

Asheville Primary School Study
Spring 2021

The Asheville City Board of Education is considering the potential closure of Asheville Primary School and relocation of the Montessori program to Hall Fletcher Elementary School effective for the 2021-22 School Year. The Board is not considering selling the APS building at this time.

I. Reasons to Consider Closure of Asheville Primary School Effective 2021-2022 School Year:

A. Why Schools are Kept Open or Closed

Schools are kept open for the following reasons:

- Geographical necessity
- Outstanding performance, and/or
- Justifiable enrollment numbers

In contrast, schools are closed for the following reasons:

- Low enrollment
- Better educational opportunities, and/or
- Economical considerations

B. Improved Educational Opportunities for Students in the City of Asheville

Closing Asheville Primary and implementing the Montessori program at Hall Fletcher Elementary will improve the educational opportunities for students by;

- Reallocation of expenses to maintain a building that is in need of costly repairs to directly support teaching and learning.
- Students enrolled in the Montessori program will be on a campus that is recently updated, safe, and well equipped to foster a positive learning experience.
- The Montessori program will continue uninterrupted for students currently enrolled when relocated to HFE.
- A separate school number and separate administrators are not necessary to run a specialized program on a school campus. A Montessori-specific lead/administrator will continue.
- The administrators of the Montessori program and HFE are collaborating to maximize the opportunities for all students to benefit from the positive components of the HFE and Montessori communities.
- The majority of the current APS staff will be reassigned to the HFE campus and supported in the transition to a new campus.

C. Enrollment Compared to Other ACS Schools by Grade Level

1. 2017-18 School Year
 - a) APS K 7.25% (25/345)
 - b) APS 1st 4.16% (15/361)
 - c) APS 2nd 1.88% (7/372)

- d) APS 3rd - N/A
- 2. 2018-19 School Year
 - a) APS K 9.76% (32/328)
 - b) APS 1st 6.16% (22/357) - Cohort decrease
 - c) APS 2nd 4.62% (16/346) - Cohort increase
 - d) APS 3rd 1.44% (5/347) - Cohort decrease
- 3. 2019-20 School Year
 - a) APS K 10.54% (35/332)
 - b) APS 1st 9.66% (31/321) - Cohort decrease
 - c) APS 2nd 7.82% (28/358) - Cohort increase
 - d) APS 3rd 2.83% (10/353) - Cohort decrease
- 4. 2020-21 School Year
 - a) APS K 8.31% (25/301)
 - b) APS 1st 9.54% (29/304) - Cohort decrease
 - c) APS 2nd 8.03% (24/299) - Cohort decrease
 - d) APS 3rd 6.96% (24/345) - Cohort decrease
- 5. 2021-22 School Year
 - a) The students enrolled in the Montessori program at HFE will be included in the enrollment at HFE

D. Building Cost of Repair

- 1. Current Indoor Air Quality and Impact
 - a) Air Quality Testing
 - b) Mold Remediation Services
 - (1) Mold Abatement Four Phases
- 2. Critical Needs - Capital Outlay (total estimated cost \$201,792)
 - a) New domestic hot water system (includes demolition of the existing system)
 - b) Replace the main gym sloped membrane roof, and install a new gutter system
 - c) Repair wood framed wall at ground level beside chiller to include removal and replacement of the deteriorated wood framing, replacement of interior painted gypsum, and termite treatment.
- 3. High Priority Needs - Capital Outlay (Total estimated cost \$5,681,423)
 - a) Courtyard sewer line replacement (including demolition)
 - b) Storefront window replacement (including demolition)
 - c) HVAC system replacement
 - d) Remove and replace 200 LF of existing hydronic pipe insulation, inspect existing piping and proceed allowance to remove and replace 100 LF of domestic copper line
 - e) 650' LF x 1 ¼" of copper water service line to include trenching and patch and repair to the existing sidewalk
 - f) Remove and replace existing door exiting hardware at the common path of travel and exterior classroom egress doors

- g) Remove and replace existing not-compliant steel guardrail with steel system welded to the existing steel structure
 - h) Remove and replace existing non-compliant steel handrails with wall mounted steel system
 - i) Removal fuel oil tank in crawl space and install new positive ventilation. Provide allowance for asbestos abatement
 - j) Install new aluminum canopy type walkway awnings
 - k) Classroom upgrades to include casework, IT, and MEP.
 - l) Electrical service and lighting upgrades
 - m) Renovate 6 group toilets to include demolition of the wall and floor tile, replacement of 6 LF galvanized branch line entombed in CMU with copper, new fixtures, partitions, epoxy floor, tile, and paint
4. Spring 2020, Summer 2020, and Fall 2020 Town Halls to address parent and ACS concerns.
- a) Town halls were held to address parent and community concerns regarding the safety of the building and the cost needed to repair it.

E. Building Location

- 1. I-26 Widening Impact
 - a) Loss of parking spaces
 - b) Loss of trees and possible damage to property trees
 - c) Negative sound impact due to construction and traffic increase
 - d) Proximity to interstate and air quality and negative impact on the learning environment
- 2. Proximity to Lucy S. Herring Elementary and Hall Fletcher Elementary and student and staff capacity.
 - a) All three schools are located within a 5-mile radius of each other. Hall Fletcher is less than 1 mile from Asheville Primary School.
 - b) Currently, 304 students are enrolled at Lucy S. Herring Elementary, 259 students are enrolled at HFE and 99 Students are enrolled at APS. Currently, 662 students are enrolled in the three elementary schools in West Asheville- HFE, APS, and Lucy S. Herring Elementary.
 - c) Currently, 62 staff are assigned to HFE, 85 staff are assigned to Lucy S. Herring Elementary, and 29 staff are assigned to APS. (the 29 does not include Pre-K which is an additional 33 staff in the APS bldg)
 - d) The building capacity for HFE is 443. The building capacity for Lucy S. Herring Elementary is 512. The total capacity for HFE and Lucy S. Herring Elementary is 955.

F. Additional Cost Savings

Moving the Montessori program to the HFE campus will result in substantial savings of local funds.

1. Utilities coded currently coded to the Preschool Building
 - a) Electric average monthly savings: \$ 2,493
 - b) Water average monthly savings: \$ 2,125
 - c) Gas average monthly savings: \$ 900
 - d) Internet average monthly savings: \$ 800
 - e) Phone/cell average monthly savings: \$ 1,300
 - f) Waste Management ave monthly savings: \$ 988
 - g) Other (safety inspections) ave monthly: \$ 255

II. Possible Hardships Resulting from Closing Asheville Primary School

A. Staff, parents, and family connection to the campus

1. Deep connection to the building and strong sense of community within a small learning community

B. Cost to relocate the Montessori program

1. Staff investment in professional development and cost of the implementation of the Montessori program

III. Exhibits

- A. [ACS Board Meeting Minutes 9/10/2020](#)
- B. [ACS Board Meeting Work Session 8/3/2020](#)
- C. [Enrollment Compared to Other ACS Schools by Grade Level](#)
- D. [ACS Renovations Capital Fund - Critical Needs](#) & High Priority Needs
- E. DOT Website [Asheville Connector website](#)
- F. DOT I-26 Impact [Noise Study Report](#).
- G. Impact of Air Quality White Paper, [Proximity of public schools to major highways and industrial facilities and students' school performance and health hazards](#)
Hopkins, J. S. (Ed.). (2017, February 17). The Invisible Hazard Afflicting Thousands of Schools. Retrieved February 2, 2021, from <https://publicintegrity.org/environment/the-invisible-hazard-afflicting-thousands-of-schools/>
- H. [The Invisible Hazard Afflicting Thousands of Schools](#) Hopkins, J. S. (Ed.). (2017, February 17). The Invisible Hazard Afflicting Thousands of Schools. Retrieved February 2, 2021, from <https://publicintegrity.org/environment/the-invisible-hazard-afflicting-thousands-of-schools/>