

AFYA PCS & BREHMS LANE PCS

MERGER

Afya Baltimore Inc. (ABI), the operator of Afya Public Charter School (6-8) and Brehms Lane Public Charter School (PreK-5), has been approved by the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners to combine the schools into a zoned, dual-facility PreK-8 public charter school. The elementary grades will remain at the Brehms Ln. campus and the middle grades will remain at the Brendan Ave. campus.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Overview of the Mergers

Why are we merging the schools?

We believe this merger is good for students, families and the community. The merged school will continue to serve as an anchor in the community. Families know they have a place to send their children to school from pre-k through 8th grade. The merger also makes Afya Baltimore, the operator of the schools, stronger, allowing us to invest more in both facilities and overall programming.

When was this merger approved?

The merger was approved by the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners on August 28, 2018.

Will both schools still be charters?

The new school will remain a public charter operated by Afya Baltimore.

Will anything about the operator of the schools change?

No. Afya Baltimore (or ABI) creates and manages schools committed to the engaging and equitable education of the whole child: intellectually, socially/emotionally, and physically. We call this **The Afya Way**. This approach to education will continue with the merger and guide everything we do from pre-k through 8th grade.

What kind of planning will occur?

We have been doing a lot of planning for this work for the past several years, including clearly defining **The Afya Way** and the ABI Schools Commitments that guide the work at all of our schools. We are also actively planning with our school leaders and teachers to make sure the merger is smooth and successful.

What is the timeline?

The official date when we become one school is July 1, 2019. We've had informational and listening sessions with staff and community members, which will continue, along with intensive planning. Another community meeting on March 20th at 5pm at Function Coworking Community will provide more updates and details. Throughout the spring we will communicate our plans through Friday Letters, parent meetings, social media and a new email newsletter, called **The Afya Way**. This summer, we'll officially launch the merger and begin changing some of our branding, signage, and communications in order to represent that Afya and Brehms are now one school.

NEED MORE INFO?

Contact Will McKenna, Executive Director,
at wmckenna@abischools.org or 410.736.8980.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Enrollment

If my child attends Brehms, can they automatically go to Afya for middle school? Do I still have to enter the lottery?

If your child is at Brehms, they can automatically go to Afya for middle school! Starting in the fall of 2019, there will be no lottery for students from Brehms rising up from grade 5 to 6. They will matriculate automatically to the next grade.

Brehms is a zoned charter school, and Afya is a lottery charter school. How will that work going forward?

The middle school is going to gradually convert to a zoned charter school (sharing the same zone as the elementary school) starting with grade 6 in fall of 2019 and adding a grade to the zone each year. Brehms and Afya will be a fully combined, zoned, dual-facility public charter school by fall of 2021.

If I don't live in the Brehms zone, can I enter through the lottery?

We continue to accept applications for both the elementary and middle school for students that live anywhere in Baltimore City to be entered into the lottery. We will accept students through the lottery when seats are available.

Can my child's younger sibling still attend Afya?

Yes. Younger brothers and sisters will still be able to attend the middle school, even if they didn't start at the elementary school.

What will change for next year?

Are the school names going to change?

Yes. As we connect the schools together, we will change the name to reflect our new unified school. Our plan is to name the new school **The Belair-Edison School**.

Why The Belair-Edison School?

We wanted a name that honored the neighborhood now that our school will be a zoned school. We also wanted to honor the legacies of Afya and Brehms Lane as pillars in the Belair-Edison community.

Will the school colors change?

We love the color palette at Afya and Brehms but we'll be using it in different ways.

Will the uniforms change?

Yes, starting this summer, all uniforms available for purchase will have the new name and logo. Students will still be able to wear their old uniforms for the next couple of years, if they want to.

What about the mascots?

Beavers are determined and resilient and represent our connection to Herring Run Park. Panthers are proud and strong, just like we want our middle schoolers to be. The decision to have a single mascot would be made by school leaders and students together.

Will there be one principal or two?

There will be two principals. The merger of Afya and Brehms will enhance our programming and allow us to do more great work. Having a principal at each campus—at Brehms Ln. and at Brendan Ave.—is critically important in continuing to meet the needs of both our elementary and middle schoolers.

Will day-to-day life at the school change for the students?

We believe only for the better! Both schools already have great teachers and staff, engaging lessons, and a strong sense of community. Both schools are guided by **The Afya Way** and the commitments we've made to the intellectual, social/emotional, and physical development of our students. That foundation will not change. Changes you will see in 2019 include continued improvement to our facilities and a clear focus on supporting 5th and 6th graders as they transition to middle school.

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