

# THINK (AND ACT) DIFFERENTLY

Overview of Study for the Proposed Closure of  
Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell Elementary  
Schools

Presented by:  
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools  
District Administration

# What is the Purpose of the Study?

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The study provides information to help the Board of Education make an informed decision about the District's future. It evaluates key factors around three schools being considered for closure, Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell Elementary Schools.

# What the Study Does.....

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- Provide additional data
- Add factual information, alongside public comments, and Board of Education discussions
- Fulfill the legally required procedural step

# What the Study Does Not Do.....

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- Weight, prioritize, or score any criteria for the closure of a specific school
- Propose specific recommendations or judgments on any school

# Structure of the Study: (snapshot in time)

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- Based on examples from other NC school districts
- Contains four sections
- While each criteria is individually covered, other criteria may be relevant
- Enrollment/data points vary based upon when information was gathered

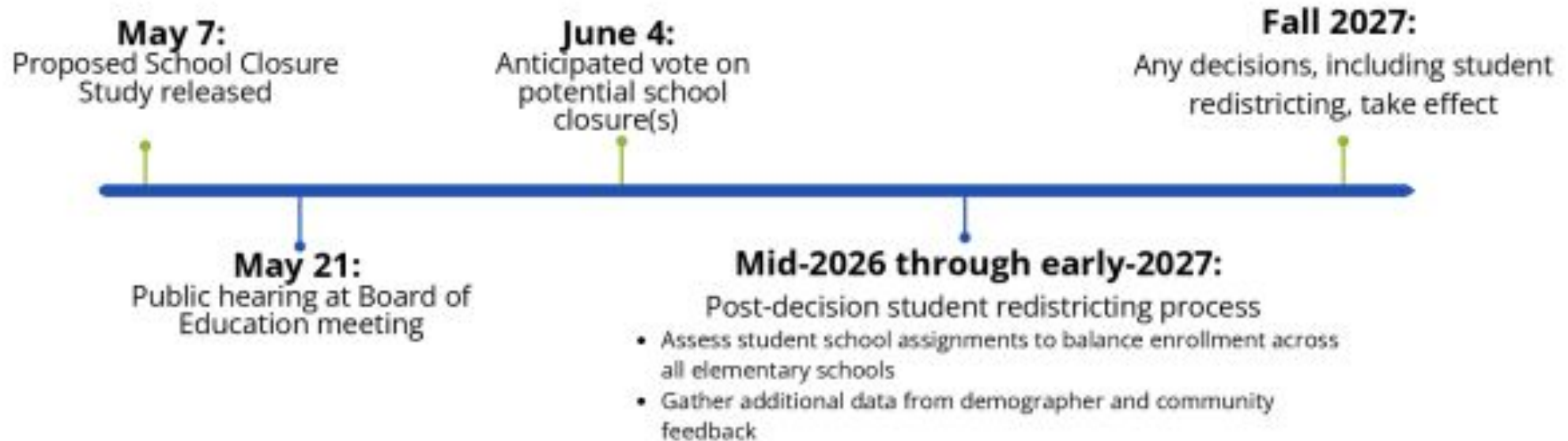
# Where Did the Majority of Information Come From?

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- **Demographic & Housing Development Information:** Orange County (Carolina Demography)
- **2025 Schools Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (SAPFO) Report 2025:** Orange County
- **Facilities and Capital Needs:** 2023 study conducted by Woolpert, Inc. and surveys conducted by District facilities staff
- **Transportation:** Town of Chapel Hill's Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) audit observations, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), and CHCCS transportation staff
- **Inconvenience or Hardship Demographics:** CHCCS Office of Research, Assessment, and Student Information staff
- **Program Capacity Analysis:** NC State SchoolCAMP staff
- **Legal Requirements:** Tharrington Smith

# Tentative Timeline for School Closure Decision

## Decision Timeline



# School Closure Study Criteria

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- Geographic Conditions [N.C.G.S. § 115C-72 (a) (1)]
- Increase or Decrease in Enrollment [N.C.G.S. § 115C-72 (a) (1)]
- Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected [N.C.G.S. § 115C-72 (a) (1)]
- Additional Facility Costs [N.C.G.S. § 115C-72 (a) (1)]
- Recent & Projected Capital Expenditures
- Building Adjacency to Middle or High Schools
- Transportation Costs
- Site Adequacy

# Criteria #1: *Geographic Conditions*

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## **Ephesus**

- 2 small wetlands; no floodplains
- Wetlands pose no site concerns
- EPA Air Quality - Good

## **Glenwood**

- Significant topography means the back athletic field dries slowly after rain
- No wetlands or floodplains
- EPA Air Quality - Moderate

## **Seawell**

- Bolin Creek is nearby
- No site concerns with nearby wetlands or floodplains
- EPA Air Quality - Good

# Criteria #2: Increase or Decrease in Enrollment

## CHCCS Historical ADM 2016-26

Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
Elementary Schools	5,501	5,555	5,508	5,472	5,349	4,926	4,716	4,641	4,552	4,510	4,294	-1207 students
Middle Schools	2,838	2,833	2,838	2,930	3,032	2,912	2,799	2,788	2,699	2,655	2,579	-259 students
High Schools	3,665	3,738	3,910	3,903	3,922	3,926	3,896	3,923	3,949	3,934	3,885	+220 students
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,004</b>	<b>12,126</b>	<b>12,256</b>	<b>12,305</b>	<b>12,303</b>	<b>11,764</b>	<b>11,411</b>	<b>11,352</b>	<b>11,200</b>	<b>11,099</b>	<b>10,758</b>	

Source: CHCCS

# Criteria #2: Increase or Decrease in Enrollment

## Carolina Demography - Development Adjusted/Projected ADM Impact to All CHCCS Schools (2016-36)

Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	
Elementary Schools	5,501	5,555	5,508	5,472	5,349	4,926	4,716	4,641	4,552	4,510	4,294	4,255	4,232	4,161	4,191	4,176	4,188	4,190	4,190	4,181	4,183	-111 students
Middle Schools	2,838	2,833	2,838	2,930	3,032	2,912	2,799	2,788	2,699	2,655	2,579	2,569	2,496	2,472	2,386	2,371	2,280	2,309	2,302	2,308	2,299	-280 students
High Schools	3,665	3,738	3,910	3,903	3,922	3,926	3,896	3,923	3,949	3,934	3,885	3,795	3,710	3,693	3,584	3,536	3,529	3,382	3,331	3,294	3,206	-679 students
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,004</b>	<b>12,126</b>	<b>12,256</b>	<b>12,305</b>	<b>12,303</b>	<b>11,764</b>	<b>11,411</b>	<b>11,352</b>	<b>11,200</b>	<b>11,099</b>	<b>10,758</b>	<b>10,619</b>	<b>10,438</b>	<b>10,326</b>	<b>10,161</b>	<b>10,084</b>	<b>9,997</b>	<b>9,882</b>	<b>9,823</b>	<b>9,783</b>	<b>9,688</b>	

Source: CHCCS; Demographic Analytics Advisors (DAA) Forecast

# Criteria #2: Increase or Decrease in Enrollment

ADM: 2025-26 Through 2035-36 by School, Colored by Year-Over-Year % Change

School	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Carrboro Elementary	462	444	430	413	409	398	395	395	392	390	388
Ephesus Elementary	343	375	387	394	405	417	421	420	422	422	423
Estes Hills Elementary	324	353	362	376	375	389	397	398	400	401	403
FPG Elementary	499	491	505	503	499	498	496	495	492	489	487
Glenwood Elementary	394	387	385	384	396	421	421	420	419	418	418
McDougle Elementary	469	487	495	491	510	511	505	501	499	496	495
Morris Grove Elementary	371	364	357	346	362	356	359	362	366	368	371
Northside Elementary	335	316	313	306	298	291	290	289	289	288	289
Rashkis Elementary	367	336	321	298	283	253	253	253	254	255	256
Scroggs Elementary	366	347	333	314	311	307	309	312	315	314	314
Seawell Elementary	364	354	344	335	343	336	341	344	343	341	340

5% or Greater Decline

2.5% - 4.99% Decline

0% - 2.49% Decline

0% - 2.49% Growth

2.5% - 4.99% Growth

5% or Greater Growth

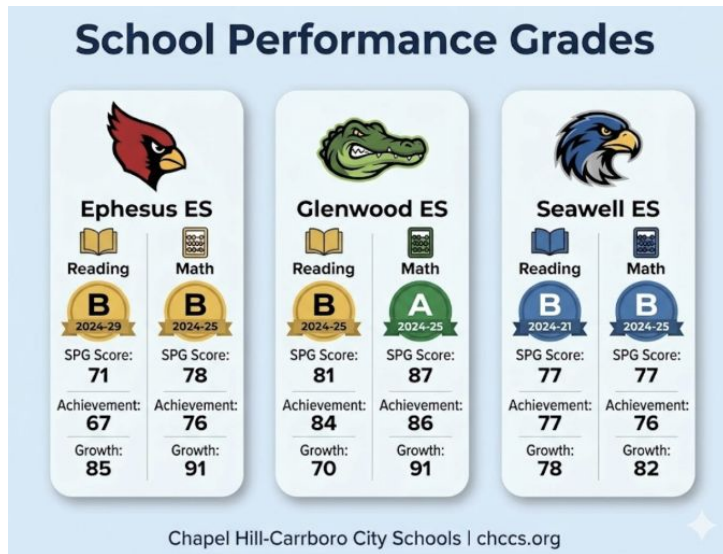
# Criteria #3: *Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected*

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## ***Initial Approach:***

- In the absence of finalized attendance zones, is difficult for the district to identify exactly the total number of students to be affected by any specific school closure scenario.
- Rather than making assumptions, the focus is on understanding potential risks and setting clear equity guardrails to guide future decisions.
- What is known, at this time, includes each school's demographics, academic outcomes, and attendance patterns, which together help frame the broader context even without student school assignments.

# Criteria #3: *Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected*



	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	EDS	ML	SWD	Enrolled	Open Seats
Ephesus	14.3%	15.3%	13.0%	6.4%	50.6%	34.5%	10.2%	13.3%	391	45
Glenwood <sup>^</sup>	38.0%	8.6%	4.6%	12.9%	35.4%	17.5%	11.6%	9.1%	395	17
Seawell	28.6%	16.5%	11.1%	8.9%	34.9%	32.2%	16.5%	13.4%	395	55
<i>(2025-26 20th Day Enrollment)</i>			<sup>^</sup> Mandarin Dual Language Program							

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged  
ML - Multilingual Learners  
SWD - Students with Disabilities

# Criteria #3: *Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected*

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## ***Next Steps:***

To stay grounded in student experience, universal risk factors exist that should apply across all schools. These include:

- the importance of stable relationships with peers and teachers,
- continuity of instruction,
- access to programs and extracurricular opportunities,
- reliable transportation,
- and the timing of transitions

## Criteria #3: *Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected*

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### ***Next Steps:***

At the same time, the district should consider how different groups of students may experience transitions differently, without overgeneralizing entire schools. This includes reflecting on the potential impacts for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and students already facing attendance challenges.

The central principle is to keep equity rooted in actual student experience rather than assumptions.

The study recommends a phased approach.

## Criteria #4: *Additional Facility Costs*

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Additional facility costs were not applicable to this study, as the Board of Education is evaluating school closure based on the district's existing elementary school portfolio rather than consolidation

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# Criteria #5: *Recent or Project Capital Expenditures*

Capital Expenditures (Recent & Projected)				
School	2020-2025	2025	2030 (5 Years)	2035 (10 Years)
<b>Ephesus</b>	\$678,024	\$16,575,000	\$20,166,021	\$24,535,049
<b>Glenwood</b>	\$769,023	\$15,760,000	\$19,174,451	\$23,328,649
<b>Seawell</b>	\$2,614,769	\$14,620,000	\$17,787,465	\$21,641,171
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$4,061,816</b>	<b>\$46,955,000</b>	<b>\$57,127,937</b>	<b>\$69,504,869</b>

# Criteria #5: Recent or Project Capital Expenditures

- 2023 Woolpert

Projected Capital Expenditures -

	OPTION A COMFORTABLE AND SAFE	OPTION B COMFORTABLE AND SAFE, PLUS 10-YEAR FACILITY NEEDS	COMFORTABLE AND SAFE,
SCHOOL NAME	BUDGET	BUDGET	STRATEGY
CARRBORO ES	\$0.0 M	\$22.0 M	Replacement School
EPHESUS ES	\$8.5 M	\$28.2 M	High Priority Needs
ESTES HILLS ES	\$3.4 M	\$29.5 M	Replacement School
FRANK PORTER GRAHAM ES	\$5.4 M	\$30.9 M	Consolidate
GLENWOOD ES	\$1.0 M	\$16.3 M	High Priority Needs
MORRIS GROVE ES	\$4.5 M	\$24.6 M	High Priority Needs
NORTHSIDE ES	\$0.0 M	\$13.3 M	High Priority Needs
RASHKIS ES	\$6.4 M	\$29.7 M	High Priority Needs
SCROGGS ES	\$4.4 M	\$29.9 M	High Priority Needs
SEAWELL ES	\$0.5 M	\$23.1 M	High Priority Needs
MCDOUGLE ES	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CARRBORO HS	\$9.2 M	\$67.1 M	High Priority Needs
CHAPEL HILL HS	\$10.9 M	\$29.6 M	High Priority Needs
E. CHAPEL HILL HS	\$23.2 M	\$75.6 M	High Priority Needs
PHOENIX ACADEMY	\$1.5 M	\$2.8 M	Renovation
MCDOUGLE MS	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CULBRETH MS	\$8.9 M	\$44.6 M	Replacement School
PHILLIPS MS	\$3.6 M	\$29.0 M	High Priority Needs
SMITH MS	\$12.5 M	\$42.2 M	Adequacy (Learning Tools)
LINCOLN CENTER	\$5.2 M	\$15.0 M	-

**“Comfortable and Safe”**

(All buildings are comfortable, reliable, and free of deferred maintenance concerns)

Ephesus ~\$28.2M

Glenwood ~\$16.3M

Seawell ~\$23.1M

## Criteria #6: *Building Adjacency to Middle or High Schools*

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Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools has three campuses that are composed of 2 or more schools (McDougle ES/MS, Estes Hills ES/Phillips MS, and Seawell ES/Smith MS/Chapel Hill HS). Another adjacent campus could be added to the district's school portfolio following FPG Bilingue replacement next to Culbreth MS.

**Ephesus:** Neither a middle or high school is contiguous to Ephesus Elementary School.

**Glenwood:** Neither a middle or high school is contiguous to Glenwood Elementary School.

**Seawell:** Smith Middle and Chapel Hill High Schools are contiguous to Seawell Elementary School. Presently, there are no Seawell students enrolled in courses at Smith Middle or Chapel Hill High. However, on occasion, there are instances where students from Smith Middle and/or Chapel Hill High students participate in student activities with Seawell Elementary students.

# Criteria #7: Transportation Costs

Projected Additional Transportation Costs			
School	Students	Cost Per Year	Est. Cost
Ephesus	125	\$936.53	\$117,066
*Glenwood	170	\$936.53	\$0.00
Seawell	120	\$936.53	\$112,384

\* Presently transport 170 students with an estimated annual cost of \$159,210.

Select School Year:    
 Search by LEA Name:

**Table 32 - STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ON PUBLIC SCHOOL BUSES**

**Student Transportation on Public School Buses**  
School Year 2024-25

Year	LEA ↑	LEA Name	Buses	Pupils	Miles	Cost	Cost Per Bus	Cost Per Pupil	Cost Per Mile
2025	681	Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	55	3,880	728,860	3,013,692	54,794.40	936.53	4.13

[Export to Excel](#)  
1 - 1

Note: Transportation includes contract transportation.

# Criteria #8: *Site Adequacy*

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## **CHCCS School Capacities: Woolpert / SAPFO / CHCCS Program and Use**

The Orange County and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School community have historically evaluated the size, or capacity of schools, across several indicators. These include:

- 1. 2023 Woolpert Report**
- 2. 2024-25 SAPFO Capacities**
- 3. 2026 CHCCS Program Capacity**

# Criteria #8: *Site Adequacy*

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## **2023 Woolpert Report**

Utilized Square Footage per Student to evaluate the size and adequacy of school facilities for Orange County Bond support.

## **2024-25 SAPFO Capacities**

Often referred to as legacy capacities, these numbers indicate the maximum number of students that could receive academic instruction if all rooms were filled irrespective of community and academic programs, such as Exceptional Child Separate Setting Classrooms (EC AC), Pre-Kindergarten, AIG and Multi- Lingual Supports.

## **2026 CHCCS Program Capacity**

In coordination with CHCCS Operational, Academic and School Leadership, NCSU ITRE / SchoolCAMP Planners evaluated the allotted and actual space use of all CHCCS Schools in accordance with classroom size, design, attributes and the academic programs being delivered at each campus. In addition, SchoolCAMP Planners met individually with each School Leadership team to produce a 'ground up' profile for each school that reflects EC AC, Pre-Kindergarten and additional programs that require space at each school. programs that require space at each school.

# Criteria #8: Site Adequacy

## Educational Adequacy

The Woolpert study assessed all CHCCS classrooms to compare existing facilities against current North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) standards and best practices in K-12 educational design. In doing so, it centered on three key questions:

- 1. Did the school have all the necessary rooms?*
- 2. Were the rooms appropriately sized?*
- 3. Did the rooms have the right equipment?*

School	Gross Square Footage	Year Built	Space Types (Question #1)	Space Types>minimum (Question #2)	Space Requirements (Question #3)
Ephesus ES	66,952	1972	72%	36%	88%
Glenwood ES	66,664	1952	76%	54%	86%
Seawell ES	66,198	1969	66%	33%	83%

# Criteria #8: Site Adequacy

## Program Capacity Analysis

Maintaining an elementary school system operational utilization within the 85-95% program capacity range is best practice.

**Analysis:** By the school year 2030-31, it is projected that CHCCS will have 4,191 enrolled K-5 Students with an overall academic program seat capacity of 5,170 - resulting in an overall operational utilization rate of 81%. Decisions about facility operations - opening, expanding or consolidating will directly affect the overall school system utilization rate.

Label	Elementary School Name	Woolpert Capacity	SAPFO Capacity	CHCCS Program Capacity	2030-31 Project Enroll	2030-31 Utilization Rates
CES	Carrboro Elementary   with DLI	543	518	520	398	77%
EES	Ephesus Elementary	578	436	416	417	100%
EHES	Estes Hills Elementary	528	516	464	389	84%
FPGES	FPG Bilingüe Elementary   with DLI	589	522	576	498	87%
GES	Glenwood Elementary   with DLI	407	412	420	421	100%
MSES	Scroggs Elementary	521	558	496	307	62%
MES	McDougle Elementary	550	548	432	511	118%
MGES	Morris Grove Elementary	547	568	484	356	74%
NES	Northside Elementary	583	568	484	291	60%
RES	Rashkis Elementary	532	568	462	253	55%
SES	Seawell Elementary	378	450	416	336	81%
		<b>5,756</b>	<b>5,664</b>	<b>5,170</b>	<b>4,191</b>	<b>81%</b>

# Criteria #8: *Site Adequacy*

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## Program Capacity Analysis cont.

*Determination: CHCCS Elementary School Program Capacity Utilization and Closure Scenarios*

Over the **next five years**, Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools K-5 elementary enrollment and program capacity utilization is approximately **81%**. The **closure of one elementary school** with a capacity between 400-500 seats would increase the overall CHCCS K-5 utilization from **81% to 87%-89%**. The closure of two 400-500 elementary schools would increase utilization rates to 95%-100%.

**\*\*85-95% program capacity range is best practice**

# Next Steps

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- The Board and the public will have time to review the study ahead of the May 21st public hearing.
- Board members will continue to engage in discussions, focused on making careful, informed decisions based on gathered data and community feedback.

**THINK (AND ACT)  
DIFFERENTLY**

**Questions**

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