

Superintendent's Recommended Student Assignment Plan

**Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher
Middle School**

June 26, 2013



The School District of Greenville County

W. Burke Royster
Superintendent

June 26, 2013

To: Board of Trustees

From: W. Burke Royster, Superintendent

Re: Recommended Student Assignment Plan for Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School

This document outlines my recommended Student Assignment Plan for the new Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School. First, I would like to briefly outline the process that has been utilized in developing my recommendation.

Greenville County Schools' Planning and Demographics (P&D) Department developed a Proposed Student Assignment Plan for Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School. When developing the plan and moving through the process, P&D kept in the forefront the fact that this new school has been in the Long Range Facilities Plan as a student population relief school since 2006. P&D's initial proposed plan was placed on the district's website on May 16, 2013, to begin receiving public input. At the same time, a media release was sent to local media outlets by the Communications Department.

P&D staff received input by phone, e-mail, regular mail, etc. On June 3, 2013, P&D held a public input meeting at J.L. Mann High Academy. P&D reviewed and analyzed all the input received and presented their updated proposal to the District's Administrative Team on June 10, 2013. The District's Administrative Team provided their comments over the next few days.

I want to thank all the people who have provided input along the way. Their involvement was an important part of my review and contributed to the development of the Administration's Recommended Student Assignment Plan for Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School. Input has been reviewed and analyzed in keeping with the primary purpose of the school, which is to provide population relief to five middle schools: Beck, Bryson, Hillcrest, Mauldin, and Riverside.

The school is being built with a capacity of 1,000 students with approximately 300 students recommended to attend the first year. The District's Academic Division is recommending that the school open in 2014-15 with a 6th grade class only, adding 7th in 2015-16, and 8th in 2016-17. The curriculum is being designed so students can transition easily into this school with or without prior involvement in a project-based Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) or STEAM (STEM plus the Arts) environment.

Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School Student Population Plan

Step 1: Assigned Attendance Area (N ≈ 90)

- A. Approximately 90 students will attend the school based on an assigned geographic attendance area in close proximity to the school. This number is projected to increase yearly.

Step 2: Priority Relief Choice (N ≈ 190)

- A. Rising 6th grade students from A.J. Whittenberg Elementary School who also reside in the Priority Relief Choice Schools' attendance areas.
- B. All remaining Step 2 slots will be filled by rising 6th grade students who reside in one of the Priority Relief Choice Schools' attendance areas. If more requests are received than slots available, a lottery will occur at this stage.

Step 3: Change in Assignment Choice (N ≈ 60)

- A. Up to 30 rising 6th grade students from A.J. Whittenberg Elementary may attend through the Change in Assignment Choice process.
- B. All remaining Step 3 slots will be filled, using the District's Change in Assignment Choice Process, by rising 6th grade students from across the district who neither come from A.J. Whittenberg Elementary nor reside in the area of the five priority relief middle schools.

Lateral Entry Considerations (requests for first time entry in 7th or 8th grade)

Lateral entry for future 7th and 8th grade students after the first year, if space is available, will be allotted to students residing in the five priority relief middle schools.

Notes:

- 1) It is important to understand that as the assigned attendance areas of Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School and/or the priority middle schools' student populations increase, the availability for students to participate in choice from other areas of the school district will decrease so that continued relief can be provided to the five middle schools.
- 2) Parents with students attending on either Priority Relief Choice or Change in Assignment Choice must provide transportation.

Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School

Recommendations for Opening

In Greenville County Schools, we believe that it is our responsibility to ensure that children are prepared to lead the United States and the world in the 21st century, with a strong ability to compete in the global marketplace. In order to realize this goal, we must provide our students with an education that includes a solid foundation on science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics. The opening of Fisher Middle School is one step along our district's journey to accomplishing this goal.

The mission of Fisher Middle School is to provide opportunities that create STEAM-literate students ready to accept the challenges of the curriculum at high school, advanced education, and tomorrow's workforce. Innovation is the key to discovering the solutions to the challenges facing the world today and in the future. The opening of Fisher Middle School will help us address the importance of the middle level on this continuous pathway from pre-K to career.

The vision of Fisher Middle School is to "transform the typical teacher-centered classroom by encouraging a transdisciplinary curriculum that is driven by problem-solving, discovery, exploratory learning, and an experience that requires each student to actively engage in a situation in order to find its solution." The STEAM curriculum will permeate every facet of the school environment – from the moment the student steps onto the campus until he/she advances to high school and the post-secondary world.

With the goals, mission, and vision of Fisher Middle School in mind, the Division of Academics recommends a phase-in for grades beginning with grade 6 in 2014 – 15, then adding grade 7 in 2015 – 16, followed by grade 8 in 2016 – 17. This grade phase-in plan would benefit students and staff in a number of ways.

- Students and staff will have the time to make the necessary adjustments to the STEAM concept. Learning communities must be developed, the culture of collaboration must be created, and each area of STEAM must be emphasized. We will be far more likely to accomplish these goals by giving the staff the opportunity to focus on one grade level at a time, until the learning communities, culture, and curriculum are established.
- The STEAM curriculum must be created, clearly articulated, and supported. The Division of Academics plans to partner with the school's instructional leadership team in this endeavor. By focusing on one grade level at a time, each phase of curriculum development could inform the next phase. The opportunity to phase-in one grade level at a time would give us the focused attention needed to do this work well. It would also give us the time to collaborate with teachers, by grade level, on fully developing the curriculum maps for the school.
- The goals of Fisher Middle School include developing relationships with numerous community partners, including Clemson University. Phasing the grade start for students would give us an enhanced opportunity to focus our work with Clemson to develop specific training and coursework that may result in a STEAM certification area. We would also be able to fully develop plans for professional development, mentorships between university students and STEAM students, internships for Clemson students, and the further development of STEAM units of inquiry.

Additional Information

Districtwide STEM Focus

GCS's Academic Division has realigned the academic specialists' positions, giving us the opportunity to focus on 21st century skills across content areas. As a part of this process, we have created an academic specialist position for STEM education. Duties include expanding STEM initiatives across the district, with an emphasis on project-based learning. The individual, as a former science teacher, brings direct experience in science. The individual's direct experience with building project-based curriculum and emphasizing technology as a vehicle to increase student engagement and achievement will serve Greenville County Schools' students well as GCS expands STEM initiatives and methodology throughout the district at all grade levels.

The district administration has recommended, and the Board has approved, a comprehensive plan to expand technology access and focus across the district with the development of infrastructure for wireless Internet access, followed by a roll-out of 1-to-1 technology in our schools. Currently, we are implementing very successful 1-to-1 initiatives in several elementary schools and are expanding our focus to include increased 1-to-1 technology access to our middle schools.

Additional Academic Choice Options

Multiple choice options are available to GCS middle school students. Some specifically involve concepts of STEM or STEAM curriculum.

Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School – The population of this school will be based on the guidelines previously outlined.

Hughes Academy, a GCS Magnet School – Hughes Middle has a magnet focus on Science and Technology, the first two areas of STEM or STEAM education. Additionally, the school also has the Magnet Spanish Immersion program, and is engaged with the Sustaining Self and Society Initiative (S3) with the project goals to:

1. Promote sustainability practices that enhance the health and well-being of students and their families by building an organic garden, in collaboration with Furman University's Shi Center for Sustainability
2. Research, design and build the first sustainable classroom in Greenville County
3. Upgrade the existing building with sustainable technology and green practices

Existing Choice Options – Middle school magnet programs are available: Beck Academy (International Baccalaureate), Greenville Middle Academy (Traditional Studies and French), and League Academy (Arts and Communication). Change in Assignment Choice is also offered to all schools within the district. Space availability is the only limiting factor.

Engineering Focused Program – A new engineering-focused program will be available to 6th graders at Sevier Middle School beginning with the 2014-15 school year and 7th and 8th grade each of the ensuing school years. This school's personnel will work simultaneously with GCS's Academic Division and Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher's Planning Committee to develop and implement a STEM and STEAM program for students interested in learning engineering concepts in a project-based environment. When fully developed, this program can be used to tie together all aspects of the school's curriculum. At that point, the program will also be ready for full or partial replication in other middle schools across the district.

Additional Academic Choice Options (Continued)

International Baccalaureate (IB) - Among our district's current choice options, IB should also be considered for students who are interested in project-based learning opportunities, many of which include an emphasis on STEM. Students study subjects from each of eight instructional areas:

Areas of Instruction

Science

Technology

Mathematics

Humanities (History)

Physical Education

Arts (Visual and Performing)

Language A (English)

Language B (Spanish or French)

Areas of instruction are studied through five methods:

Approaches to Learning (ATL) - Through ATL teachers provide students with the tools to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning, thereby developing an awareness of how they learn best, of thought processes and of learning strategies.

Human Ingenuity - Students explore in multiple ways the processes and products of human creativity, thus learning to appreciate and develop in themselves the human capacity to influence, transform, enjoy and improve quality of life.

Environments - This area aims to develop students' awareness of their interdependence with the environment so that they understand and accept their responsibilities.

Community and Service - This component requires students to take an active part in the communities in which they live, thereby encouraging responsible citizenship.

Health and Social Education - This area deals with physical, social and emotional health, and intelligence – key aspects of development leading to complete and healthy lives.

Gateway To Technology (GTT) Program - Currently, the following middle schools are GTT schools: Beck, Bryson, Greer, Hughes, Sevier, Ralph Chandler, Riverside, and Tanglewood. The program includes a project-based curriculum designed to challenge and engage the natural curiosity and imagination of middle school students. The students envision, design and test their ideas with the same advanced modeling software used by companies like Lockheed Martin, Intel and Sprint. They study mechanical and computer control systems, such as those used in robotics and animation. Students also explore the importance of energy, including innovative ways to reduce, conserve and produce it using solar, thermal and wind power. The knowledge that students gain and the skills they build from GTT create a strong foundation for further STEM learning in high school and beyond. Throughout GTT, students acquire knowledge and skills in problem solving, teamwork and innovation, as well as while exploring STEM careers. Taught in conjunction with a rigorous academic curriculum, the program is divided into eight, nine-week independent units, assuming a 45-minute class period. Schools implement both foundation units and may add any combination of the specialization units.

Additional Academic Choice Options (Continued)

Robotics Clubs - Many middle schools have Robotics Clubs. Often, these are connected to a STEM-related program such as GTT; however, a school does not need to be a Gateway to Technology school in order to sponsor a Robotics Club. Robotics Clubs afford students opportunities to create and program robots usually using Lego NXT products. Students generally participate in the club after school hours, often working to complete robotics challenges with the support of teachers and outside mentors (parents, engineers, industry and corporate partners). Currently, there are Robotics Clubs at the following middle schools: Beck, Bryson, Hughes, Sevier, Sterling, and Tanglewood.



Appendix

Glossary of Terms

Recommended Geocodes to Fisher MS & Mauldin MS

Impact on Schools

Feeder Patterns

Student Assignment **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

School District

All of Greenville County Schools

School Attendance Area

All of the geocodes that make up an individual schools' assignment boundary.

Education Plan

The Board's priorities for performance

LRFP

Long Range Facilities Plan

Factors

Board Policy AD(P) lists the eleven factors to be considered.

FARMS

The Free and Reduced Meals Program is available to students that apply and meet the requirement to receive meals in school at no charge or at a reduced charge.

Homebase

School that a student is assigned based on the student's resident address.

Test Data

South Carolina and federal laws require end-of-the-year accountability tests for grades 3-8 that are based on state academic standards. Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) results include scores in five subject areas: writing, English language arts (reading and research), mathematics, science and social studies.

PASS has three scoring levels:

- Exemplary – The student demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.
- Met – The student met the grade-level standard.
- Not Met – The student did not meet the grade-level standard.

The High School Assessment Program (HSAP)

The test is administered for the first time in a student's second year in high school. There are two sections of the test, English/Language Arts and Math. Students must pass both the ELA and Math portions prior to graduation in order to receive a South Carolina standard diploma. There are four scoring levels (1, 2, 3, and 4). Level 2 and above is considered passing.

Rising

The grade a student will be in for the upcoming school year. A current 4th grader is a rising 5th grader.

Change in Assignment (Choice)

Students may request to attend a school other than their assigned home-based school.

Magnet Choice

Magnet Schools that offer a program seeking to attract students (whether the student resides in the school's attendance area or not) with specialized academic disciplines.

Geocode

A geographic area used to manage school assignment at the elementary, middle and high school level. Geocode numbers reflect actual numbers recorded in the district's database.

Island

A geocode that is not contiguous (not connected) to a school's main attendance area.

Feeder Pattern

The flow of school assignment from elementary to middle to high school.

15th Day Enrollment

The number of actual students enrolled at an individual school on the 15th day of school.

Program Capacity (PC)

The number of students that a school may serve (excluding portables) depending on offered programs for that particular school as computed prior to increasing class sizes due to recent budget funding shortfalls.

Expansion

An existing school that receives construction updates to increase its capacity.

Portable

A free-standing classroom used to serve the students at an overcrowded school.

Lots to go (LTG)

Based on subdivision notifications since 1995; the current number of lots still to be built out.

Yield

The number of students the district can expect to receive from every 100 single-family lots. The average yield for 100 new homes is 20 elementary students, 10 middle and 10 high school students.

Recommended Geocodes to Fisher MS

SUBDIVISION	GEO	ELEM	MIDDLE	HIGH
ASHFORD	KNL1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
BIRDFIELD ESTATES	BIR1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
FORRESTER CHASE	GHS1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
FORRESTER HEIGHTS	HBC1	SARA COLLINS	BECK	MANN
FRANKLIN HILLS	FFW1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
GREER PLACE	KNL1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
HEARTWOOD	KNL1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
KNOLLWOOD HEIGHTS	KNL1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
LAUREL VIEW	LAU1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
LEDGEMONT	OFC1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
MAULDIN TR PK	MLR1	GREENBRIER	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
OAK FOREST	OFC1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
PINE FORREST	OFC1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
PLANTATION GREENE	PLG1	SARA COLLINS	BECK	MANN
RIDGE ACRES	LAU1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
WALL INTERSTATE PARK	LCC1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN

MULTIFAMILY	GEO	ELEM	MIDDLE	HIGH
AVALON APTS	LCC1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
AVANA @ CAROLINA POINT	ABA1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MANN
AZALEA HILL SUITES AT VERDAE	NLC2	PELHAM ROAD	BECK	MANN
BENTBROOK TOWNHOMES	MLR1	GREENBRIER	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
BERKLEY POINTE	WWA1	MAULDIN	BECK	SOUTHSIDE
CAVALIER WOODS APTS.	CVW1	MAULDIN	BECK	SOUTHSIDE
JAMESTOWN POINTE	IBH1	SARA COLLINS	BECK	MANN
LAUREL WOODS APTS.	LWA1	MAULDIN	BECK	SOUTHSIDE
LIONS GATE	LMG1	BETHEL	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
MAULDIN HEIGHTS	PLE1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
MILLENNIUM APARTMENT HOMES	RGF1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
MILLER OAKS VILLAGE	MLR1	GREENBRIER	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
PARKINS RIDGE APTS.	IBH1	SARA COLLINS	BECK	MANN
PLANTATION GREENE, RESERVE @	PLG1	SARA COLLINS	BECK	MANN
RAVENWOOD APTS.	KNL1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
RESERVE @ CAVALIER, THE	HWA1	MAULDIN	BECK	SOUTHSIDE
SUMMER STONE TOWNES	MLR1	GREENBRIER	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
THE AVENTINE	ABA1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MANN
VININGS @ ICAR, THE	VIN1	MAULDIN	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
WENWOOD TOWNS	WWT1	MAULDIN	BECK	SOUTHSIDE
WHISPERING OAKS	MLR1	GREENBRIER	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
WINDMILL APTS.	MLR1	GREENBRIER	MAULDIN	MAULDIN
TOWNHOMES @ THE GROVE, THE	CVW1	MAULDIN	BECK	SOUTHSIDE

Recommended Geocodes to Mauldin MS

SUBDIVISION	GEO	ELEM	MIDDLE	HIGH
DOGWOOD TERRACE	LRM1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
LAUREL MEADOWS	LRM1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN
MULTIFAMILY	GEO	ELEM	MIDDLE	HIGH
LAUREL HEIGHTS	LRM1	MAULDIN	BECK	MANN

Recommended Geocodes - # Students

GEOCODE	From	To	Total # Students
BIR1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	0
CCT1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	0
CVW1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	5
FFW1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	8
GHS1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	6
HBC1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	17
HWA1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	9
IBH1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	31
JLM1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	0
LAU1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	9
LCC1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	16
LWA1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	2
NLC2	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	2
OFC1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	25
PCR1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	0
PLE1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	11
PLG1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	22
RFD1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	1
RGF1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	9
WEN1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	0
WWA1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	19
WWT1	Beck Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	2
Subtotal			194
ABA1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	3
BLO1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	0
DEV1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	7
KNL1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	28
LMG1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	13
MLR1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	15
TDR1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	1
VIN1	Mauldin Middle	Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle	0
Subtotal			67
TOTAL DR. PHINNIZE J. FISHER MIDDLE			261
Other Affected Schools			
LRM1	Beck Middle	Mauldin Middle	26
Subtotal			26
TOTAL STUDENTS REASSIGNED			287

Greenville County Schools Recommended Student Assignment Plan

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Student Assignment Proposal
Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle
Feeder Pattern

GEOCODE	Current Assignment ELEM	Current Assignment MIDDLE	Current Assignment HIGH	Total # Students	% FARM ELEM	LOTS TO GO	TEST % ELEM	
							ELA	MATH
BIR1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	0				
CCT1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	Southside High	0				
CVW	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	Southside High	5				
FFW1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	8				
GHS1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	6				
HBC1	Sara Collins Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	17				
HWA1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	Southside High	9				
IBH1	Sara Collins Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	31				
JLM1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	0				
LAU1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	9				
LCC1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	16				
LWA1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	Southside High	2				
NLC2	Pelham Road Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	2				
OFC1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	25				
PCR1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	0				
PLE1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	11				
PLG1	Sara Collins Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	22				
RFD1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	1				
RGF1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	JL Mann High	9				
WEN1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	Southside High	0				
WWA1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	Southside High	19				
WWT1	Mauldin Elem	Beck Middle	Southside High	2				
		To Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle		194				
ABA1	Mauldin Elem	Mauldin Middle	JL Mann High	3				
BLO1	Mauldin Elem	Mauldin Middle	Mauldin High	0				
DEV1	Mauldin Elem	Mauldin Middle	Mauldin High	7				
KNL1	Mauldin Elem	Mauldin Middle	Mauldin High	28				
LMG1	Bethel Elem	Mauldin Middle	Mauldin High	13				
MLR1	Greenbrier Elem	Mauldin Middle	Mauldin High	15				
TDR1	Mauldin Elem	Mauldin Middle	Mauldin High	1				
VIN1	Mauldin Elem	Mauldin Middle	Mauldin High	0				
		To Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle		67				
GRAND TOTAL DR. PHINNIZE J. FISHER MIDDLE SCHOOL				261	62.84%	82	69.96%	69.78%

Student Assignment Proposal
Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle
Feeder Pattern Effects

Current Assignment MIDDLE	Current Assignment ELEMENTARY	Current Assignment HIGH
Beck	Bells Crossing	JL Mann
	Blythe	Southside
	Brook Glenn	Wade Hampton
	Mauldin	
	Mitchell Road	
	Monarch	
	Oakview	
	Pelham Road	
	Robert E. Cashion	
	Sara Collins	
Effect of Recommended Change	No Change	No Change

Mauldin	Bells Crossing	JL Mann
	Bethel	Mauldin
	Greenbrier	
	Mauldin	
	Monarch	
Effect of Recommended Change	No Change	No Change