



Greenfield Central
Community School Corporation
March 4, 2025

***Maximizing Academic Achievement
and School Efficiency***



Higher Achievement
Jim Snapp Consulting

Greenfield Central Community School Corporation
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Executive Summary

In early 2024, Greenfield Central Community School Corporation leaders commissioned two studies, *Facilities Utilization Study* completed by Administrator Assistance and *Population and Enrollment Forecast* by McKibben Demographic Research. Each study successfully completed the identified task: examining the school facilities and projecting future enrollment. The findings from both studies were direct—the facilities with only minor notes, are in good to excellent condition throughout the school corporation and include more classroom space than is expected to be utilized in the next decade and beyond given enrollment projections.

Using information gleaned from previous studies as the foundation for future decisions, GCCSC leadership collaborated with Jim Snapp at Higher Achievement to synthesize the reports and:

- Examine the efficient school day use of elementary, intermediate and junior high schools;
- Propose options regarding the effective use of the schools, not limited by existing grade configurations or potential school closures;
- Evaluate the possibility of creating a separate preschool facility utilizing an existing school;
- Recommend research based modifications to improve academic performance;
- Ensure all recommendations are tax rate neutral and reduce spending from the Education Fund.

The study was completed in February 2025 and consisted of touring all GCCSC schools, with the exception of the high school, meeting with the school principals, reviewing the daily instructional schedule, examining the school floor plans and determining classroom utilization. Based on that information, options were developed that met the primary goals; however, most were not acceptable, calling for multiple rounds of redistricting, a significant increase in transportation costs and unnecessary transitions for students. After reviewing the preliminary findings with the GCCSC

leadership team, two options emerged for broader study. Each option reduces the number of school transitions for students through their educational career, consolidates students for a more efficient use of space, and reduces operational and staff expenditures.

Research

Greenfield Central Community School Corporation is not the first school corporation to experience stabilized enrollment after a period of growth. How leadership in each community responds to such a challenge can vary based on a number of factors; however, research can provide a basis on which to make decisions. One of those factors is the grade configuration of schools, which is often determined by growth or decline in student enrollment, density of student population within the school corporation, existing facilities and construction cost of new facilities (e.g. a new middle school typically costs more than a new elementary school). As a backdrop to the grade configuration review, *Analysis of Elementary and Secondary Grade Span Configurations* from June 2017 was used as a reference.

The report highlights what most intuitively know, “every grade configuration has its own strengths and weaknesses relative to the context in which the grade span occurs” (page 4); however, two specific elements are clear—numerous transitions are not beneficial for students nor a grade structure that constantly transitions the entire school enrollment either in or out of the school each year. With those parameters providing guidance for future decisions, it is important to include “an array of factors” when making a decision; therefore, grade configuration should not be the sole factor in determining what the future structure of schools look like in GCCSC.

One key factor is instructional time in core content. In cases when sixth grade is housed in an elementary school, those students spend more instructional time in core instruction. The historical approach in middle school is to provide a wider range of exploratory curriculum, therefore time allocated to core instruction is minimized while time in exploratory classes increases. Moving from 90 minutes for reading each day at the elementary level to a 45-minute language arts period at the middle school adversely

impacts student achievement, therefore instructional time in the core content areas should be protected regardless of grade configuration.

Stated more directly, just changing the grade configuration of a school is not going to raise student achievement.

General Information

A brief tour of each elementary school reveals multiple classrooms not in use or utilized in ways not intended (e.g. offices, small group instruction, storage, etc.) yet class sizes in the classrooms remain relatively low. Teachers across the school corporation, regardless of their school assignment, benefit from small class sizes. Leadership is to be commended for prioritizing small class sizes.

This study did not modify current class size averages in determining enrollment capacity, honoring the past practice of smaller than typical class sizes by using 22 students per class as the standard. School capacity was determined by multiplying the number of classrooms by 22 students per classroom. (Please see Appendices for school-by-school classroom details.) GCJHS's capacity is listed at a modest 616 students, using the 22 per class multiplied by the number of grade level classrooms. GCJHS's Related Arts and special education classrooms were not included in the school capacity calculation. Two classrooms designated for special education could be used as general education classrooms raising capacity to 660 students.

When considering the total enrollment of any grade level corporation wide, 325 students was the standard. When addressing preschool classroom size, 18 students was utilized as the standard for enrollment.

Projecting enrollment for future years, for example 2025-2026, the kindergarten enrollment from the previous year was utilized and other grade levels rolled up to the next grade unless the McKibben Demographic Study is noted.

No determination was made regarding the placement of special education programming in either option, nor was a review of the ratio of leadership staff (e.g. principal, assistant principal, dean, counselor, social worker, etc.) in the recommendation of the two options.

Both options call for the addition of a sixth grade wing at Greenfield Central Junior High School and the expansion of the cafeteria and fine arts spaces. In addition, each option converts an existing elementary school to a preschool center. Modest renovations (e.g. classroom restrooms and age appropriate playground) would be needed at either school selected.

Option A

This plan moves to four K-5 elementary schools, one 6-8 junior high/middle school and a separate preschool at Harris over the next three years.

Current School Name	2024-2025		2025-2026		2026-2027		2027-2028	
	Grades	Enrollment	Grades	Enrollment (estimated)	Grades	Enrollment (estimated)	Grades	Capacity
Eden Elementary School	K-3	152	K-4	193	K-4	202	Closed	
Harris Elementary School	K-3	274	K-4	329	K-4	308	Preschool	
J. B. Stephens Elementary School	K-3	455	K-4	508	K-4	485	K-5	770
Weston Elementary School	K-3	320	K-4	396	K-4	394	K-5	506
Greenfield Intermediate School	4-6	481	5-6	312	5-6	310	K-5	616
Maxwell Intermediate School	4-6	454	5-6	297	5-6	300	K-5	660
Greenfield Central Junior High School	7-8	694	7-8	670	7-8	625	6-8	1,050*

*includes addition

Some features of Option A are:

- Current third grade students remain in their respective elementary schools for fourth grade; this practice continues until redistricting for 2027-2028.
- GIS and MIS include only fifth and sixth grade students for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.
- All GIS and MIS fifth and sixth grade students transition to the junior high school following 2026-2027 as the intermediate schools become elementary schools in 2027-2028.
- Eden Elementary School closes in 2027-2028; staffing efficiencies offset any potential increases in transportation costs.
- Elementary boundary adjustments are necessary for 2027-2028 allowing better enrollment balance between the elementary schools.

- Centrally located Harris Elementary School becomes a separate preschool in 2027-2028 allowing all preschool classrooms and services at the same location. This will result in an increase of preschool classrooms by at least 30%.
- Following the expansion of a sixth grade wing and enlargement of cafeteria and performing arts spaces, Greenfield Central Junior High includes sixth grade students in 2027-2028.
- The McKibben Demographic Study projected elementary enrollment for 2027-2028 for grades K-5 at 1,790 students. The K-5 total capacity, using 22 students as the average class size, under Option A is 2,552 students.

Option B

This plan moves to four K-5 elementary schools, one 6-8 junior high/middle school and a separate preschool over the next three years. Weston becomes a preschool and Harris/GIS becomes an elementary.

Current School Name	2024-2025		2025-2026		2026-2027		2027-2028	
	Grades	Enrollment	Grades	Enrollment (estimated)	Grades	Enrollment (estimated)	Grades	Capacity
Eden Elementary School	K-3	152	K-4	193	K-4	202	Closed	
Harris Elementary School	K-3	274	K-4	329	K-4	308	Combined with GIS See below	
J. B. Stephens Elementary School	K-3	455	K-4	508	K-4	485	K-5	770
Weston Elementary School	K-3	320	K-4	396	K-4	394	Preschool	
Greenfield Intermediate School	4-6	481	5-6	312	5-6	310	K-5	1,078
Maxwell Intermediate School	4-6	454	5-6	297	5-6	300	K-5	660
Greenfield Central Junior High School	7-8	694	7-8	670	7-8	625	6-8	1,050

Some features of Option B are:

- Current third grade students remain in their respective elementary schools for fourth grade; this practice continues until redistricting for 2027-2028.
- GIS and MIS include only fifth and sixth grade students for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.
- All GIS and MIS fifth and sixth grade students transition to the junior high school following 2026-2027 as the intermediate schools become elementary schools in 2027-2028.

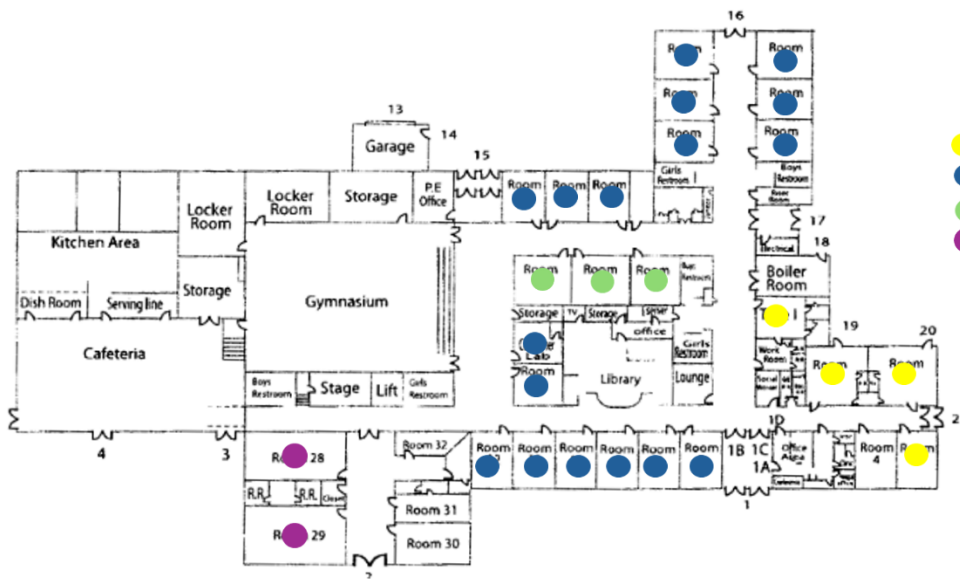
- Eden Elementary School closes in 2027-2028; staffing efficiencies offset any potential increases in transportation costs.
- GIS and Harris merge into one elementary school in 2027-2028.
- Elementary boundary adjustments are necessary 2027-2028.
- Weston becomes a separate preschool in 2027-2028.
- Following the expansion of a sixth grade wing and enlargement of cafeteria and performing arts spaces, Greenfield Central Junior High includes sixth grade students in 2027-2028.
- The McKibben Demographic Study projected elementary enrollment for 2027-2028 for grades K-5 at 1,790 students. The K-5 total capacity, using 22 students as the average class size, under Option B is 2,508 students.

Observations

This study points to a number of key decisions including closing an elementary school, adjusting grade configurations and completing comprehensive redistricting. Each decision alone is important, yet when approached collectively, the significance cannot be understated. The selection of either of these options brings significant, long-term benefits to GCCSC, including:

- Financial savings through operational and staffing efficiencies
- Expansion of the successful preschool program with operational and staffing efficiencies when all students are educated at the same location
- Fewer school transitions for students over the course of their K-12 academic careers
- Strengthening fine arts and extracurricular opportunities for students as sixth grade students transition to the junior high school

These benefits make these challenging decisions worthwhile. This is also an opportunity to examine lengthening the elementary school day by at least 30 minutes and reviewing the middle school schedule, including the consideration of lengthening time in core academic classes by moving to a six period instructional day.



Harris Elementary School

- Kindergarten Classrooms: 4
- Classrooms: 17
- Art, Music, STEM: 3
- Special Education: 2

Total Student Capacity: 462

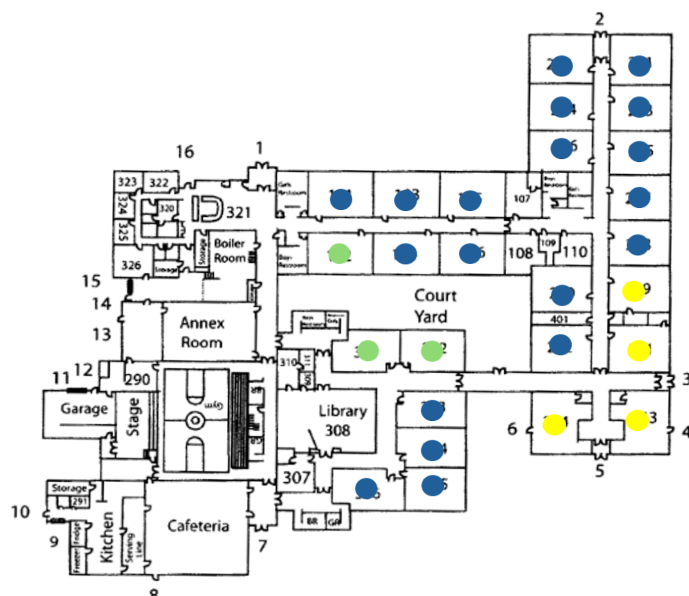


J.B. Stephens Elementary School

- Kindergarten Classrooms: 10
- Classrooms: 25
- Art, Music, STEM: 3

Total Student Capacity: 770





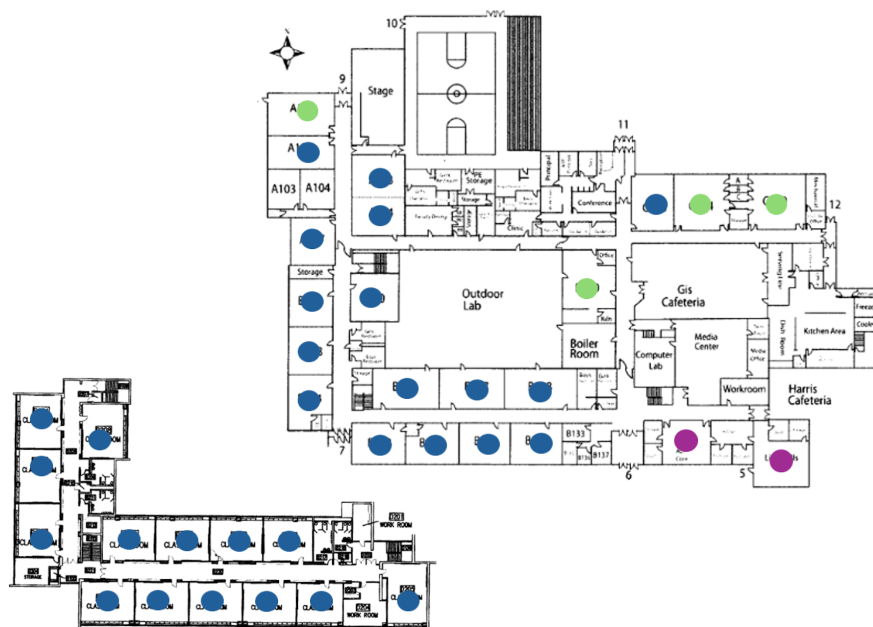
Weston Elementary School

Kindergarten Classrooms: 4

Classrooms: 19

Art, Music, STEM: 3

Total Student Capacity: 506



Greenfield Intermediate School

Kindergarten Classrooms: 0

Classrooms: 28

Art, Music, STEM: 6

Special Education: 2

Total Student Capacity: 616



