



Superintendent's Final Recommendation Regarding the School Closure of Swan Meadow 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 Swan Meadow School.

School Closure Advisory Committee Process

The Swan Meadow 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

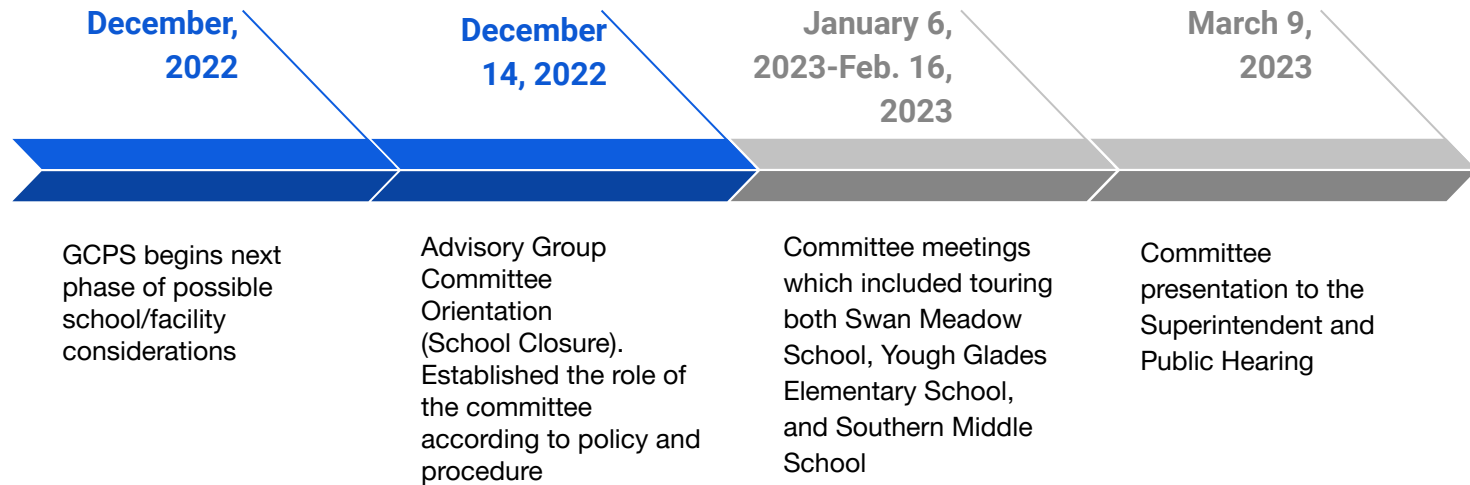
Per COMAR and Policy FCB, the impact of the following factors were considered in making my final recommendation:

- 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**

Swan Meadow School Advisory Committee Timeline

The advisory committee met approximately six (6) times over a 3 month period.

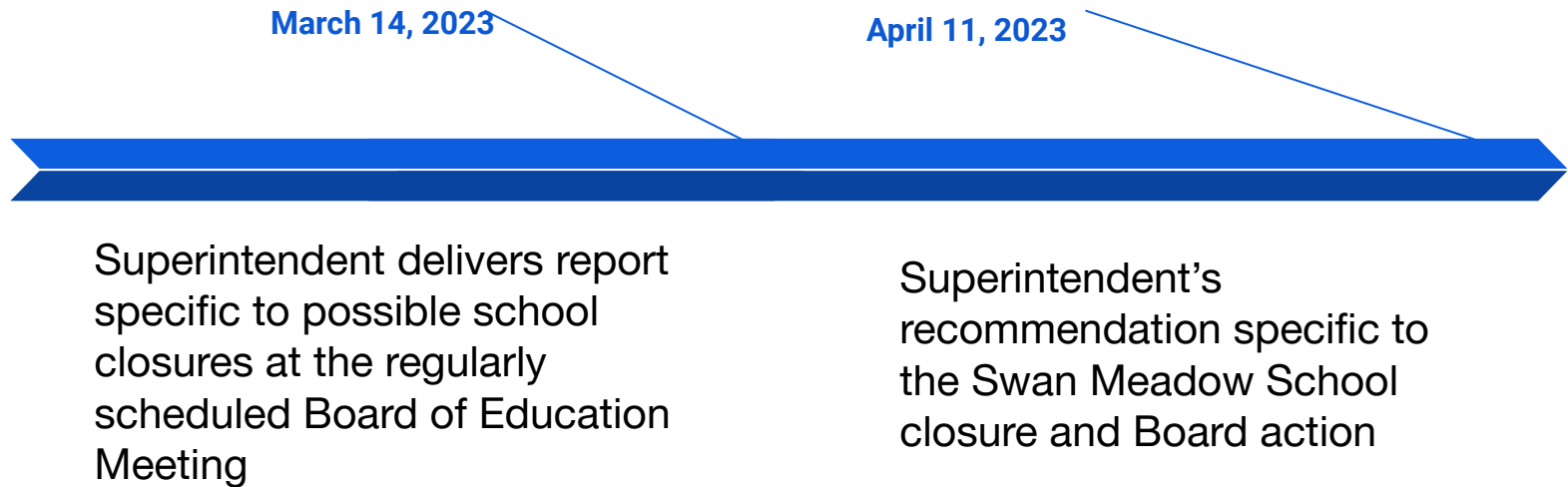
Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations:



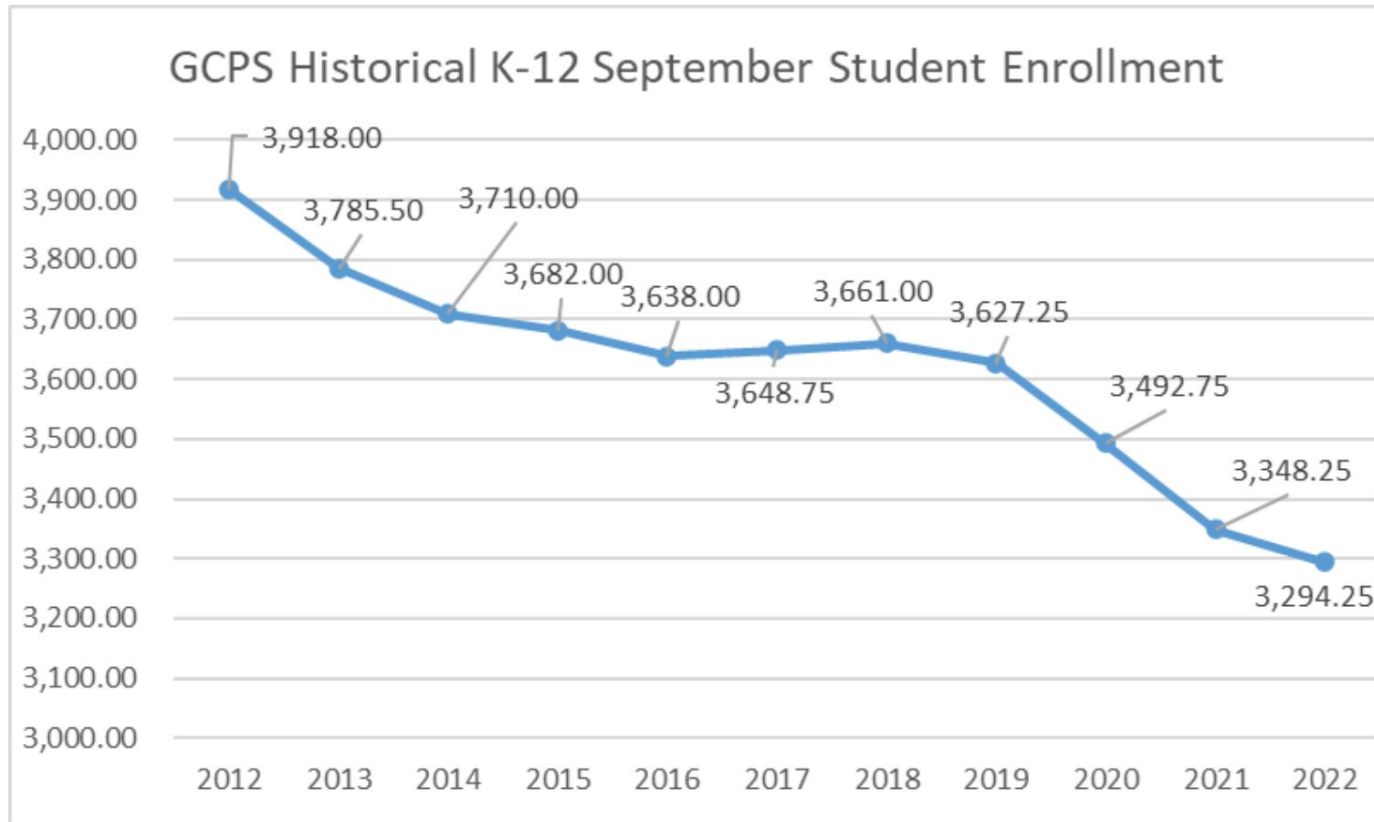
Swan Meadow School Advisory Committee Timeline Cont.

The advisory committee met six (6) times over a 3 month period.

Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations



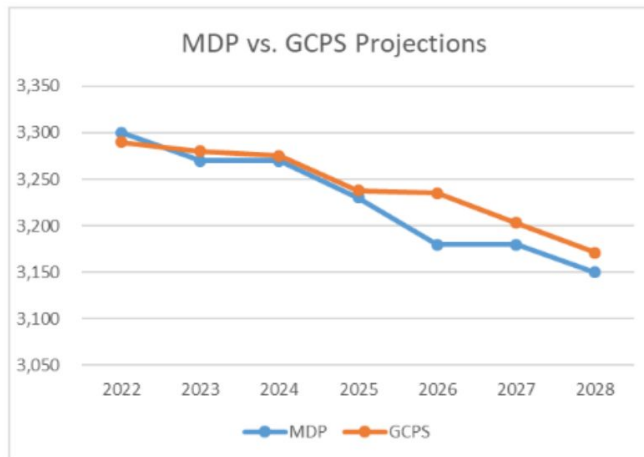
A. Enrollment Trends



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

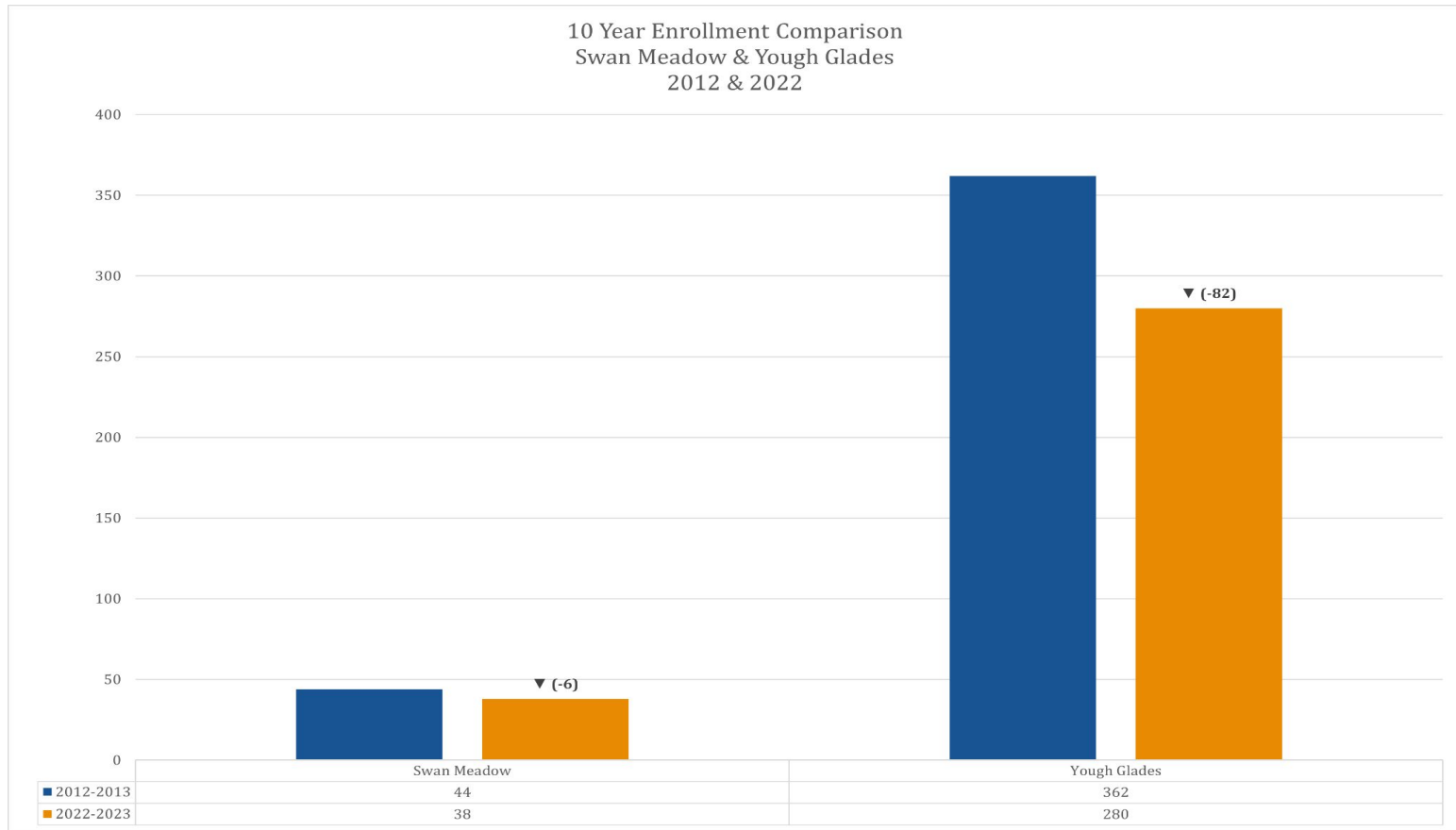
Each Spring MDP collaborates with each LEA to detail 10 year projections to assist with the preparation of Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). MDP publishes projections each year in August/September.

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: Swan Meadow and Yough Glades



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

Swan Meadow School (2021)

- MDCI = 2.98
- Rank 1 out of 1,383
(lowest score)

Yough Glades Elementary School (2021)

- MDCI = .41
- Rank 366 out of 1,383

C. Utility Costs

Below is a side by side comparison of the actual fiscal year 2022 utility expenses for both Swan Meadow and Yough Glades 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:** Swan Meadow is serviced by a well and due to location does not receive the same internet service as other schools.

Utility Analysis for Swan Meadow Closure			
Expenses as of 6/30/22			
	SM	YG	YG (with SM K-5)
Total Utility Expenses	20,899	89,873	89,873
9/30/21 Enrollment	44	271	301
Cost per student	\$ 474.98	\$ 331.63	\$ 298.58
Foundation Amount	\$ 7,390	\$ 7,390	\$ 7,390
% spent on utilities	6.4%	4.5%	4.0%

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

Yough Glades has space within the existing facility to serve the existing Yough Glades and Swan Meadow populations.

- **Yough Glades Elementary = 36,750 square feet**
- **Yough Glades Elementary SRC = 334**
- **Projected Enrollment for Swan Meadow/Yough Glades Combined: 303**
(per September 30, 2022 enrollment count)

Yough Glades currently has 2 classrooms per grade. This will be maintained in the 2022-2023 school year regardless of the Board of Education's decision. There is room in the existing classroom structure to accommodate Swan Meadow students. Average class size would range from 19-27.

E. Transportation

- No extra cost in transportation
- Ride times for some students may increase by 10-15 minutes
- K-8 students residing in the Swan Meadow attendance area will ride their current school bus either to Yough Glades or Southern Middle School



Note: Bus routes for students to be transported to Yough Glades would increase by approximately 10-15 minutes. There is sufficient capacity to transport Swan Meadow students to Yough Glades and Southern Middle School.

F. Educational Programs

Proposed Staffing Plan following Weighted Student Funding if Swan Meadow (SM) School remains open for FY24:

Swan Meadow:

- SM Teaching Principal will be cut and reallocated to another school.
- 1 SM teacher will be cut, effectively splitting students into two classrooms (K-4 and 5-8).
- 1 of the 2 remaining SM teachers will be offered a “Teacher in Charge” contract.
- Secretary will be responsible for secretary responsibilities as well as Instructional Assistant, Certified Medical Technician, and Media responsibilities. A nurse will only report as needed.

Yough Glades:

- Teaching Assistant Principal (50%/50%) will be added regardless of the decision on closure.
- YG resources teachers will serve Swan Meadow if Swan Meadow remains open.
- Crellin Pre-K4 students will attend YG regardless of the decision on Swan Meadow.

Proposed staffing plan following Weighted Student Funding if Swan Meadow closes for FY 24:

- SM Teaching Principal position will be cut and reallocated to another school.
- All 3 teacher positions will be cut from the operating budget.
- Secretary position will transfer to YG to serve as 50% Secretary and 50% Transitional Supplemental Instruction services.
- There are adequate teaching positions open due to attrition that all three staff will have an opportunity for a teaching position at another southern area school for SY23-24 if they choose to continue employment of GCPS.

F. Educational Programs

From an instructional lens, Yough Glades would be able to provide equitable educational programs to all YG and SM students:

- Two classes per grade which allows for increased teacher collaboration, departmentalization, instructional groupings and supports, etc.
- Students will have daily support from a full time school nurse, counselor, and 2 administrators.
- There will be a behavior coach serving all students 80% of their time.
- Yough Glades 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.
- All students will have access to full-time resources teachers (Art, PE, Media, and Music).
- Yough Glades will continue to qualify for Judy Center supports for families with children ages 0-5.
- Yough Glades will qualify as a Blueprint Community School which will provide comprehensive wrap around services to students and families.

F. Educational Programs

From an instructional lens, Southern Middle would be able to provide equitable educational programs to all Southern Middle and Swan Meadow students:

- Core content specialists at every grade level allowing for increased teacher collaboration, departmentalization, instructional groupings, supports, etc.
- All students will have daily support from a full-time school nurse, 2 school counselors, and 2 administrators.
- All students will have access to all grade level elective courses including Project Lead the Way, Computer Science, Theatre, etc.
- Students would have access to their grade level social studies/science standards with teachers certified in those content area.
- All students will have access to a full time media specialist.

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

SWAN MEADOW SCHOOL

School Year	Total Students	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	African-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Unclassified
2022-2023	38	0	0	0	38	0	0
2021-2022	44	0	1	0	43	0	0
2020-2021	45	0	1	0	44	0	0
2019-2020	59	0	1	0	57	0	1
2018-2019	50	0	1	0	49	0	0
2017-2018	43	0	0	0	43	0	0
2016-2017	42	0	0	0	42	0	0
2015-2016	44	0	0	0	44	0	0
2014-2015	42	0	0	0	41	1	0
2013-2014	36	0	0	0	36	0	0
2012-2013	44	0	0	1	43	0	0

G. Racial Composition

YOUGH GLADES ELEMENTARY

School Year	Total Students	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	African-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Unclassified
2022-2023	280	1	1	3	273	2	0
2021-2022	271	1	1	5	260	4	0
2020-2021	284	1	0	4	276	3	0
2019-2020	308	1	0	5	300	2	0
2018-2019	323	0	0	6	314	3	0
2017-2018	328	0	0	4	321	3	0
2016-2017	346	0	0	5	339	2	0
2015-2016	352	0	2	3	342	4	1
2014-2015	353	0	0	1	351	1	0
2013-2014	326	0	0	2	324	0	0
2012-2013	362	0	0	4	358	0	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 Swan Meadow and Yough Glades a total of \$621,076 was overallocated.

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

	Swan Meadow	Yough Glades
Enrollment:		
Actual K-12 Enrollment (9/30/2021)	44	248
Revenues		
75% Model	431,468	2,839,420
Expenses:		
Total Actual Expenses	563,544	3,328,420
Overallocated	132,076	489,000
Overallocated Percentage	31%	17%

H. Financial Considerations

Operating Budget Savings:

- The estimated savings of Swan Meadow Closure (isolated of the Route Forty closure decision):
 - Fixed Costs \$119,855
 - Positions Cut \$265,590
 - **Total = \$385,445**
- **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 Swan Meadow students will complete the 2022-23 school year at Swan Meadow School.

For the 2023-24 school year:

- Students entering pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) through fifth grade will be automatically enrolled at Yough Glades Elementary and begin attending on the first day of the school year.
- Students entering sixth through eighth grades will be automatically enrolled at Southern Middle School and begin attending on the first day of the school year.
- Students entering ninth grade will be automatically enrolled at Southern High School and begin attending on the first day of the school year.
- The district boundary for Yough Glades will include all of the current Swan Meadow boundary. No other district changes are planned.

J. Community Impact

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

- Swan Meadow students and families would be provided an opportunity to tour the Yough Glades, Southern Middle, and Southern High facilities. Students may be transported during the school day with another option in the evening.
- Swan Meadow 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.
- Swan Meadow students would attend summer programming with the Yough Glades student population.

The Swan Meadow building would transfer to County Government. GCPS cannot determine how the County will utilize the building.

Superintendent Review & Recommendation

The Superintendent is appreciative of the efforts of the Swan Meadow 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 Swan Meadow School Advisory Committee, reviewed community feedback, directed staff to gather additional information, and considered the following guiding questions:

- How will my recommendation affect all students in GCPS?
- At what point is a small school too small?

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 Swan Meadow School at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year.