

Route 40 Elementary School Advisory Committee Findings Report

March 2023

What components deem a school necessary for closure? Is it poor quality of education or low performing test scores? According to COMAR 13A.02.09 and Garrett County Schools Policy FCB, Student Enrollment Trends, Building Conditions, Utility Costs, Facility Study, Transportation, Educational Programs, Racial Composition, Financial Consideration, Student Relocation, and Community Impact are the factors that are considered. The Route 40 Elementary School Advisory Committee (referred to as The Committee) met for the first time on December 14, 2022 and was tasked with researching each of those factors as they relate to the potential closure of Route 40 Elementary School (referred to as Route 40). The Committee has met almost weekly, working diligently to research each factor thoroughly, in an attempt to not overlook anything of vital consideration. The following are the findings:

Student Enrollment Trends

From the Enrollment Trends presented at the February 2022 Garrett County Public Schools (GCPS) Board Meeting, the enrollment at Route 40 is projected to be steady through 2029. The current enrollment based on a Pre-K through 5 grade model is 122 with a 64.2% facility usage and in 2029 is projected to have an enrollment of 123 with a 64.7% facility usage.

From the Enrollment Trends presented at the February 2022 GCPS Board Meeting, the enrollment at Grantsville Elementary (referred to as Grantsville) is projected to decrease through 2029. The current enrollment based on a Pre-K through 5 grade model is 171 with a 49.7% (45%) facility usage and in 2029 is projected to have an enrollment of 138 with a 40% (36.3%) facility usage. Grantsville's Current Facility Utilization in parentheses is based on Mr. Richard Wesolowski's upgraded SRC at Grantsville to 380 students, up from the estimated 344 students stated in the February presentation.

The Garrett County Commissioners published the Garrett County Economic Development Strategic Plan (Draft, January 2023), in which the school-age population predictions show an increase of approximately 250 school-age children by 2030 and increase of approximately 800 school-age children by 2045.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	% Change 2016- 2020	% Change 2020- 2045
Total Population	29,677	29,516	29,376	29,235	29,155	29,698	30,254	30,506	30,756	30,997	-2%	6%
Under 5	1,428	1,403	1,436	1,423	1,439	1,445	1,508	1,585	1,611	1,627	1%	13%
5 to 19 years	5,231	4,978	4,888	4,742	4,608	4,904	4,862	5,009	5,219	5,404	-12%	17%
20 to 34 years	4,828	4,870	4,830	4,765	4,791	4,559	4,772	4,851	4,719	4,659	-1%	-3%
35 to 54 years	7,754	7,560	7,370	7,216	7,074	6,951	6,953	6,962	7,210	7,515	-9%	6%
55 to 64 years	4,493	4,579	4,625	4,653	4,716	4,524	4,155	3,904	3,820	3,838	5%	-19%
65 years and over	5,943	6,126	6,227	6,436	6,527	7,315	8,004	8,195	8,177	7,954	10%	22%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning

Furthermore, the Garrett County Commissioners published the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan (Nov. 2022), indicating that the Casselman River watershed is projected to add approximately 288 housing units through 2040 (pages 2-14; A-5). The plan indicates optimistic plans for population growth in the Grantsville Area and Casselman River Watershed. There are plans for affordable housing with access to I-68 and the US-219 project as well as plans for additional water needs and upgraded wastewater treatment facilities due to projected growth. In addition, it predicts planned and anticipated population growth in the current Grantsville and Route 40 school districts.

With conflicting data pertaining to student enrollment - it is very difficult to ascertain exactly what future enrollment will be at Route 40, Grantsville, or Route 40 and Grantsville combined. Why isn't the predicted growth being prepared for by the County Government reflected in the GCPS enrollment trends?

Potential Impacts:

In looking at facility utilization, historically, when Garrett County has closed schools, it has caused unanticipated overcrowding in receiving schools that has led to additional expenses of portable classrooms. If Grantsville were to become overcrowded, Mr. Wesolowski indicated that students in the current Grantsville district could be redistricted to eliminate any potential overcrowding.

Current parents of Route 40 students have expressed intentions to move to non-public schooling or relocation if Route 40 Elementary is closed. Instead of bolstering the enrollment at Grantsville, this could create additional declines in enrollment.

There is concern about Pre-k enrollment spots at Grantsville for students in the current Route 40 district. While the Committee was assured that all students who apply for Pre-k will be eligible for a seat, the location of where they would be eligible to attend is unknown. What happens when you have siblings in two different elementary schools? This could lead parents to search out non-public schooling options that provide access to education in locations more accessible for them and their support systems.

Route 40 has the potential for a Daycare that would allow the creation of a pre-k (3) partnership that would align with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. A daycare and pre-k (3) would increase the utilization of Route 40.

Route Forty Enrollment Analysis

Historical Enrollment

	2011	2017	2022	2029*
Garrett County Public Schools	4,077	3,809	3,500	3,339
Route Forty Elementary	129	140	122	123
Grantsville Elementary	237	203	171	138

NOTE: This enrollment figure includes PreKindergarten & 2029 is Maryland Department of Planning projection.

SY2022-23

Current at Route Forty Elem	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Current Enrollment	15	17	15	26	14	23	12	122
Number of Classroom Teachers	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	7.00
Student to Teacher Ratio	15.00	17.00	15.00	26.00	14.00	23.00	12.00	17.43

Current at Grantsville Elem	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Current Enrollment	21	25	24	23	26	26	26	171
Number of Classroom Teachers	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.30	8.30
Student to Teacher Ratio	10.50	25.00	24.00	23.00	26.00	26.00	20.00	20.60

SY2023-2024

Projected Consolidated	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Projected Enrollment	35	47	48	39	48	41	48	306
Number of Classroom Teachers	2.00	2.00	2.30	2.00	2.30	2.00	2.30	14.90
Student to Teacher Ratio	17.50	23.50	20.87	19.50	20.87	20.50	20.87	20.54

Original Provided 12/14/2022 to the Advisory Committee for School Closure by GCPS, revised provided 12/16/2022.

The enrollment analysis provided to the committee shows that there are cohorts that are with greater class sizes. To offset this, it is shown that $\frac{1}{3}$ of a teacher is provided to these classes to bring down the student to teacher ratio. In analyzing student to teacher

ratios, it is important to note that these are not class sizes. These will be class sizes of 24 students each and $\frac{2}{3}$ of each day the student to teacher ratio will be 24:1.

Building Conditions

Route 40 was built in 1956 and served as a 1-8 school serving the areas of Finzel, Longstretch, and Avilton in Eastern Garrett County. Upon the construction of Northern Middle School, it became a K-5 school. In the early 1990's pre-k was added. In 2003 Route 40 underwent a complete renovation, and continues to serve students in grades pre-k through 5.

In looking at Grade Band Alignment, if the Board of Education members vote to realign the grade bands, Route 40 has an optimal location for 6th grade without additional construction. In addition, Route 40 has space for a daycare that could be accredited and partnered with the school system, as outlined in Pillar 1 of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

A Facilities Inventory dated 6/30/2022 gave Route 40 a "Good" rating. The IAC Facility Maintenance Assessment Scored the school as "Not Adequate" with a 65.64%. Mr. Wesolowski indicated that this is in part due to the HVAC/Air Conditioning upgrades considered as necessary upgrades; Mrs. Alison Sweitzer (referred to as Mrs. Sweitzer) indicated that the State of MD Healthy Schools Fund is assisting school districts with HVAC upgrades.

Among the Facility Needs are (1) Boiler Replacement/HVAC, (2) Roof Repairs, (3) Parking Lot Curb Replacement and Resurfacing, and (4) Retaining Wall at rear of building. The Boiler Replacement/HVAC has been on the CIP since 2017, with design and contingency in FY 2019, and slated project completion in FY 2020. This maintenance project has been deferred multiple times with a current project completion set for FY 2025 with a current estimated local cost of \$450,000. The Roof Repairs are slated with a project completion in FY 2025. The maintenance has been deferred 1 year with a current estimated local cost of \$1,000,000. The Parking Lot Curb Replacement and Resurfacing is slated for project completion in FY 2025 with an estimated local cost of \$200,000. The Retaining Wall at the rear of the building is not on the CIP because it can be covered in the operating budget. Mr. Wesolowski indicated the most recent estimate to fix the wall is \$25,000.

Mr. Wesolowski provided information that the newly renovated Grantsville has a State Rated Capacity of 380 (based on the building plan of PreK-6). It has space to accommodate two classrooms per grade as well as space to accommodate sixth grade,

should grade banding be approved. If grade banding is approved, Grantsville will require additional construction to create 2, 6th grade classrooms. Currently Art and Music share a classroom at Grantsville. The grade band floor plan shows a solution with a Classroom for Music, yet not in the current location it is located. The current location was constructed with sound panels to help absorb excess noise, yet the music room will be relocated under the grade band floor plan. In addition, the solution stated at the Grade Band Alignment Meeting was “Art or Music on a cart”. Neither solutions are equitable to current Route 40 or the proposed Northern Elementary School.

Even after renovation, Grantsville still requires work to be able to offer equitable environments. If Grade Banding occurs, additional construction will be needed at Grantsville. Route 40 can offer pre-k through 6 without additional construction.

Utility Costs

The following was provided as the Utility Costs for Route 40:

FY2022 Utilities for Route Forty Elementary	
Internet	2,306.00
Elevator Phone	658.07
Heat	29,728.00
Electricity	25,639.00
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	\$ 58,331.07
9/30/2021 Enrollment	122.00
Cost per student	\$ 478.12

The following are a list of things that were determined to be saved if Route 40 were to close.

Route Forty Fixed Cost Expenses to be saved:			
for 2/28/2023 as of 6/30/2022			
Category	Activity	Object	Amount
201	163 Utility - Internet		2,306
202	181 MFD - Copier		3,917
202	181 Substitute for Principal		971
205	216 License - Destiny + ProQuest		1,627
205	229 License - School Pace + OG		5,819
205	232 License for iReady Math & Reading Interventions		7,310
210	600 Operations (less salary & fringe)		76,870
211	700 Maintenance		22,084
	School Budget Allocation		4,164
			\$ 125,068

Further explanation is needed on copier, substitute for principal, operations, and maintenance but the information was not received until 2/28/23 - 2 days before the findings from the Committee were due.

The following are the questions, answers, and thoughts from a review of the fixed cost expenses:

Not sure how there would be a copier savings - wouldn't the school getting the increased enrollment need an additional copier? – Each school has a MFD copier, this unit is more expensive than the traditional B/W copier, so while there would be a savings on a MFD copier, any additional copier would be B/W. This would result in some cost savings, but the cost of any copies made at Route 40 would just transfer to Grantsville to reflect the increased enrollment. So while there would be savings for Route 40, there would be increased expenditure at Grantsville to reflect this.

How often is the Sub for Principal really used? – As a teaching principal at Rt 40 substitutes are required, but we have been told that they have rarely been able to find someone to accept the substitute job, so once again, some savings but we don't believe it would be equal to the amount quoted.

Are the school licenses site based or enrollment based? – We were told that these licenses listed are site based, and that there are others that are enrollment based but are not listed. With that said, we have found that there are pieces to some of these licenses that are enrollment based so we are unsure as to if the site vs enrollment costs were separated, or if the cost savings quoted are inflated.

What are the operations and maintenance - are there positions being cut? – These are positions that would be cut, but the staff members holding the positions will be relocated to other buildings as it was stated that all current staff is needed.

What is the school budget allocation - is it the same for every school? – This is an amount that will be cut from the operating budget, while there are certain portions that

are enrollment based, what was listed is an amount allocated to each school to operate certain programs in which each school receives funding. We would like to think that if a school is increasing in capacity, that the amount from the closing school would transfer to the receiving school as they will have increased costs associated with a larger enrollment and staff.

Facility Study

To date, and as far as the Committee could find, there has been no specific facility study about the closure of Route 40 or the Grade-banding proposals.

In addition, there has been neither a modeling of money reappropriated with new funding rules nor modeling of cost savings or projections for educational programs. The Committee has asked many times for these numbers and been continuously told by Mrs. Sweitzer that she cannot provide the answer to those questions.

Since 2011 there have been several Needs Assessment and Facilities Master Plans completed by private firms costing the school system and taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars for these studies. In the past 12 years GCPS has followed very few, if any of the recommendations they paid for. The school closures that have been made have not addressed the scope of the problem. The Master Plans' guidance of redistricting to accommodate the overcrowding of schools on the southern end and the underutilization of facilities in the northern end has not been a consideration.

With so many costs/savings unknown - it is very difficult to ascertain what the financial impact/benefit of closing Route 40 would actually be.

Transportation

The Route 40 district currently has 3 school bus routes that only service the Route 40 Students. Mr. Wesolowski was asked for bussing options and provided 2 options of transporting Route 40 District students to Grantsville.

Scenario A resulted in no change to current bus routes. Students from the Route 40 District will continue to have their own buses serving only pre-k to grade 5 students. Buses will arrive as a "second wave" at Grantsville Elementary School in the morning as these buses do not transport secondary students and will pick up first in the afternoon. There would be an increase of time on the bus of 10-15 minutes. It is also important to note that current Grantsville students will continue to ride pre-k to grade 12 buses.

The Committee believes that current Route 40 district students continuing to ride pre-k through 5 only buses as well as arriving on a second wave and leaving first could create

backlash as the students from Grantsville do not have that opportunity. Route 40 students will be on buses longer which could lead to increased behavior issues. There will also be an increase in transportation costs to the county as the buses are traveling further distances. In addition, continuing with separate buses could create childcare issues for parents in the Route 40 district. Families with older children would be unable to assist with before and after school care of younger siblings as the different bus times would not allow for it to occur.

Scenario B readjusts all bus routes in the Route 40 district. All students would be riding pre-k through 12 buses. The total ride time (depending on residence) is estimated to be 45-55 minutes. Route 40 district students would arrive home 20 minutes later in the evening due to unload and load time at Grantsville. This would allow families with multiple aged children to have all children on the same bus. There would be a modest cost savings for GCPS as there would be a reduction in time and mileage for the bus contractors, but that exact savings amount is not known.

There have been occasions when just the Route 40 District was closed due to inclement weather. Mr. Wesolowski indicated that if it is not safe for one student, then none will go. This could cause increased disruption to all Northern End schools as instead of just Route 40 area students not attending, it would be the new Grantsville Area District not attending.

Potential Impacts:

Up to half of all students in the Northern End not attending school due to inclement weather near the county's border.

Without knowing exactly which scenario the GCPS would select, it is difficult to state the exact impact of closing Route 40. The only certainty is that current Route 40 district students will have longer bus rides.

Educational Programs

Route 40 and Grantsville offer the same instructional programming and resources. Route 40 students attending Grantsville would have access to supports that are not currently in place at Route 40 such as a Full-time Nurse, Full-time Behavior Coach, Additional Intervention Teachers, Judy Center Support, and Title I Support. Two classrooms per grade at Grantsville could benefit from departmentalization opportunities currently not available at either school and provide increased instructional coaching opportunities for Grantsville teachers. Two classrooms per grade at Grantsville would offer collaborative planning and professional learning for the teachers, aligning to the

Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

Potential Impacts:

The Committee is concerned that Grantsville may not be able to maintain the additional support positions. Applying weighted student funding to the FY 2023 budget, Grantsville would be over-allocated by \$681,000. The addition of the students from Route 40 could change the future status of Grantsville's Title I rank/status, causing a reduction in Title I funds. This could impact Grantsville's ability to provide a full-time nurse, a Judy Center, and additional intervention teachers.

Mrs. Sweitzer indicated that it currently cannot be determined if Grantsville would be over-allocated with the additional students from Route 40 but if the consolidated Grantsville Elementary School would be over-allocated, program offerings or staffing positions would be affected.

The Committee also wonders if Route 40 can continue to afford to maintain its positions and programs. Applying weighted student funding to the FY 2023 budget, Route 40 would be over-allocated by \$200,627. If the school would be over-allocated, program offerings or staffing positions could be affected at Route 40.

As Physical Education, Art, and Music are currently shared positions between Grantsville and Route 40, how is it possible to continue to provide students with the same amount of instructional time? There will be students losing resource time that they currently have.

There has been no model provided to show that, even with consolidation, students at Grantsville or Route 40 would be offered the same educational opportunities afforded to them currently.

Racial Composition

Racial Composition is not a factor that is influenced by the closure of Route 40.

Financial Consideration

The Maryland Blueprint for Education mandates that a minimum of 75% of base student funding follow the student to the school level. All schools must pay all costs of running

the school including: Salaries of all employees (including employer tax portions, insurance, and pension matches), Utilities, and Supplies.

Scenario: Student-Weighted Funding with Current Populations					
Revenue vs. Expense Analysis with Weighted Student Funding Methodology Applied					
Garrett County Public Schools					
Unrestricted Funding Actuals as of 6/30/2022					
		System-wide		Grantsville	Route Forty
Enrollment:		9/30/2020	9/30/2021		
Actual K-12 Enrollment		3,489.75	3,348.25	146	106
Revenues		Totals	Non-Direct		
75% Model		52,111,954	17,202,603	1,599,351	1,155,357
Expenses:					
Total Actual Expenses		51,796,729	12,798,487	2,280,563	1,355,984
Overallocated (Underallocated)		(315,225)	(4,404,116)	681,212	200,627
Overallocated (Underallocated) Percentage			-26%	43%	17%

The scenario was created using current enrollment and the FY'23 school budgets. The scenario indicates that Grantsville Elementary School and Route 40 Elementary School would have been given more budget money than mandated by law. If the funding laws would have been implemented for the 2022-2023 school year, Grantsville Elementary would have been allocated \$681,212 too much. If the funding laws would have been implemented for the 2022-2023 school year, Route 40 Elementary would have been allocated \$200,627 too much. Both schools are financially overallocated.

Enrollment affects the base amount of the budget for the schools. Per pupil allotments and demonstrated student needs also alter the base of the budget. Projections show substantial decreases, depending on the model. This may cause further inability to fund positions or programs, creating inequity among resources offered at other schools in Garrett County. Enrollment may further decline beyond expectations as parents have expressed interest in non-public education through private schooling opportunities or home schooling opportunities.

The following percentages provided for FARMS Rates are from each respective school's SIP which reflect data collected as of 10.31.2022. Grantsville is a Title I School with a FARMS rate of 45.93%. Route 40 is Not a Title I School but has a FARMS rate of

42.86%. A combined population would equate to a 44.5% FARMS rate. 40% is the minimum eligibility under Title I for finding.

Combining Schools could change the rank among Title 1 Schools in the County, changing funding for Grantsville, leaving it over-allocated. In addition, there have not been any exact numbers provided to accurately determine what the exact financial impact/benefit is of closing Route 40.

Student Relocation

All students in the Route 40 district would attend Grantsville. Some parents have already indicated that the closure of Route 40 would cause them to seek alternative non-public education or to relocate. If the school would become overcrowded, the Committee was told that students in the current Grantsville district would be redistricted to other elementary school(s).

The relocation of Route 40 students to Grantsville could create challenges for Route 40 district parents that will not be known until the relocation occurs. In addition, if the relocation results in future overcrowding, current Grantsville district students could be subjected to relocation - this is not something that has been communicated to current Grantsville district families.

Community Impact

The Committee wants to stress that it has been made clear that this is a School Closure - NOT a consolidation. It is evident that Grantsville and Route 40 Elementary Schools are both overallocated financially and both need more enrollment to support programs. It has been presented that only Route 40 is not financially viable. The Committee strongly feels that this should have been presented as a consolidation partnership with the opportunity to blend just as Friendsville and Accident may potentially do and Broad Ford and Southern Middle will as part of the overarching grade-banding plan.

A new school name with new school colors, as well as blending of staff and transportation would create a sense of ownership for all students, teachers, parents, and community members. The current Grantsville students are already in the school, returning after Christmas Break. The discussion to close Route 40 was already occurring. Why was the education of the current Grantsville students disrupted mid-year when ALL students could have entered the building TOGETHER for the first time in Fall

2023? In addition, all the teachers could have entered the building TOGETHER as a new cohesive staff. With what has already occurred, Route 40 students will be the “new” kids.

Impact on Students

These students have had constant changes during their education. This is the 1st year that this year’s third grade class has had a “normal” year. This is the 1st year that this year’s second grade class has had a “normal” year. This is the 1st year that this year’s first grade class has had a “normal” year. This year’s 4th grade class has not had a normal year since kindergarten. This county has made a lot of progress as shown in academic testing results in recovering from COVID, but more change will not improve the trend.

The mental health of the students have been affected. Many have suffered increased anxiety from COVID and readjusting to “normal” education. Many are already showing increased anxiety of the fear of “their” school closing and having to go to a new school.

Route 40 offers girls in grades 3-5 the Girls on the Run Program and is planning to implement Hero Boys (a similar program for boys). The North 40 First Lego League Team has roots based in Route 40 as all of the students on the team attended Route 40. Their success in the First Lego League program is among the top in the county as they have continuously won the Garrett County Qualifier as well as being named Champions Finalists at the Maryland State Competition. This year’s team is presenting their project to Maryland State Superintendent Choudry. The impact closing Route 40 will have on the students involved in these programs cannot be measured.

Impact on Families

The closure of Route 40 creates increased hardship for families with childcare. Closing the school eliminates the potential for a daycare facility in the area. In addition, there will be fewer pre-k enrollment spots at Grantsville for those within the Route 40 district - while the number of pre-k spots are the same, they are at the Grantsville location. Some families in the Route 40 district may not get spots that they otherwise would if Route 40 is open. This could lead parents to not enroll students in pre-k leading to learning delays and deficits that will need addressed when they enter Kindergarten.

Route 40 annually holds the Coins for Caring Drive, a Christmas coin drive that enables students to give back to local families. It is connected to PBIS and the

Character Traits of Caring and Giving. Students usually raise \$1000 or more each year to provide Christmas gifts for students in our school.

Every year the PTO/PIT sponsors activities for students and their families. Activities and events include the Halloween Social, Santa's Workshop, Family Movie Night, Annual Red Cross Blood Drive, Spring Easter Egg Hunt, Family Game Night, and School Camp Fire. These are held at Route 40 and give students and families an environment to interact together and foster a sense of community for our students. These events also provide high school students opportunities to earn service learning hours.

Impact on Community

Grantsville, Accident, and Friendsville have town centers. The community encompassed in the Route 40 district has the school as the center for our children. Route 40 serves as a polling place for the community residents and has for years. Community sports groups such as the Grantsville Little League use the gym for early spring and inclement weather practice sessions. The Long Stretch 5K held its first event last year with over 100 participants. There were numerous additional family and community members as well as community and high school student volunteers. Closing the school will eliminate access to much needed athletic space for the children of our area.

Annually, the Parent Involvement Team (PIT) holds a blood drive - closing the school will eliminate a much needed blood drive. The Divine Mercy Parish in Frostburg holds a shoe drive to benefit schools local to the parish - Route 40 received 60 pairs of shoes from the drive. They were distributed to students who needed them and Route 40 was able to share the wealth, providing shoes to students in other Garrett County Schools upon the request of student services staff.

Dr. Jennifer Rankin has created a unique relationship between Route 40 and interns from the Frostburg State University Education Department. Interns spend time creating STEM activities to conduct with Route 40 students at the annual Halloween Social. This provides Route 40 students with increased STEM knowledge and allows the interns to practice their instructional skills.

The closure of Route 40 eliminates the potential for a daycare business which would contribute to the Route 40 budget shortfall as well as eliminates employment opportunities for members of the community.

The Committee wants to stress that there is a feeling of distrust between the community and the GCPS. In addition, the Committee was promised transparency from the GCPS, yet it was not until members of the Committee attended the Grade Band Alignment Meeting that they learned that there is only one proposed Grade Band option that allows Route 40 to remain open. While they were reassured that their concerns were duly noted, they believe that the feeling of distrust that has been created will not diminish.

The closure of Route 40 will create an impact on the community that will be felt for generations. Route 40 is the center of the community in Eastern Garrett County.

“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.”– Socrates

As you review the information presented by the Committee and reflect on the public comment that will be given related to the closure of Route 40, the Committee asks that you consider the following:

Not enough information has been provided.

- *Will Grantsville Elementary still be over-allocated if the schools are combined??*
- *How much is really saved by closing Route 40 Elementary School??*
- *What cuts would be made to resolve the over funding??*
- *Will our children be given equitable opportunities to others in the county??*
- *Which enrollment and community growth data are accurate??*
- *How many students will leave Garrett County Public Schools if Route 40 closes??*
- *If Route 40 is closed, will the same community opportunities exist for our students and families??*

There are currently many moving parts and unknowns in GCPS. Not only are they unable to provide a solid plan for the merging of Route 40 and Grantsville, but also not even an exact plan for what the Grade Band will be. Without a solid plan, any changes will not be successful and could have a negative chain reaction.

“Education is the key to the vitality and sustainability of our community.” - GCPS Vision