



Scotland County Schools Closure and Consolidation Fact Sheet

In the fall of 2014, at the request of the Board of Commissioners, Scotland County Schools conducted a capacity study of all of our elementary and middle schools. In addition to the capacity data, the Board and Administration studied carefully other areas that would be affected by school consolidation and closure. The results of the study and the data showed:

Capacity of our Schools:

- We looked at capacity from two perspectives – capacity of the building and per classroom.
- What we found was that many of our buildings were operating under-capacity and our middle schools were operating at only about 60% capacity.
- And later, at the urging of the public, diversity and equity were added to the equation.

ADM (average daily membership – i.e. the number of students):

- Trend data was tracked to show a declining student enrollment. Our enrollment is down 841 students in the past 9 years, and based on US Census birth rate data, our enrollment is expected to continue to drop 300-400 more students over the next 5-7 years.

Age of schools:

- The average age of our schools, prior to consolidation, was 50 years old. After this first phase of consolidation, we reduced the average age of our schools to 29 years.

Safety of existing schools:

- Board was very clear in stating that the safety of our students was the top priority.
- The Board's ultimate goal is to eliminate all mobile units.

Transportation:

- In large part because of the implementation of corner stops prior to consolidation, in many cases, bus ride times have been reduced for many of our students.
- The Board and Administration have stated in open, public sessions that if transportation was ever an issue for a parent/guardian to not be involved in their child's school, that we would make accommodations for that parent/guardian (i.e. parent nights, band/choral concerts, athletic events, curriculum events, etc.).

Budget:

- In 2016-17, Scotland County Schools received \$243,598 less than what the school funding formula allows and in 2017-18; the school system will take \$238,117 less. We hope to move forward with consolidation for a variety of reasons, but one would be that the savings we would have as a result would allow us to continue to work with the county on our local funding allotment.
- The school system does not set the tax rate nor do we dictate tax increases or decreases. However, per the County Commissioners, the tax rate could be reduced \$.01 for every \$200,000 saved.

Over the course of the past 3 years, a variety of potential consolidation and closure scenarios have been presented publically. During this process, the Board and Administration went to each school that could have been potentially affected, presented the information, and provided an opportunity for those in attendance to ask questions. During this process (as well as prior to and since then) the Board and Administration have been open and transparent with the information they have and the reasons behind their decisions. Additionally, the Board and Administration have been transparent with the Board of Commissioners, providing any information and data that they request and meeting with them on a regular basis. In an effort to strengthen their relationship and understanding of each group's need, a Liaison Committee, comprised of Board of Education and Board of Commissioners members, was formed and meets once a month.

Results of Consolidation and Closure:

- No jobs were lost during consolidation during the first phase of consolidation.
- Through attrition, during the first phase of consolidation, all staff that chose to continue to work for SCS were able to be placed. That is also the plan moving forward.
- Additional student support personnel were placed at the consolidated schools (i.e. full-time nurse, additional assistant principal, full-time social worker, etc.) and again, this will be the plan moving forward.

Class Size:

- Class size did not change during the first phase of consolidation. The Board was committed to keeping class size the same and they have. Additionally, SCS classes are often below state averages.
- During the 206-17 school year, class size ratios are as follows (note: K-3 class size is set by the state):

K – 3 rd	1:21
4 th – 5 th	1:24
6 th – 8 th	1:26
9 th – 12 th	1:29
- As a result of recent legislation, class sizes will change for the 2017-18 school year (note: K-3 class size is set by the state)

K – 3 rd	1:20 (reduction of 1 student per class)
4 th – 5 th	1:24
6 th – 8 th	1:26
9 th – 12 th	1:29

More resources:

- Consolidating schools means more resources for students (more books, technology, access to a gym, more extra-curricular programs and clubs).

Additional information:

- The Board has committed to not leave empty buildings in our community should they not be able to sell them. Pate-Gardner and Washington Park were sold. We already have had several purchase inquiries about some of our other schools that could potentially close.
- St. Andrews is expanding their programs and they have expressed a need for additional space. At the same time, we want to be able to expand our Early College High School program and, because of space constraints, we cannot do that at St. Andrews. Moving SEarCH to Covington would allow that successful program to become available to more students.

