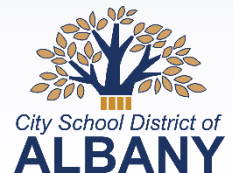


City School District of Albany

Feeder Alignment Committee

Kaweeda G. Adams, Superintendent

July 7, 2021



CSDA Guiding Principles

Vision Statement

The City School District of Albany will be a district of excellence with caring relationships and engaging learning experiences that provide equitable opportunities for all students to reach their potential.

Mission Statement

We will work in partnership with our diverse community to engage every learner in a robust educational program designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for success.

Goals

- Increase **student achievement**
- Enhance the **delivery of quality instruction**
- Build our **leadership capacity**
- Empower families**
- Partner with our diverse community**



Feeder Alignment Committee

Agenda

- Livestream and recorded
- Purpose
- Introductions
- Background and review of data
- Next steps and future meetings

Feeder Alignment Committee

Introduction

Purpose of the committee

- To engage community members and district personnel in a partnership to develop criteria and make recommendations for an equitable feeder pattern for all students transitioning from elementary (PK -5) to middle school (grades 6-8).

Committee members

- Mechelle Pointer – Albany High School
- Lamonda Watson – Albany School of Humanities (ASH)
- Natasha Fields – Arbor Hill Elementary School
- Dorian Solot – Delaware Community School
- William Lemmon – Eagle Point Elementary School
- Francesca Serrano – Giffen Memorial Elementary School
- Daniel Katz – Montessori Magnet School
- Tyleia Harrell – New Scotland Elementary School
- Shay Hooks – North Albany Middle School
- Elizabeth MacCallum – Pine Hills Elementary School
- Shatiqua Pannell-Hyndman – Philip J. Schuyler Achievement Academy
- Maria Lopez – Sheridan Preparatory Academy
- Marina Marcou-O’Malley – Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School
- Amber Fields – Thomas O’Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST)
- Lauren Manning – William S. Hackett Middle School

Feeder Alignment Committee

Background and Review of Data

Grade Configuration Phase 1 – 2015-16

The Phase 1 committee worked to determine the best grade configuration for our district. The Board of Education adopted the following findings from that work in June 2016:

- All sixth-graders belong in middle school
- Middle school should be three years at minimum

Key rationale:

- Academic performance of sixth-graders in middle school is substantially better than sixth-graders in elementary school
- Students entering middle school at both sixth and seventh grade creates two years of substantial disruption for schools
- Middle school principals recommended strongly that three years is the minimum needed to build relationships with students and put them on the road to high school success

Feeder Alignment Committee

Background and Review of Data

Brighter Choice and Urgent Need for Change

Brighter Choice Middle School for Boys and for Girls closed suddenly in March 2016, adding 275 middle school students to our system with only a few months' notice.

- The board elected to maintain as much continuity for those children and families as possible by renting and then purchasing the closed Brighter Choice building at 395 Elk St., renaming it West Hill Middle School
 - That building now houses Tony Clement Center for Education. That program is a perfect fit for 395 Elk, which has unusually small classrooms, not appropriate for a middle school
- Staff recommended, and the board adopted, moving West Hill to the building that became Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School for Excellence, enrolling students from North Albany Academy, Sheridan Prep, Schuyler and Arbor Hill in a temporary feeder pattern
- Voters approved a facilities project in January 2017 to facilitate that move; the new O'Neal Middle School opened for the 2017-18 school year
 - That allowed sixth-graders from Pine Hills to go to Myers since Sheridan Prep and Schuyler shifted to O'Neal
 - ASH, Eagle Point, Giffen and TOAST retained sixth grade due to space limitations at the middle level district-wide

Feeder Alignment Committee

Background and Review of Data

Grade Configuration Phase 2: 2016-17

After the district met the urgent need to serve the former Brighter Choice students, work on a permanent PK-8 solution moved forward. Even with O'Neal, the existing middle schools were not large enough to serve all sixth-graders.

- The Phase 2 committee reviewed options for a fourth middle school, or a third larger middle school. The committee:
 - Rejected ASH and TOAST as too small
 - Rejected Giffen because using it as a middle school would leave the South End with no elementary school
 - Rejected Arbor Hill as a much bigger, 800-seat middle school, agreeing that 650 is the maximum number for a good middle-level program
 - Rejected building an entirely new school because of the substantial cost (about twice estimates for renovation options) and the lack of an available site
- Ultimately, the committee recommended two options:
 - Four middle schools of either 650 or 500 students
 - Both options used Arbor Hill as the third middle school
 - One used North Albany as a fourth middle school, the other O'Neal

Feeder Alignment Committee

Background and Review of Data

Enrollment Methodology Recommendations: September 2017

The Phase 2 committee recommended an enrollment pattern that spreads higher-, medium- and lower-performing elementary schools across the middle schools.

The feeder pattern should result in an equitable enrollment structure that is the least disruptive overall

Pros:

- Can achieve balance among schools that is more reflective of the district as a whole
- Model used to successfully enroll Hackett and Myers with relatively balanced student bodies
- Allows students to retain elementary peer groups while advancing to middle school, increasing student and parent/guardian comfort

Cons:

- Families may not be geographically close to their child's school, creating a disadvantage for some
- Feeder pattern would need to change if elementary school's performance changed dramatically

Feeder Alignment Committee

Background and Review of Data

Additional Study: 2017- 2018

After careful consideration of the Phase 2 recommendations, the board requested:

- An updated demographic study
 - This 2018 study showed that middle school enrollment would continue to grow, but not as much as had been anticipated in a 2015 demographic study
- A feasibility study of three options based on the committee's work. Staff also added four additional options to reflect the lower enrollment estimates presented in the 2018 demographic study

The board eventually eliminated Arbor Hill as a potential middle school to honor the strong community sentiment that Arbor Hill should continue to serve elementary students

The board settled on a 650-seat North Albany middle school to go along with Hackett and Myers, with another subsequent demographic study to assure that the district would be able to serve all students in grades 6-8 in three equitable 650-student schools



Feeder Alignment Committee

Next Steps

Review documents and submit questions:

- albanschools.org/feedback
- Grade Configuration Report
- 2021 Demographic Report

Develop recommendations for the criteria to determine equitable attendance patterns for the district's three middle schools:

- North Albany Middle School
- Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School
- William S. Hackett Middle School

Feeder Alignment Committee

Virtual Meeting Dates

- Wednesday, July 28 6-7 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 4 6-7 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 29 6-7 p.m.

Additional meetings may be scheduled if needed.



Questions

