



# **Superintendent's Final Recommendation Regarding the School Closure of Route 40 Elementary School**

**April 11, 2023**

# Objective

The purpose of this presentation is to:

- Respond to the Garrett County Board of Education's Policy FCB: Closing of Schools and COMAR 13A.02.09 of the Regulations of the State Public Schools, for the Superintendent of Schools to review and make a recommendation to the Garrett County Board of Education specific to the closing Route 40 Elementary School.

# School Closure Advisory Committee Process

The Route 40 Elementary School School Closure Advisory Committee was charged with investigating and reporting on **the impact of the proposed school closure** in accordance with COMAR 13A.02.09 of the Regulations of the State Public Schools & Garrett County School Board Policy FCB: Closing of Schools.

# **COMAR 13A.02.09 & Policy FCB School Closing**

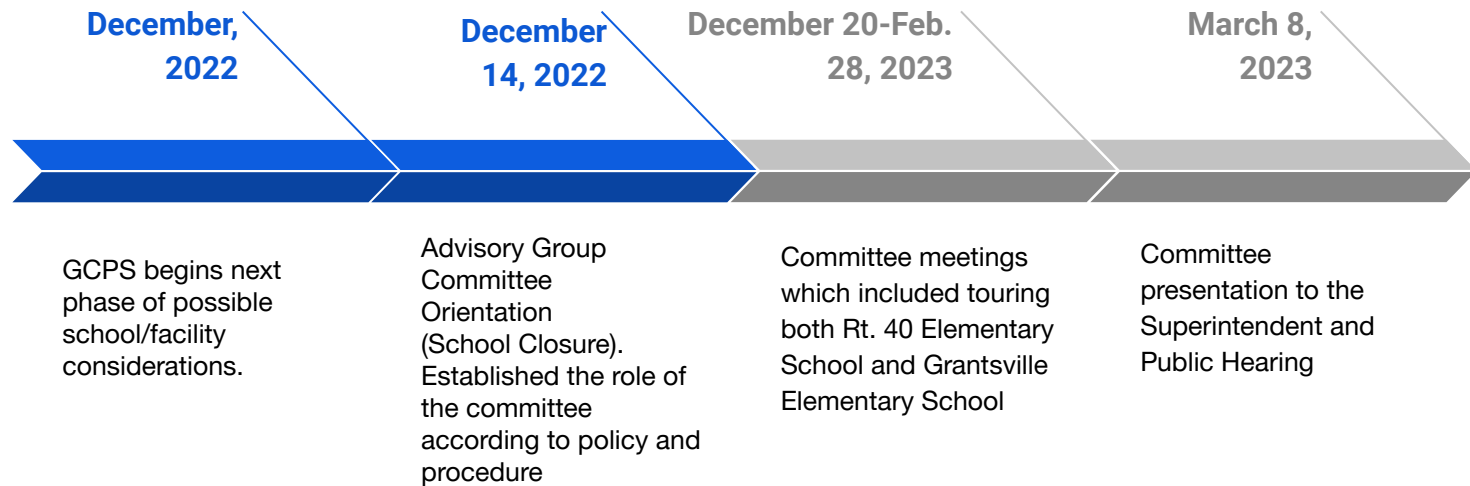
**Per COMAR and Policy FCB, the impact of the following factors were considered in making my final recommendation:**

- A. Enrollment Trends**
- B. Conditions of School**
- C. Utility Costs**
- D. Facility Study**
- E. Transportation**
- F. Educational Programs**
- G. Racial Composition**
- H. Financial Considerations**
- I. Student Relocations**
- J. Community Impact**

# Route 40 Elementary School Advisory Committee Timeline

The advisory committee met ten (10) times over a 3 month period.

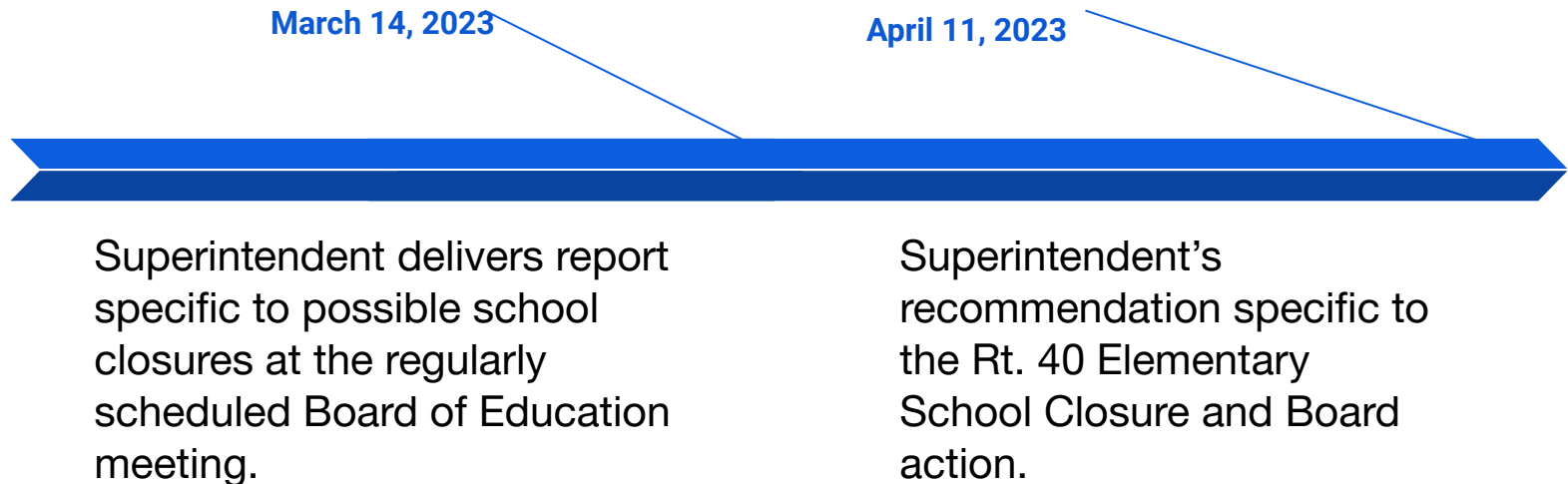
## Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations



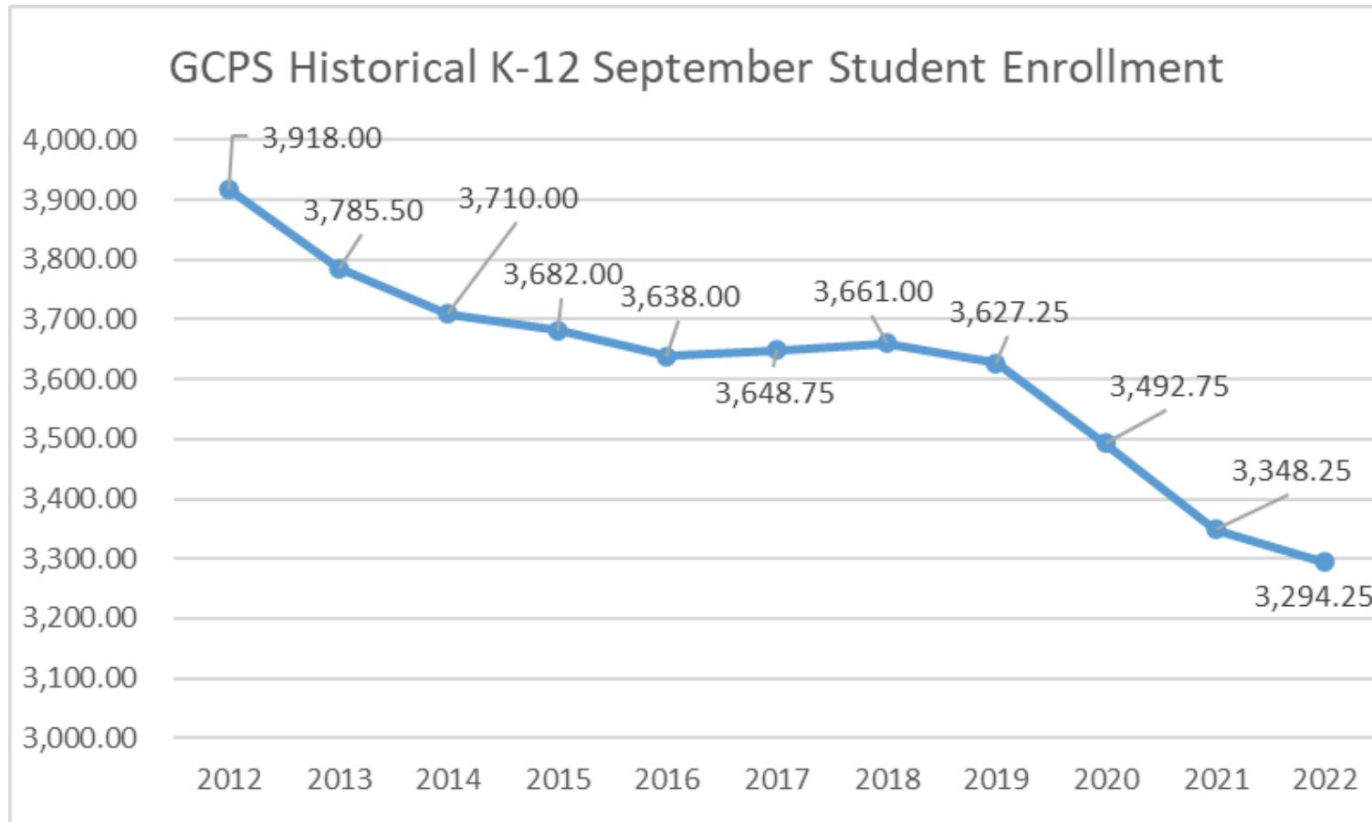
# Route 40 Elementary School Advisory Committee Timeline Cont.

The advisory committee met ten (10) times over a 3 month period.

## Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations



# A. Enrollment Trends

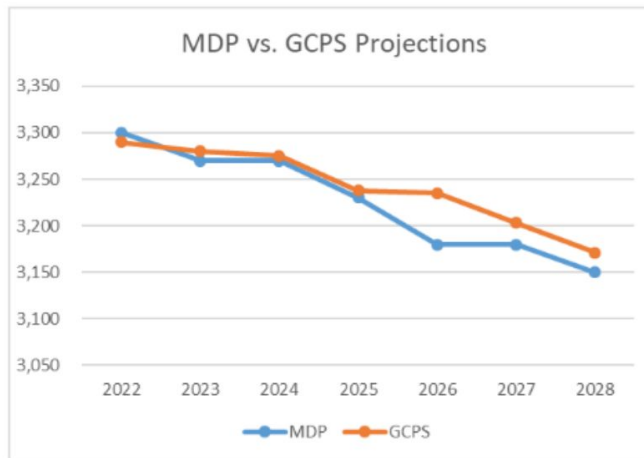


NOTE: Totals do not include Pre-K enrollment. Over the past 10 years GCPS has experienced a total decline of **623.75** students or **15.9%**. Year over year the system decreased by **54** students. The enrollment projection shared with the Board in June estimated a 9/30/22 enrollment of 3,290.



# A. Enrollment Trends: Maryland Department of Planning Projections

## Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) Projections K-12 Enrollment from 2022-2028



### MDP Drivers

- Population projections
- Birth information
- Compulsory attendance
- Private school enrollment
- Homeschooled children

### Assumption Variances:

#### MDP vs. GCPS

- Birth rate vs. Kindergarten enrollment
- Grade Succession ratios vs. Roll forward + High School regression
- Rounding to 10s place vs. Actual formulas

Each Spring MDP collaborates with each LEA to detail 10 year projections to assist with the preparation of Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). MDP publishes projections each year in August/September.

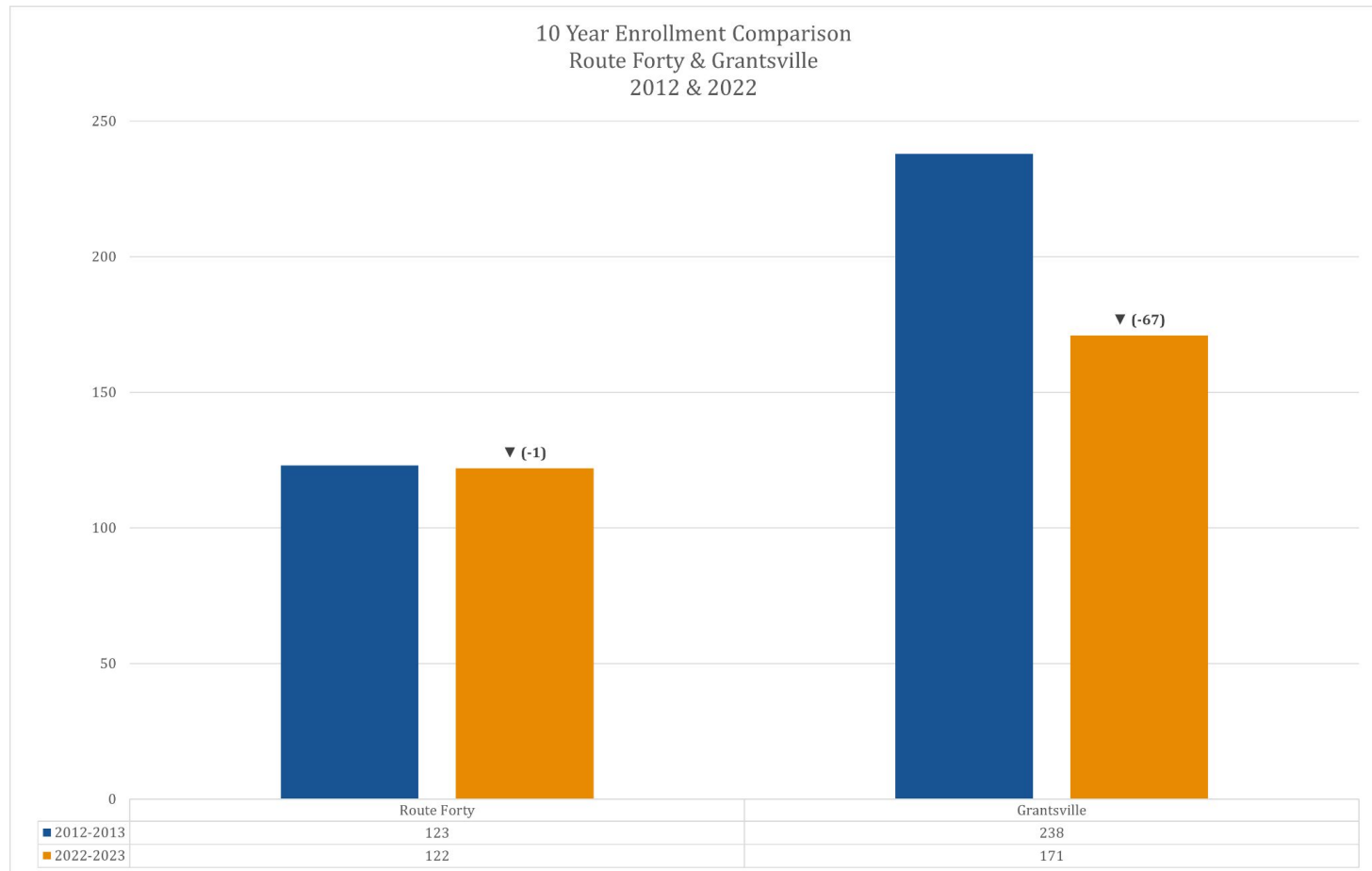
This data represents a reasonable scenario for the future, given recent and long-term birth, migration and demographic patterns. 5

**Unfortunately,  
the trend in  
enrollment  
decline is not  
estimated to end  
in the coming  
years.**

*This slide courtesy of 'Grade Band Alignment Update: Enrollment and Revenue Projections' presentation at the Board's June 14, 2022 Meeting.*



# A. Enrollment Trends: Rt.40 and Grantsville



## B. Conditions of School

### Projected Capital Costs for Rt. 40 and Grantsville

School	Estimated Capital Costs
Route 40 Elementary School	<b>\$4,857,000</b>
Grantsville Elementary School	\$10,000-\$15,000

The limited renovation for Grantsville will be complete at the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

## B. Conditions of School

### Projected Capital Costs for Rt. 40 and Grantsville

<b>Rt.40 Elementary</b>	
Boiler replacement and HVAC installation	\$3,150,000
Roof panel restoration/replacement	\$1,300,000
Rear retaining wall repair	\$32,000
Relocate front office to the exterior of the building and add a security vestibule	\$200,000
Sidewalk and curb replacement	\$50,000
Front Office and Media center carpet replacement	\$25,000
Classroom tile replacement	\$100,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$4,857,000</b>

<b>Grantsville Elementary</b>	
Cost for minor modifications for 6th grade and resource to accommodate all Rt.40 and GV students (if grade band alignment for Northern Area Schools is approved)	\$5,000
Bus parking lot safety upgrades	\$10,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>

# B. Conditions of School

## Statewide Facilities Assessment

The purpose of the Statewide Facilities Assessment is to assess the condition and educational sufficiency of the school facilities that currently exist in Maryland.



### Combined Facility Score

Maryland Condition Index  
(MDCI) score

#### Rt. 40 Elementary School

- MDCI = .35
- Rank 489 out of 1,383

#### Grantsville Elementary School

- MDCI = TBD post renovation
- Rank= TBD post renovation

## C. Utility Costs

Below is a side by side comparison of the actual fiscal year 2022 utility expenses for both Route 40 Elementary and Grantsville Elementary.

- Utility costs are to be funded by revenues from the Foundation Amount under Blueprint legislation.
- Economies of scale would be achieved with a higher number of students in one building. Changes in funding requirements require GCPS to review the per pupil expenditures differently than in prior years.
- Inflation will cause utility costs to increase. As enrollment remains flat to declining, this will increase the dollars per pupil that must be spent on utilities.
- **Special Circumstances:** Route 40 is serviced by a well and due to location does not receive the same internet service as other schools.

Utilities Analysis for Route Forty Elementary Closure Expenses as of 6/30/22			
	RF	GV (Alone)	GV (w/ RF Enrollment)
Total Utility Expenses	\$ 58,331.07	\$ 58,430.41	\$ 58,430.41
9/30/2021 Enrollment	122	166	288
Cost per student	\$ 478.12	\$ 351.99	\$ 202.88
Foundation Amount	\$ 7,390	\$ 7,390	\$ 7,390
% spent on utilities	6.5%	4.8%	2.7%

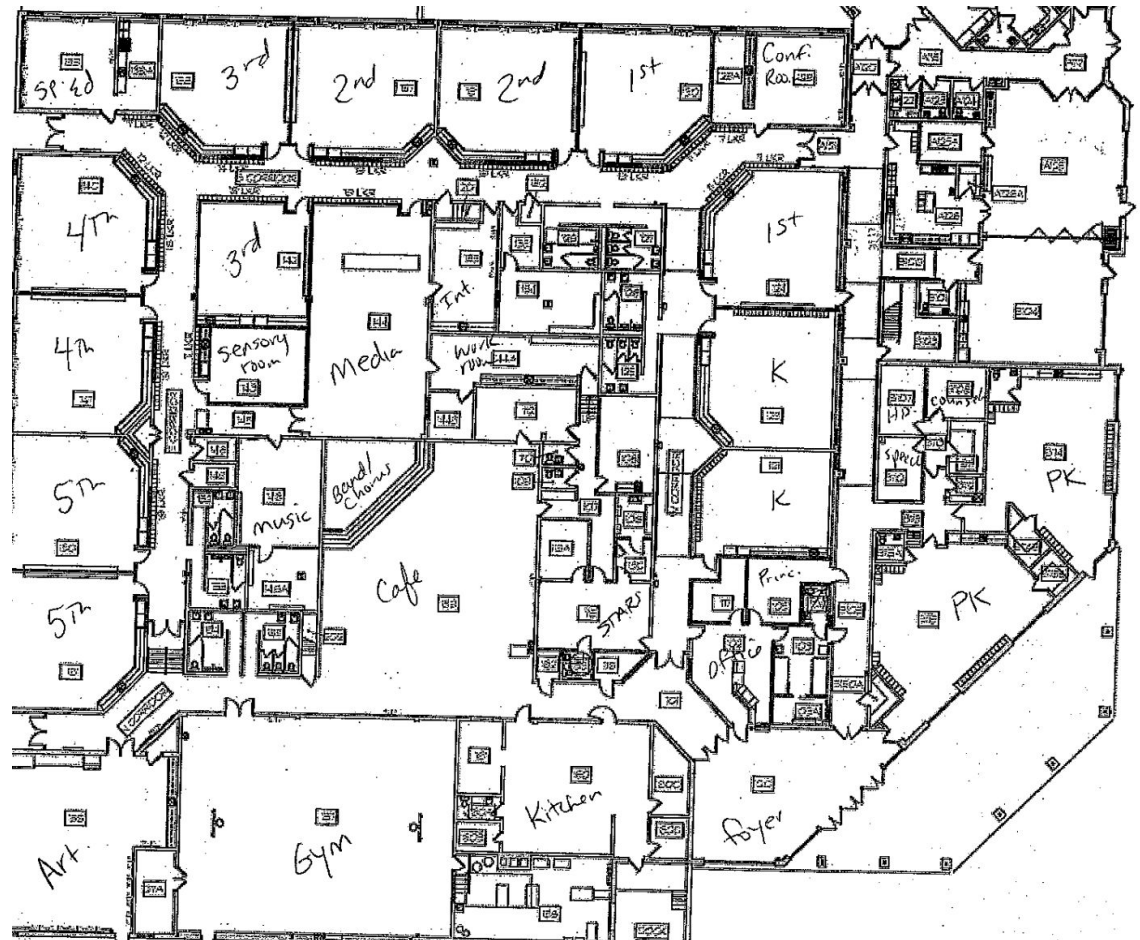
In Fiscal Year 2022, GCPS paid \$489.54 per pupil for utility costs at the six Northern district schools, while only paying \$297.60 per pupil in the south. Under Weighted Student Funding, this measure is important to manage as revenue must follow the student and Foundation Revenue is the funding program for this expense.

NOTE: Utility expenses included in analysis are phone, water, sewer, heat, electricity and internet.

# D. Facility Study

Grantsville Elementary has space within the existing facility to serve the existing Grantsville and Rt. 40 populations

- **Grantsville Facility=**  
48,862 square feet
- **Grantsville Projected SRC=** 380
- **Projected Enrollment for Rt.40/GV**  
**Combined:** 293 (per September 30, 2022 enrollment count)



# E. Transportation

- All bus routes in the Finzel area will be readjusted with all students on pre-k through 12th grade busses.
- Total ride time estimated to be 45-55 minutes (varies depending on residence).
- Students will arrive home 20 minutes later in the evening due to unload and load times at Grantsville.
- Families with children of multiple ages will have all children on the same bus.



# F. Educational Programs

## **Proposed Staffing Plan following Weighted Student Funding if Rt. 40 remains open for FY24:**

### **Rt. 40**

- **Pre-K program would move to Grantsville (GV)**
- **Reduction of a classroom teacher making 1 split grade**
- **Reduction of full-time counselor to 40%**
- **Reduction of 1 custodian by 50%**

### **Grantsville**

- **Reduction in full-time counselor to 60%**
- **Reduction in full-time media assistant to 60%**
- **Maintain full-time nurse by using ARP ESSER funding**
- **Implement 2 Pre-K classrooms that will serve both GV and Rt. 40 Pre-K students**

## **Proposed staffing plan following Weighted Student Funding if Rt. 40 closes for FY24:**

### **Grantsville**

- **2 classrooms per grade PK-5 with an average class size between 19-25**
- **Add Teaching Assistant Principal (50%/50%)**
- **Retain 1 full-time counselor**
- **Gain 1 full-time behavior coach (currently Rt. 40/GV are split)**
- **Retain 1 full-time nurse**
- **Resource teachers would no longer travel between Rt. 40/GV. Resources teachers would be full-time at GV**
- **GV would have 2 special education teachers and 2 special education assistants. Currently they have 1 of each**
- **Gain 1 secretary who will serve 50% of the time doing secretary duties and 50% in small group tutoring (Transitional Supplemental Instruction)**
- **Gain 1 custodian**



## F. Educational Programs

Grantsville and Rt. 40 are better together from an instructional lens using Weighted Student Funding.

- Two classes per grade which allows for increased teacher collaboration, departmentalization, instructional groupings, supports, etc.
- Students will have daily support from a full-time school nurse, counselor, behavior coach, and 2 administrators.
- Grantsville will retain their Title I status allowing for the school to continue Title I services as appropriate based on the Title I budget and rank order.
- Collaborative Pre-K classrooms in partnership with Head Start can be offered to both Pre-K populations
- Grantsville qualifies for Judy Center supports for families with children ages 0-5.

## F. Educational Programs

The board could consider other options to address the impacts of Weighted Student Funding by reducing programs and or services such as:

- Hickory Environment Education Center - \$500,000
- School-Sponsored Field Trips (including band & athletics) - \$250,000
- All CTE programs could potentially be moved or cut. - TBD
- Eliminating enrichment activities such as Robotics, Fine Arts Fair, Envirothon, Science Fair, National History Day. - \$250,000
- School-Sponsored Athletics - \$365,000

# G. Racial Composition

## ROUTE 40 ELEMENTARY

School Year	Total Students	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	African-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Unclassified
2022-2023	122	0	0	0	122	0	0
2021-2022	122	0	0	0	122	0	0
2020-2021	119	0	0	0	119	0	0
2019-2020	133	0	0	1	132	0	0
2018-2019	129	0	0	2	127	0	0
2017-2018	140	0	0	1	139	0	0
2016-2017	127	0	0	1	126	0	0
2015-2016	139	0	1	1	135	0	2
2014-2015	138	0	2	1	135	0	0
2013-2014	131	0	0	1	130	0	0
2012-2013	123	0	0	1	122	0	0

# G. Racial Composition

## GRANTSVILLE ELEMENTARY

School Year	Total Students	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	African-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Unclassified
2022-2023	171	0	1	2	166	2	0
2021-2022	166	0	0	2	162	1	1
2020-2021	172	0	0	1	171	0	0
2019-2020	188	0	0	1	186	1	0
2018-2019	191	0	1	1	189	0	0
2017-2018	203	0	1	2	200	0	0
2016-2017	236	0	1	3	232	0	0
2015-2016	236	1	1	4	229	1	0
2014-2015	223	1	0	1	221	0	0
2013-2014	228	1	0	0	227	0	0
2012-2013	238	1	0	2	234	1	0

# H. Financial Considerations

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future changes the funding formula.

- The formula for the Blueprint is weighted student funding. That means, the formula provides resources to local education agencies (LEAs) based on total student enrollment and on the enrollment of certain student subgroups.
- The Local Education Aid must be used to match the state revenue to provide specific amounts for each revenue program. No longer is there local flexibility to spend local dollars where and on what the Superintendent or Board of Education wishes.

## Weighted Student Funding Overallocation:

GCPS Staff analyzed fiscal year 2022 actual expenditures modeled by the Weighted Student Funding methodology.

System-wide, GCPS complied with the minimum expenditures at the school-level, however there is reallocation required amongst the schools to bring all into compliance. The analysis suggests that when combining Route 40 and Grantsville a total of \$881,839 was overallocated.

Revenue vs. Expense Analysis with Weighted Student Funding Methodology Applied  
Unrestricted Funding Actuals as of 6/30/2022

	Grantsville	Route Forty
<b>Enrollment:</b>		
Actual K-12 Enrollment (9/30/2021)	146	106
<b>Revenues</b>		
75% Model	1,599,351	1,155,357
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Total Actual Expenses	2,280,563	1,355,984
<b>Overallocated</b>	681,212	200,627
<b>Overallocated Percentage</b>	43%	17%

# H. Financial Considerations

## Operating Budget Savings:

- The estimated savings of Route 40 Closure (isolated from Swan Meadow closure decision):
  - Fixed Costs \$125,068
  - Positions Cut \$197,857
  - **Total = \$322,925**
- **Fixed Costs** include those expenses that are not determined by number of students attending, i.e. utilities, site licenses & leases, operations, and maintenance.
- **Positions** would be cut, but all staff would be retained and placed through the intent process. Other positions may be reallocated to other schools, to be determined.

# I. Student Relocations

All current Route 40 students will complete the 2022-23 school year at Route 40 Elementary.

For the 2023-24 school year:

- Students entering pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) through fifth grade will be automatically enrolled at Grantsville Elementary and begin attending on the first day of the school year.
- Students entering sixth grade will be automatically enrolled at Northern Middle School and begin attending on the first day of the school year.
- The district boundary for Grantsville will include all of the current Route 40 boundary. No other district changes are occurring.

NOTE: Regardless of the Board's decision, beginning in school year 2023-24, all Route 40 district 4-year-old Pre-K students will attend Grantsville. There will not be a Pre-K classroom at Route 40.

# J. Community Impact

There will be a full transition plan developed with stakeholder input. The initial plan includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Route 40 students and families would be provided an opportunity to tour the Grantsville facility. Students may be transported during the school day with another option in the evening.
- Route 40 staff will be provided additional time to prepare for their relocation both at the end of this school year and beginning of next.
- Additional resources would be available for staff to work collaboratively to prepare for the new school year.
- Route 40 students would attend summer programming at Grantsville.

The Route 40 building would transfer to County Government. GCPS cannot determine how the County will utilize the building.



# Total Savings to Capital & Operating Budgets

**School system decisions are dependant upon each other and decisions can not be made in isolation.**

- **Capital -**
  - **\$4,857,000** - Capital Budget savings for Local and State Governments if Route 40 Elementary closed.
- **Operating -**
  - **\$322,925** - Savings of closure of only Route 40 Elementary
    - With the Route 40 student enrollment attending Grantsville Elementary, the weighted student funding allocation will become compliant of the allowable allocation.
  - **\$385,445** - Savings of closure of only Swan Meadow School
  - **\$844,212** - Savings should both schools be closed at the same time

# Superintendent Review & Recommendation

The Superintendent is appreciative of the efforts of the Route 40 School Advisory Committee and of the staff who dedicated significant time and energy to study the data and make informed recommendations in the best interest of all students.

The resulting recommendations were not entered into lightly, rather the work was conducted in an earnest effort to improve the educational opportunities for all students, while operating facilities in the most cost-effective manner possible given the current realities of funding and the legislative mandates required within the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

To make the decisions noted in this presentation, the Superintendent carefully examined all information provided by the Route 40 School Advisory Committee, reviewed community feedback, directed staff to gather additional information, and considered the following guiding question:

- How will my recommendation affect all students in GCPS?

# Superintendent Review & Recommendation:

## **RECOMMENDATION**

After a thorough review of the school closure factors, prompted by declining enrollment and financial impacts on the school system as a whole, the Superintendent recommends to close Route 40 Elementary School at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year.