited to continue our work, planning for the new school year with students. As additional details for this plan are developed, we will be certain to keep you informed and up to date as quickly and efficiently as possible. This is our commitment to you. Thank you for your continued support, and be well.

Sincerely,  
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