



A Study of the Proposed Closure of Ephesus, Glenwood and Seawell Elementary Schools



*Presented to the
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education • May 7, 2026*

*Drafted by the
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools District Administration*

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Overview of Closure Study

North Carolina Legal Context for Closure, Consolidation or Merger of Schools

When a local board of education considers the closure, consolidation, or merger of schools, it must comply with specific statutory requirements established under North Carolina law. These requirements ensure that such decisions are made thoughtfully, transparently, and with the primary focus on the educational welfare of students.

Under N.C.G.S. § 115C-47(1), local boards of education are vested with the exclusive duty and authority to ensure that students have the opportunity to receive a sound basic education. In fulfilling this responsibility, boards must make policy decisions that prioritize this objective, including those related to employment, budgeting, and other administrative actions within their local school administrative units, as directed by law. This statutory responsibility underscores the board's central role in making decisions that affect the structure and operation of schools.

In addition to this general authority, N.C.G.S. § 115C-72 provides local boards of education with explicit legal authority regarding the consolidation or discontinuance of schools. The statute grants boards the power to close or consolidate schools within the same district whenever, in the board's judgment, such action will better serve the educational interests of the local school administrative unit or a portion of it. While this authority is broad, the statute requires that specific procedural steps be followed before any final action is taken.

First, the board must conduct a thorough study of the school or schools under consideration. This study must focus primarily on the welfare of the students who would be affected by the proposed closure or consolidation. The law requires that the study evaluate several key factors, including geographic conditions, anticipated changes in student enrollment, and the potential inconvenience or hardship that the proposed change may impose on affected students. In addition, the study must consider the financial implications of the proposal, including the cost of providing additional school facilities if the consolidation or closure occurs. The board may also consider other relevant factors it deems appropriate in evaluating the proposal.

Second, prior to issuing any order to close or consolidate a school, the board must hold a public hearing on the proposed action. This hearing provides members of the public with the opportunity to present their views, concerns, and feedback regarding the proposal. The public hearing requirement ensures transparency in the decision-making process and allows the community to participate meaningfully in discussions that may significantly affect students, families, and the broader school system.

Together, these statutory provisions establish both the authority and the procedural framework within which local boards of education must operate when considering school closures or consolidations. By requiring careful study and public engagement, the law seeks to ensure that such decisions are made with a comprehensive understanding of their potential educational, logistical, and community impacts.

Overall Background Information

The Chapel Hill–Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) Board of Education has engaged in discussions regarding the potential closure of certain schools within the district as part of its ongoing responsibility to ensure the effective delivery of educational services and the prudent management of district resources. These discussions arise from the Board’s statutory duty to provide students with the opportunity to receive a sound basic education and to make policy and administrative decisions that support this objective.

In the course of its deliberations, the Board has reviewed several factors that may warrant consideration of school closure or consolidation. Among the primary issues discussed is the presence of changing enrollment patterns across the district, including declining or uneven enrollment in certain schools. These patterns can result in schools operating significantly below their intended capacity, which may affect the efficient use of facilities, staffing allocations, and program delivery.

The Board has also examined the financial implications associated with maintaining underutilized facilities. Operating and maintaining school buildings requires substantial expenditures for utilities, maintenance, staffing, and other operational costs. When schools operate with significantly reduced student populations, the cost per student may increase, potentially limiting the district’s ability to allocate resources toward instructional programs, student services, and other educational priorities. As part of its discussions, the Board has considered whether the closure of certain facilities may allow the district to more effectively direct resources toward enhancing educational opportunities for students.

Additionally, the Board has discussed long-term facilities planning and capital considerations, including the age and condition of certain school buildings and the projected costs associated with ongoing capital investment with maintenance. In evaluating the district’s facility footprint, Board members have considered whether the continued operation of certain buildings remains aligned with projected enrollment trends and the district’s long-term strategic goals.

Throughout these discussions, the Board has consistently emphasized that the welfare of students and the educational interests of the district remain the paramount considerations. The Board has indicated that careful study and thoughtful evaluation of these impacts are essential components of the decision-making process.

Primary Reasons for School Closure Consideration

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) is considering closing one or more elementary schools primarily due to declining student enrollment, financial pressures, and long-term facility planning needs. These factors together have prompted the Board of Education to evaluate whether the district currently has more elementary school buildings than it needs to serve its student population.

Declining Student Enrollment

One of the main reasons for the discussion is a steady decline in student enrollment across the district. Over the past decade, the number of elementary students has dropped significantly. Fewer students means the district receives less state funding, because much of North Carolina's school funding is allocated on a per-student basis. Demographers attribute the enrollment decline largely to lower birth rates, a challenging housing market, and some families choosing charter, private, or other schooling options.

Budget Pressures

The district is also facing significant financial challenges. Rising operational costs combined with declining enrollment have created budget gaps that the district must address. CHCCS leaders estimate they may need additional funding in the coming years to maintain a balanced budget.

Because operating multiple school buildings is expensive, closing an elementary school(s) could assist the district budget gap by reducing the costs associated with building maintenance, utilities, fixed staffing, and ongoing capital maintenance expenses.

Summary of the CHCCS Board of Education Decision to Study Three Elementary Schools

At its meeting on March 5, 2026, the CHCCS Board of Education voted to initiate a formal study regarding the potential closure or consolidation of three elementary schools within the district. This action represented a procedural step required under North Carolina law before any decision can be made regarding the closure of a public school.

During the meeting, Board members discussed ongoing challenges related to declining student enrollment, financial sustainability, and the efficient use of school facilities across the district. Over recent years, CHCCS has experienced a decrease in overall student enrollment, particularly at the elementary level. This decline has resulted in several schools operating below their intended capacity, prompting the Board to evaluate whether the district's current number of facilities aligns with present and projected student enrollment.

In light of these factors, the Board voted to conduct a comprehensive study of three (3) elementary schools: Ephesus Elementary School, Glenwood Elementary School, and Seawell Elementary School. The purpose of the study is to gather detailed information regarding the potential impacts of closing any of these schools and to ensure that any future decisions are informed by an analysis of relevant considerations.

Consistent with North Carolina General Statute §115C-72, the study will examine multiple factors necessary when considering the potential closure of schools. These considerations include geographic conditions, anticipated changes in student enrollment, the potential inconvenience or hardship that may affect students and families, and the financial implications associated with operating or closing school facilities. The Board may also review other relevant factors necessary to evaluate how any potential action may affect the educational/programming interests of the district.

Primary Reasons for School Closure Consideration

Board members have previously emphasized that no final decision has been made regarding the closure of any school. Rather, the vote to conduct the study represents the first step in a legally required process intended to provide the Board, district leadership, and the community with comprehensive information about potential factors.

The Board also acknowledged the importance of community engagement and transparency throughout this process. Following the completion of the study, and before any final action could be taken, the Board would be required to hold a public hearing to allow community members, families, and staff the opportunity to provide input and express their views regarding any proposed closure or consolidation.

The March 5 decision reflects the Board's effort to responsibly evaluate the district's facility needs while maintaining its commitment to providing high-quality educational opportunities for all students. The study is intended to help inform future discussions and ensure that any potential decisions are made with careful consideration of the educational, financial, and community impacts.

Primary Reasons for School Closure Consideration

Criteria to Inform School Closure/Consolidation Study and Board Deliberations

Required Based Upon N.C.G.S. § 115C-72(a)(1)

- **Geographic Conditions:** The study shall evaluate the geographic conditions of each school, including environmental factors such as flood zones, as well as the broader geographic impact on the district as a whole, including how a potential school closure could affect the distribution of schools across the district and the Board's future flexibility for districtwide planning.
 - **Anticipated Increase or Decrease in Enrollment:** The study shall evaluate the anticipated increase or decrease in student enrollment, including analysis of demographic trends and information related to town planning, approved development projects, and projected student yield, in order to understand how future growth or decline may affect enrollment at each school under consideration.
 - **Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected:** Evaluate the inconvenience or hardship that may result to affected students, including an equity impact analysis addressing potential effects on students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, multilingual learners, Black students, and Latinx students, and also include information regarding Pre-Kindergarten programming, including enrollment, classroom capacity, program placement, and any potential impacts on affected schools.
 - **Additional Facility Costs:** Cost of providing additional facilities.
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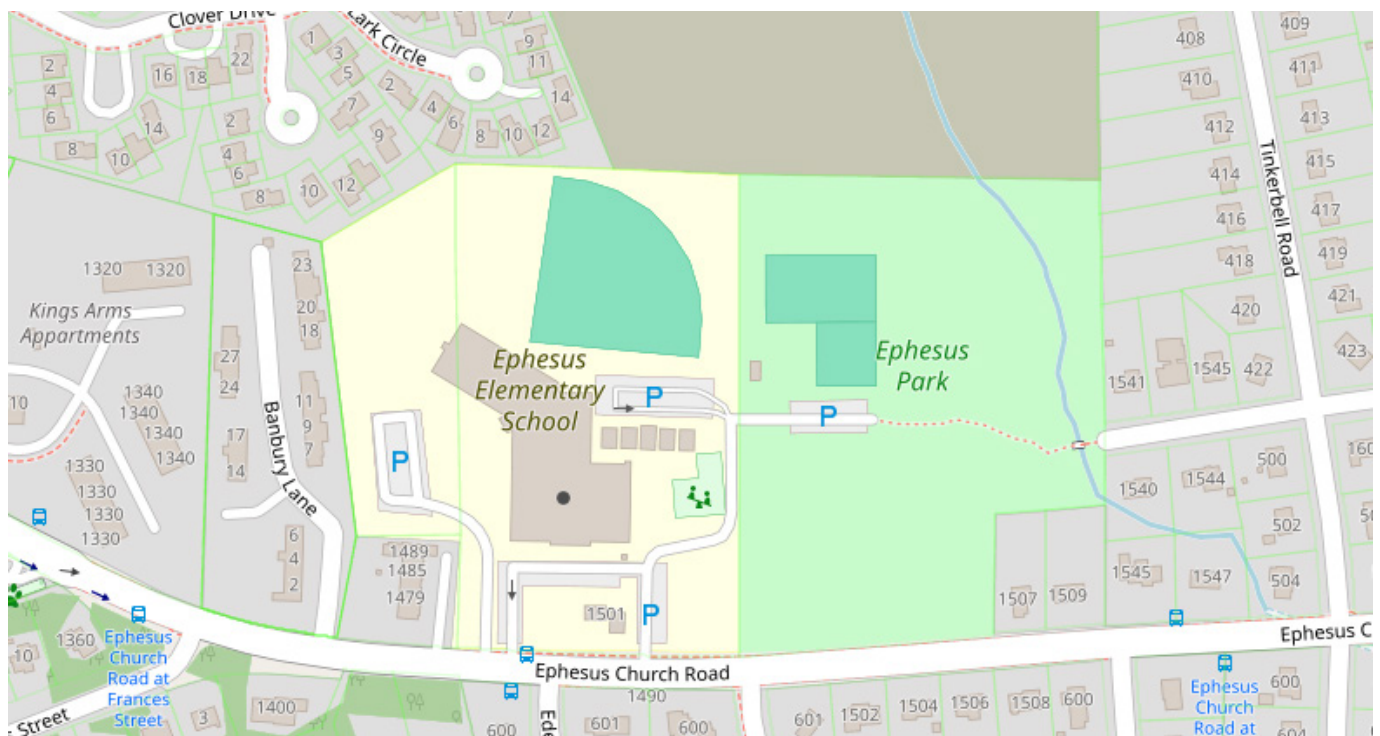
Additional Board Approved Criteria

- **Recent and Projected Capital Expenditures:** Projected 10-year capital maintenance outlook. (Notes/Comments: include recent capital expenditures)
- **Building Adjacency to Middle or High Schools:** The study shall evaluate the adjacency of each school to nearby middle or high schools, including potential programmatic and academic impacts, opportunities for cross-school collaboration, and any long-range planning considerations. (Notes/Comments: Proximity can make academic acceleration more logistically feasible, allowing elementary students to take classes at the middle or high school level.)
- **Transportation Costs:** The study shall evaluate transportation costs and impacts, including all modes of student transportation, such as bus eligibility, actual bus ridership, walk zones, and other transportation patterns, to assess the potential operational and financial effects associated with student reassignment.
- **Site Adequacy:** The evaluation of site adequacy, including whether each facility provides sufficient space and appropriate program fit to support current and potential programming, shall assess facility capacity and suitability, including considerations for programs such as Pre-Kindergarten, should relocation or reassignment become necessary.

Ephesus Elementary: Study of Proposed Closure

Introduction

Ephesus Elementary School, a one-building designed campus located on approximately a 13-acre parcel at 1495 Ephesus Church Road in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and is one of eleven elementary schools within the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) district. The school serves students in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade and provides a comprehensive elementary education program that includes core academic instruction, enrichment opportunities, and student support services.



The present Ephesus Elementary was constructed in 1972 along with an addition in 1991. While the school has undergone some capital improvements over time, the age and condition of the building has been noted in district discussions regarding long-term facilities planning and maintenance needs.

As in all CHCCS elementary schools, Ephesus provides a range of services, including Exceptional Children programs, multilingual learner support, and gifted education, to meet the needs of its student population. The school also serves as 1 of the 6 designated Title I schools within the CHCCS district, receiving federal funding to support students from economically disadvantaged households.

Ephesus Elementary

Criteria #1

Geographic Conditions

The study shall evaluate the geographic conditions of each school, including environmental factors such as flood zones, as well as the broader geographic impact on the district as a whole, including how a potential school closure could affect the distribution of schools across the district and the Board's future flexibility for districtwide planning.

Ephesus is located on Ephesus Church Road, a two-lane road maintained by NCDOT. Ephesus is just east of NC 15-501 (Fordham Boulevard) and is immediately surrounded by low-density development. Ephesus Park borders the school with some shared circulation roads.

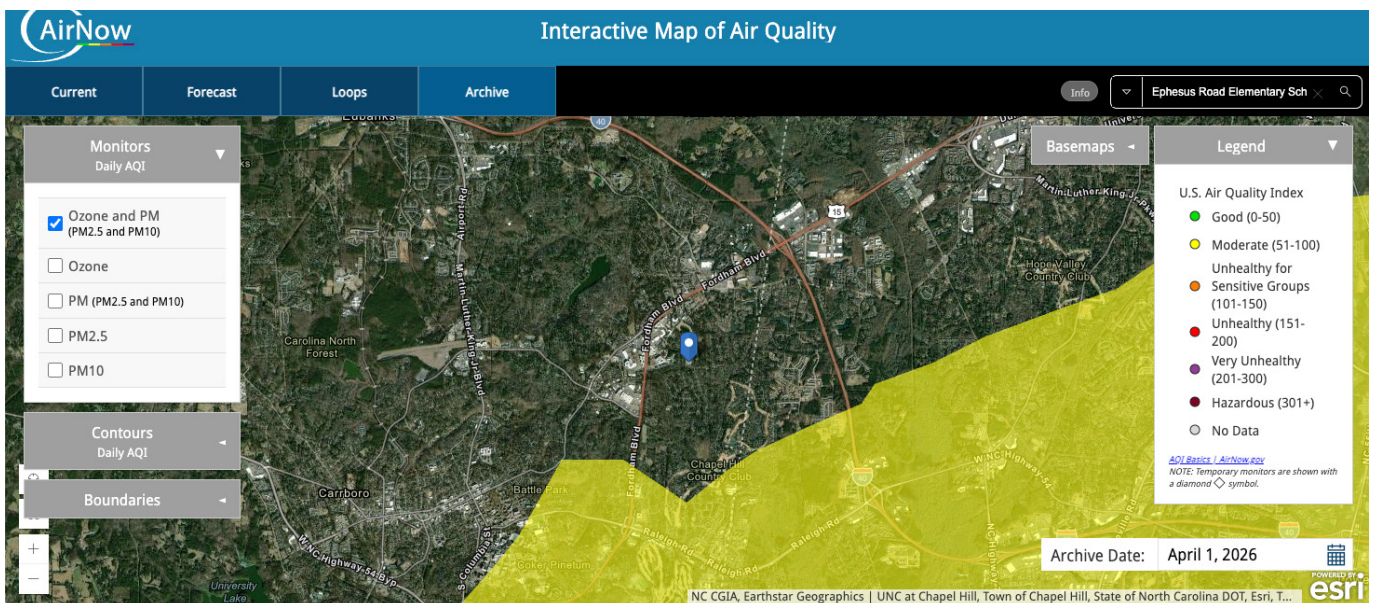
Wetlands and/or Floodplains

Based on Chapel Hill/Orange County stream maps, the school sits in the Booker Creek watershed, and the nearest mapped channels are on the eastern boundary of the school site on the adjacent park property. The channels within the Booker Creek watershed are not on the Ephesus Elementary property and have not posed any known concerns for the school property. With respect to floodplains, the school site does not have flood zones that overlap its property. However, the site does possess 2 small wetland areas on the northeast and southeast sections (adjacent to the park) of the site. These two wetland areas have also not posed any known concerns for the school property.

Ephesus Elementary

Air Quality

The image below shows a snapshot from the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) AirNow interactive air quality map focused on the Chapel Hill and Durham area in North Carolina, centered near Ephesus Road Elementary School on April 1, 2026. The map uses a color overlay to represent air quality conditions based on the U.S. Air Quality Index. A broad shaded area in yellow, outside of the Ephesus Elementary vicinity, stretches across the southern and eastern portions of the map, indicating that air quality in those areas is classified as moderate, meaning pollution levels are acceptable for most people but could pose a concern for individuals who are especially sensitive to air pollution. The monitoring settings on the left indicate that both ozone and particulate matter are being considered together, suggesting the displayed air quality reflects a combined assessment of these pollutants.



Ephesus Elementary

Criteria #2

Anticipated Increase or Decrease in Enrollment

The study shall evaluate the anticipated increase or decrease in student enrollment, including analysis of demographic trends and information related to town planning, approved development projects, and projected student yield, in order to understand how future growth or decline may affect enrollment at each school under consideration.

- **Note:** Districtwide, school enrollment numbers change almost every day. That means, in this study, school enrollment data can vary based on the time the data became available or when it was pulled for a pre-existing report that contributed to a section of this study. As a result, you may notice minor differences in a school’s enrollment count, but the differences do not impact the study in a significant manner.

Current Enrollment

As of March 2026, Ephesus Elementary is a residentially zoned school with a total enrollment of 373 students, including 317 non-program students, 26 Pre-Kindergarten (3-year-olds), and 30 Pre-Kindergarten (4-year-olds).

The table below shows the current enrollment distribution by grade level:

Ephesus Elementary			
Grade	Non-Program Students	Pre-K (3-year olds)	Pre-K (4-year olds)
Pre-K	-	26	-
Pre-K	-	-	30
K	40	-	-
1	52	-	-
2	45	-	-
3	56	-	-
4	54	-	-
5	70	-	-
Subtotal	317	26	30
Total			373

Ephesus Elementary

The table showing the distribution of Pre-Kindergarten students at Ephesus Elementary based on their assigned homeschools is as follows:

List of Pre-K Students' Homeschools Enrolled at Ephesus ES		
School	Pre-K (3-year olds)	Pre-K (4-year olds)
Carrboro ES	0	1
Ephesus ES	9	11
Estes Hills ES	2	2
Glenwood ES	1	4
McDougle ES	0	0
Morris Grove ES	1	2
Northside ES	0	2
Rashkis ES	8	7
Scroggs ES	3	0
Seawell ES	1	0
Out of District	1	1
Subtotal	26	30
Total		56

Projected Enrollment

As part of its contract with Orange County, Carolina Demography conducted an analysis of all CHCCS schools, to include Ephesus Elementary, in its *Student Membership Forecast: 2025-26 through 2035-36 for Orange County: Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools and Orange County Schools* report.

Enrollment Trends

While overall elementary enrollment across CHCCS is projected to decline over the next decade, Ephesus Elementary is expected to grow steadily over the next ten years. Projections indicate an increase from approximately 343 students in 2025-26 to roughly 423 students by 2035-36 (see next table).

Ephesus Elementary

ADM: 2025-26 Through 2035-36 by School, Colored by Year-Over-Year % Change

School	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Carrboro Elementary	462	444	430	413	409	398	395	395	392	390	388
Ephesus Elementary	343	375	387	394	405	417	421	420	422	422	423
Estes Hills Elementary	324	353	362	376	375	389	397	398	400	401	403
FPG Elementary	499	491	505	503	499	498	496	495	492	489	487
Glenwood Elementary	394	387	385	384	396	421	421	420	419	418	418
McDougle Elementary	469	487	495	491	510	511	505	501	499	496	495
Morris Grove Elementary	371	364	357	346	362	356	359	362	366	368	371
Northside Elementary	335	316	313	306	298	291	290	289	289	288	289
Rashkis Elementary	367	336	321	298	283	253	253	253	254	255	256
Scroggs Elementary	366	347	333	314	311	307	309	312	315	314	314
Seawell Elementary	364	354	344	335	343	336	341	344	343	341	340

5% or Greater Decline	2.5% - 4.99% Decline	0% - 2.49% Decline	0% - 2.49% Growth	2.5% - 4.99% Growth	5% or Greater Growth
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The report indicates the growth is largely attributable to new housing developments within the school's attendance zone, which are expected to generate approximately 49 additional students over the forecast period.

Development Impact: Ephesus Elementary

Development	Total Units	Units Already Completed	First Year Occupancy	Total Student Add
Weaver's Grove-1	117	50	2027	12
Park Apartments Phase II	259	259	2027	10
Aura Blue Hill	313	0	2027	8
Gateway-1	314	0	2028	6
Gateway-2	72	0	2029	4
Tarheel Lodging Phase II	283	0	2029	4
Weaver's Grove-2	35	0	2029	2
The Reserve at Blue Hill	212	0	2030	1
Residence Inn Hotel and Summit Place Townhomes	52	0	2028	1
Millennium Chapel Hill / University Inn	274	274	2027	0
Total	1,931	583	—	49

Source: Data from Demographic Analytics Advisors, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and municipalities.

Ephesus Elementary

Capacity and Utilization

As a result of this growth, Ephesus Elementary is projected to transition from moderate utilization to one of the most highly utilized schools in the district. Capacity is expected to rise from approximately 79% to 97% by 2035-36.

Percent Capacity by School: 2025-2026 through 2035-2036

School Name	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031	2031-2032	2032-2033	2033-2034	2034-2035	2035-2036
Carrboro Elementary	89%	86%	83%	80%	79%	77%	76%	76%	76%	75%	75%
Ephesus Elementary	79%	86%	89%	90%	93%	96%	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%
Estes Hills Elementary	63%	68%	70%	73%	73%	75%	77%	77%	78%	78%	78%
FPG Elementary	96%	94%	97%	96%	96%	95%	95%	95%	94%	94%	93%
Glenwood Elementary	96%	94%	93%	93%	96%	102%	102%	102%	102%	101%	101%
McDougle Elementary	86%	89%	90%	90%	93%	93%	92%	91%	91%	91%	90%
Morris Grove Elementary	65%	64%	63%	61%	64%	63%	63%	64%	64%	65%	65%
Northside Elementary	59%	56%	55%	54%	52%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%
Rashkis Elementary	65%	59%	57%	52%	50%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%
Scroggs Elementary	66%	62%	60%	56%	56%	55%	55%	56%	56%	56%	56%
Seawell Elementary	81%	79%	76%	74%	76%	75%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%

Overall 10-Year ADM Impact to Elementary Schools

For elementary schools, Carolina Demography’s forecast projects CHCCS elementary school average daily membership (ADM) to decline from 4,294 students in the current school year to 4,191 within the next five years, marking a decrease of approximately 100 students. A further reduction to 4,183 is projected by the end of the forecast period (2035-36), resulting in an overall projected decline of about 111 students in elementary school ADM throughout the decade.

CHCCS Development Adjusted ADM Forecasts by Level: 2015-16 to 2025-26

Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Elementary Schools	5,501	5,555	5,508	5,472	5,349	4,926	4,716	4,641	4,552	4,510	4,294	4,255	4,232	4,161	4,191	4,176	4,188	4,190	4,190	4,181	4,183
Middle Schools	2,838	2,833	2,838	2,930	3,032	2,912	2,799	2,788	2,699	2,655	2,579	2,569	2,496	2,472	2,386	2,371	2,280	2,309	2,302	2,308	2,299
High Schools	3,665	3,738	3,910	3,903	3,922	3,926	3,896	3,923	3,949	3,934	3,885	3,795	3,710	3,693	3,584	3,536	3,529	3,382	3,331	3,294	3,206
Total	12,004	12,126	12,256	12,305	12,303	11,764	11,411	11,352	11,200	11,099	10,758	10,619	10,438	10,326	10,161	10,084	9,997	9,882	9,823	9,783	9,688

Source: CHCCS; Demographic Analytics Advisors (DAA) Forecast

Ephesus Elementary (Including Glenwood and Seawell Analysis)

Criteria #3

Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected

Evaluate the inconvenience or hardship that may result to affected students, including an equity impact analysis addressing potential effects on students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, multilingual learners, Black students, and Latinx students, and also include information regarding Pre-Kindergarten programming, including enrollment, classroom capacity, program placement, and any potential impacts on affected schools.

Introduction

Though the purpose of this study is to assist with the school closure decision, the district has made it known that a possible school closure(s) would coincide with a district-wide elementary boundary change process. In the absence of finalized attendance zones, it is difficult for the district to identify exactly the total number of students to be affected by any specific school closure scenario. Rather than making assumptions, the focus is on understanding potential risks and setting clear equity guardrails to guide future decisions. What is known, at this time, includes each school's demographics, academic outcomes, and attendance patterns, which together help frame the broader context even without student school assignments.

To stay grounded in student experience, universal risk factors exist that should apply across all schools. These include the importance of stable relationships with peers and teachers, continuity of instruction, access to programs and extracurricular opportunities, reliable transportation, and the timing of transitions, with the understanding that certain grade levels are more sensitive to change than others.

At the same time, the district should consider how different groups of students may experience transitions differently, without overgeneralizing entire schools. This includes reflecting on the potential impacts for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students already facing attendance challenges, and those in key transition years such as rising fifth and eighth graders. The central principle is to keep equity rooted in actual student experience rather than assumptions.

It is recommended that this work unfolds in 3 phases. In phase 1, after the closure decision is made and before attendance zones are established, the district should develop school level equity profiles, identifying universal risk factors, examining student level sensitivities, and being transparent about current limitations. In phase 2, once zones are created in partnership with a demographer, the analysis should shift to concrete impacts such as how students are redistributed, how demographics change, what transportation looks like, and how access to programs may shift. In phase 3, after decisions are made, the focus should turn to targeted mitigation strategies along with ongoing monitoring and adjustment to ensure student needs are met.

Ephesus Elementary (Including Glenwood and Seawell Analysis)

Student Groups

As reported to the NC Department of Public Instruction, the table below presents a snapshot of student demographics and program participation across Ephesus Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and Seawell Elementary which is based on the October 2025 “20th” day enrollment data. Each school reflects a distinct demographic composition, while also showing some common trends in student needs and enrollment patterns.

Ephesus Elementary has the largest share of White students at 50.6%, with smaller but relatively balanced representation among Asian (14.3%), Black (15.3%), and Latinx (13.0%) students. Multiracial students account for 6.4%. Over one-third of students (34.5%) are identified as Economically Disadvantaged (EDS), and 13.3% receive Special Education services (SWD).

Glenwood Elementary stands out for its higher percentage of Asian students (38.0%), the largest among the three schools, while its White student population is 35.4%. Other groups include Black (8.6%), Latinx (4.6%), and Multiracial students (12.9%). Glenwood has the lowest percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students (17.5%) and Students with Disabilities (9.1%) among the three schools.

Seawell Elementary presents a more evenly distributed demographic profile, with White students making up 34.9% of the population, followed by Asian (28.6%), Black (16.5%), and Latinx (11.1%) students. Multiracial students account for 8.9%. Similar to Ephesus, Seawell has a relatively high percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students (32.2%) and the highest proportion of Multilingual Learners (16.5%) among the three schools.

The differences in demographic composition and program participation (EDS, ML, SWD), and available seats highlight varying levels of diversity and student needs (see table).

Ephesus Elementary (Including Glenwood and Seawell Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools - Demographic Breakdown

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	EDS	ML	SWD	Enrolled	Open Seats
Carrboro*	2.4%	2.4%	35.6%	4.5%	55.1%	34.4%	20.4%	14.0%	494	24
Estes Hills	8.6%	10.4%	12.2%	12.5%	56.4%	25.8%	8.3%	12.8%	337	179
Ephesus	14.3%	15.3%	13.0%	6.4%	50.6%	34.5%	10.2%	13.3%	391	45
Frank P Graham *	1.3%	4.6%	50.9%	4.8%	38.5%	38.5%	29.9%	8.8%	525	-3
Glenwood^	38.0%	8.6%	4.6%	12.9%	35.4%	17.5%	11.6%	9.1%	395	17
McDougle	3.5%	13.3%	18.4%	8.5%	56.3%	30.6%	11.0%	15.9%	483	65
Morris Grove	15.6%	8.1%	14.2%	8.1%	53.8%	24.5%	10.8%	16.7%	372	196
Northside	11.0%	27.7%	14.0%	6.3%	40.7%	49.7%	11.5%	17.6%	364	204
Rashkis	21.1%	22.7%	16.4%	8.1%	31.6%	51.7%	19.6%	19.8%	383	185
Scroggs	10.9%	15.7%	15.4%	7.3%	50.8%	29.0%	11.1%	15.4%	396	162
Seawell	28.6%	16.5%	11.1%	8.9%	34.9%	32.2%	16.5%	13.4%	395	55
<i>(2025-26 20th Day Enrollment)</i>			*Spanish Dual Language Program				^Mandarin Dual Language Program			

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

CHCCS Elementary Schools - Demographic Breakdown for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	EDS	ML	SWD	Enrolled	Open Seats
Ephesus	14.3%	15.3%	13.0%	6.4%	50.6%	34.5%	10.2%	13.3%	391	45
Glenwood^	38.0%	8.6%	4.6%	12.9%	35.4%	17.5%	11.6%	9.1%	395	17
Seawell	28.6%	16.5%	11.1%	8.9%	34.9%	32.2%	16.5%	13.4%	395	55
<i>(2025-26 20th Day Enrollment)</i>			^Mandarin Dual Language Program							

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Ephesus Elementary (Including Glenwood and Seawell Analysis)

Reading and Math Academic Performance for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

The 2024 Reading and Math academic performance data for Ephesus Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and Seawell Elementary shows generally strong outcomes across both subjects, with some notable differences in achievement and growth patterns.


Overall, Glenwood Elementary stands out as the highest-performing school, earning an A in Math and a B in Reading. It leads in both Reading Achievement (84) and Math Achievement (86), as well as the highest SPG scores in both subjects (81 in Reading and 87 in Math). However, its Reading Growth (70) is the lowest among the three schools, suggesting that while students are performing at a high level, their year-over-year progress in reading is comparatively slower.

Seawell Elementary demonstrates balanced performance across all measures. With B grades in both Reading and Math, it maintains consistent scores in SPG (77 in both subjects) and Achievement (77 Reading, 76 Math). Its Growth scores (78 Reading, 82 Math) indicate steady student progress, positioning Seawell as the most consistent performer without major strengths or weaknesses.


Ephesus Elementary shows solid growth despite lower achievement levels. While it holds B grades in both subjects and has the lowest Reading Achievement (67) and relatively lower SPG scores (71 Reading, 78 Math), it excels in Growth, particularly in Math (91) and Reading (85). This suggests that although overall proficiency is lower, students at Ephesus are making significant academic gains.


2024 Reading & Math Academic Performance			
	Ephesus ES	Glenwood ES	Seawell ES
Reading Grade	B	B	B
Math Grade	B	A	B
Reading SPG Score	71	81	77
Math SPG Score	78	87	77
Reading Achievement	67	84	77
Math Achievement	76	86	76
Reading Growth	85	70	78
Math Growth	91	91	82

School Performance Grades




Ephesus ES



 Reading
B
2024-29



 Math
B
2024-25

SPG Score: **71** SPG Score: **78**
 Achievement: **67** Achievement: **76**
 Growth: **85** Growth: **91**




Glenwood ES



 Reading
B
2024-25



 Math
A
2024-25

SPG Score: **81** SPG Score: **87**
 Achievement: **84** Achievement: **86**
 Growth: **70** Growth: **91**



Seawell ES


 Reading
B
2024-21


 Math
B
2024-25

SPG Score: **77** SPG Score: **77**
 Achievement: **77** Achievement: **76**
 Growth: **78** Growth: **82**

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Ephesus Elementary (Including Glenwood and Seawell Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools - Student Attendance

As prepared by the Office of Research, Assessment, and Student Information, the 2024-25 Average Daily Attendance data (see table below) highlights a strong overall commitment to student presence across schools from August through June, with most campuses maintaining attendance rates in the mid 90 percent range. This consistency reflects a district wide emphasis on engagement and the importance of daily participation in learning.

Across student groups, attendance remains relatively balanced, though some variation is visible. White and Multiracial students tend to show slightly higher attendance rates overall, while attendance among Black and Latinx students, though still solid, trends a bit lower in comparison. These differences, while not drastic, point to opportunities for targeted support to ensure equitable access and engagement for all student populations.

School level attendance shows a similarly positive picture, with several schools such as Estes Hills, Glenwood, and McDougle demonstrating particularly strong attendance across multiple subgroups. At the same time, a few schools and student groups reflect modest dips, suggesting areas where focused interventions or additional resources could further strengthen outcomes.

Attendance among Multilingual Learners (ML) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) generally aligns with overall trends but shows slightly more variability, reinforcing the importance of continued monitoring and tailored strategies to support these groups. Note: The State doesn't have comparable data posted publicly on the internet, so the Office of Research, Assessment and Student Information calculated it from the data in Infinite Campus.

2024-25 Average Daily Attendance - Percent Attendance from August - June

	All	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	ML	SWD
Carrboro	95.0	94.5	94.2	94.9	95.3	95.0	95.0	92.4
Ephesus	95.0	95.8	92.9	94.5	95.9	95.4	94.6	93.7
Estes Hills	95.6	95.7	92.0	95.2	95.8	96.4	94.8	93.2
FPG	95.3	97.5	97.1	94.5	96.7	96.1	94.0	95.0
Glenwood	95.3	96.0	94.8	94.9	95.9	95.8	96.2	95.1
McDougle	95.8	97.0	93.1	92.6	94.5	95.9	91.9	93.7
Morris Grove	94.8	96.0	92.1	95.2	96.3	95.6	95.0	94.8
Northside	95.4	96.0	92.4	93.2	93.2	95.0	95.2	91.2
Rashkis	94.2	96.0	93.2	92.7	93.6	95.4	95.0	91.9
Scroggs	94.5	95.8	92.4	92.5	95.1	95.3	92.9	92.2
Seawell	94.6	96.2	95.1	94.8	95.0	94.9	95.5	93.2

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Ephesus Elementary (Including Glenwood and Seawell Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools -

Student Attendance for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

Overall, Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell are all performing at a high level, with percentages mostly in the mid-90s across student groups. Glenwood has the highest overall score at 95.3%, followed closely by Ephesus at 95.0%, while Seawell is slightly lower at 94.6%.

Looking at specific student groups:

- Asian students perform consistently well across all schools, with Seawell leading at 96.2%, followed by Glenwood at 96.0% and Ephesus at 95.8%.
- For Black students, Seawell again has the highest performance at 95.1%, followed by Glenwood at 94.8%, while Ephesus is lower at 92.9%, representing the largest gap among schools for any subgroup.
- Among Latinx students, results are very similar across schools, with Glenwood slightly ahead at 94.9%, Seawell at 94.8%, and Ephesus at 94.5%.
- In the Multiracial group, Ephesus and Glenwood are tied at 95.9%, while Seawell is slightly lower at 95.0%.
- For White students, Glenwood again has the highest score at 95.8%, followed by Ephesus at 95.4% and Seawell at 94.9%.

2024-25 Average Daily Attendance - Percent Attendance from August - June

	All	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	ML	SWD
Ephesus	95.0	95.8	92.9	94.5	95.9	95.4	94.6	93.7
Glenwood	95.3	96.0	94.8	94.9	95.9	95.8	96.2	95.1
Seawell	94.6	96.2	95.1	94.8	95.0	94.9	95.5	93.2

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Ephesus Elementary (Including Glenwood and Seawell Analysis)

Exceptional Children Services

In considering the potential closure of Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell Elementary Schools, it is important to recognize that a school is not simply a place of instruction for students receiving exceptional children (EC) services. It is a carefully developed ecosystem of support, predictability, and relationships that must be thoughtfully considered.

While none of these schools house our Exceptional Children's Adapted Curriculum (ECAC) programs, our most medically fragile and severely disabled students, it is equally important that we make every effort to think through the challenges that our exceptional student population at each school will face. For all students with individualized education plans (IEPs), significant time and effort has been invested in building trust with teachers and designing for specially designed instruction. The relationships with instructional assistants, therapists, and other related support staff are not incidental; they are foundational to student progress.

Legally, if a school were to close, services would follow the student. The district would remain responsible for providing a free appropriate public education, and IEPs would continue to be implemented in a new setting. This would also not have an impact on caseload ratios for teachers. Our caseloads are well below state average. While this suggests continuity on paper, the reality is that transitions introduce variables that can disproportionately affect students with disabilities if not carefully planned for in advance.

A new school environment may involve unfamiliar hallways, louder cafeterias, different classroom layouts, and altered schedules. For students who rely on consistency and structure, these changes can lead to anxiety, regression, or behavioral challenges initially if these factors are not taken into consideration prior to their occurrence.

It is important to acknowledge that while legal compliance ensures services continue, it does not fully capture the student experience. The key question is not only whether services can be delivered elsewhere, but whether they can be delivered with the same level of effectiveness, stability, and responsiveness that students currently experience at Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell.

Any decision regarding closure should therefore include a careful, student-centered transition plan. This should involve advance preparation for students, additional teacher training, opportunities to visit new environments, thoughtful placement decisions, continuity of key staff when possible, and clear communication with families.

Ephesus Elementary

Criteria #4

Additional Facility Costs

Cost of Providing Additional Facilities

Additional facility costs are not applicable to this study, as the Board of Education is evaluating school closure based on the district's existing elementary school portfolio rather than consolidation.

Criteria #5

Recent and Projected Capital Expenditures

Recent District Capital Expenditures (2020-2025)

Over the past five years, capital expenditures have been largely directed toward targeted repairs, safety systems, and facility upgrades approximating \$678,024 (see next table).

Projected District Capital Expenditures (2026-2036)

District facilities staff conducted a survey of the school's facility and building systems. This projection shifts from targeted repairs to large, system-wide infrastructure replacements and estimates approximately \$24,535,049 needed over the next ten years using a 4% annual escalation factor. These projects include full HVAC system replacements, roof replacements across major building sections, stormwater and sewer infrastructure replacements, and major facility improvements in addition to other projects (see next table).

Ephesus Elementary

Recent and Projected Capital Expenditures

Ephesus Elementary				
High Priority Maintenance Project	2020-2025	2025	2030 (5 Years)	2035 (10 Years)
Security System Upgrades (Camera/Door Access)	\$64,624	-	-	-
Mobile Unit Gutter Replacement	\$40,000	-	-	-
3/5 Playground	\$225,000	-	-	-
Pre-K Playground	\$102,000	-	-	-
Fire Alarm System Replacement	\$105,000	-	-	-
Fencing	\$81,000	-	-	-
Roofing Repairs	\$17,400	-	-	-
Site Drainage / Foundation Repair	\$21,000	-	-	-
Library Carpet	\$22,000	-	-	-
Grade 3/5 Wing HVAC Replacement	-	\$950,000	\$1,155,820	\$1,406,232
HVAC Roof Top Units Replacement	-	\$425,000	\$517,077	\$629,104
Storm Water Pipe Replacement	-	\$1,600,000	\$1,946,645	\$2,368,391
Exterior Sanitary Sewer Pipe Replacement	-	\$1,550,000	\$1,885,812	\$2,294,379
Interior Sanitary Sewer Pipe Replacement	-	\$2,700,000	\$3,284,963	\$3,996,660
Asphalt Replacement/Vehicle Queuing	-	\$1,800,000	\$2,189,975	\$2,664,440
Grade 3/5 Wing Roof Replacement	-	\$1,500,000	\$1,824,979	\$2,220,366
Schoolwide VCT Tile Replacement	-	\$570,000	\$693,492	\$843,739
Domestic Water Piping Replacement	-	\$925,000	\$1,125,404	\$1,369,226
Replace Cabins (7 Cabins Total)	-	\$840,000	\$1,021,988	\$1,243,405
Schoolwide Ceiling Grid and Tile Replacement	-	\$250,000	\$304,163	\$370,061
Kitchen Renovation/Equipment Replacement	-	\$1,300,000	\$1,581,649	\$1,924,318
Bathroom Renovations Schoolwide	-	\$750,000	\$912,490	\$1,110,183
Gymnasium Floor Replacement	-	\$140,000	\$170,331	\$207,234
Lighting Fixture Replacement	-	\$275,000	\$334,580	\$407,067
Abatement	-	\$300,000	\$364,996	\$444,073
Foundation Slab Repair	-	\$175,000	\$212,914	\$259,043
Playground Replacement (1)	-	\$325,000	\$395,412	\$481,079
Blacktop Play Area Resurfacing	-	\$200,000	\$243,331	\$296,049
District Total	\$678,024	\$16,575,000	\$20,166,021	\$24,535,049

Ephesus Elementary

Woolpert Projected Capital Expenditures (Comfortable and Safe)

In 2023, Orange County contracted with Woolpert, Inc. to conduct a facilities assessment for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City and Orange County Schools in order to develop a fiscal planning document on future capital maintenance expenditures. Option B was developed to represent a comprehensive approach focused on restoring all existing facilities to a safe, functional, and “like-new” condition with an overall total projected investment of \$675.1 million over ten years. This plan fully addresses the needs identified in the district’s facility condition assessment. The intent of this option was to ensure that all buildings are comfortable, reliable, and free of deferred maintenance concerns, creating a stable and secure environment for students and staff.

While Option B successfully resolves all identified facility deficiencies, it is important to note that it does not include enhancements to educational spaces or address issues of school capacity. Classrooms, layouts, and instructional environments would remain largely unchanged, meaning the plan does not modernize learning spaces or adapt them to evolving educational needs. Additionally, this option does not provide for new school construction or significant renovations that would expand or reimagine existing facilities.

For Ephesus Elementary, Option B recommended that approximately \$28.2M is needed to address the school’s maintenance needs over the next ten years (see table below).

CHCCS OPTIONS DETAILS

	OPTION A COMFORTABLE AND SAFE	OPTION B COMFORTABLE AND SAFE, PLUS 10-YEAR FACILITY NEEDS	COMFORTABLE AND SAFE,
SCHOOL NAME	BUDGET	BUDGET	STRATEGY
CARRBORO ES	\$0.0 M	\$22.0 M	Replacement School
EPHESUS ES	\$8.5 M	\$28.2 M	High Priority Needs
ESTES HILLS ES	\$3.4 M	\$29.5 M	Replacement School
FRANK PORTER GRAHAM ES	\$5.4 M	\$30.9 M	Consolidate
GLENWOOD ES	\$1.0 M	\$16.3 M	High Priority Needs
MORRIS GROVE ES	\$4.5 M	\$24.6 M	High Priority Needs
NORTHSIDE ES	\$0.0 M	\$13.3 M	High Priority Needs
RASHKIS ES	\$6.4 M	\$29.7 M	High Priority Needs
SCROGGS ES	\$4.4 M	\$29.9 M	High Priority Needs
SEAWELL ES	\$0.5 M	\$23.1 M	High Priority Needs
MCDUGLE ES	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CARRBORO HS	\$9.2 M	\$67.1 M	High Priority Needs
CHAPEL HILL HS	\$10.9 M	\$29.6 M	High Priority Needs
E. CHAPEL HILL HS	\$23.2 M	\$75.6 M	High Priority Needs
PHOENIX ACADEMY	\$1.5 M	\$2.8 M	Renovation
MCDUGLE MS	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CULBRETH MS	\$8.9 M	\$44.6 M	Replacement School
PHILLIPS MS	\$3.6 M	\$29.0 M	High Priority Needs
SMITH MS	\$12.5 M	\$42.2 M	Adequacy (Learning Tools)
LINCOLN CENTER	\$5.2 M	\$15.0 M	-

Ephesus Elementary

Criteria #6

Building Adjacency to Middle or High Schools

The study shall evaluate the adjacency of each school to nearby middle or high schools, including potential programmatic and academic impacts, opportunities for cross-school collaboration, and any long-range planning considerations. (Notes/Comments: Proximity can make academic acceleration more logistically feasible, allowing elementary students to take classes at the middle or high school level.)

Neither a middle or high school is contiguous to Ephesus Elementary School. (Note: Ephesus Park is adjacent to the school.)

Criteria #7

Transportation Costs

The study shall evaluate transportation costs and impacts, including all modes of student transportation, such as bus eligibility, actual bus ridership, walk zones, and other transportation patterns, to assess the potential operational and financial effects associated with student reassignment.

Ephesus Elementary School serves approximately 373 students, with transportation patterns distributed across CHCCS bus transportation, walking/biking, and parent-driven travel. Of the total student population, 253 students (approximately 68%) are eligible for school-provided transportation.

The school operates three regular/exceptional transportation buses. Morning ridership includes approximately 140 students, representing 55% of eligible riders and 38% of total enrollment. This suggests that a notable portion of transportation-eligible students do not utilize bus service on a daily basis.

Non-transportation zone (NTZ) data indicates variation between systems. Infinite Campus identifies 164 students (44% of total enrollment) as NTZ, while the transportation routing system (TIMS) identifies 125 students (34%). After inquiring with transportation staff, this 39-student discrepancy reflects students who are provided bus transportation within the 1.5 mile NTZ due to environmental factors making it unsafe to walk to school. The Infinite Campus counts do not reflect this transportation modification.

Alternative transportation methods (walking/biking) account for a significant share of student travel. The Town of Chapel Hill's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) audit observations recorded 64 students walking and 14 students biking. Combined, walking/biking represents approximately 19% of the student population. In addition, approximately 160 students (43%) are transported by private vehicle daily, indicating that parent-driven commuting is the single largest mode of transportation.

Ephesus Elementary

Overall, student transportation at Ephesus reflects a multi-modal distribution: approximately 38% bus ridership (morning), 19% active transportation (walk/bike), and 43% parent-driven travel. Ephesus Elementary's transportation landscape reflects a combination of bus usage, walking/biking, and parent-driven travel.

See table below for comparison amongst the 3 closure study schools.

School Bus Information / Student Counts / Methods of Transportation			
Information	Ephesus ES	Glenwood ES	Seawell ES
~ # of Students Eligible for Bus Transportation	253	389	282
~ # of Regular/EC Buses at School	3 buses	7 buses	4 buses
~ # of Students Counted Riding Bus (AM)	140	170	147
~ # of Students Identified as Non-Transportation Zone (Infinite Campus)	164	0	121
~ Adjusted # of Students Identified as Non-Transportation Zone by Transportation (TIMS)	125	2	120
# of Students Observed Walking to School (SRTS Audit)	64	38 (4)	25
~ # of Students Biking to School (SRTS Audit)	14	7	23
~ # of Students Driven to School by Parents	160	210	207
~ Average School Bus Ride Time (first bus stop to arrival at school)	30 minutes	38 minutes	28 minutes
~ Average Individual School Bus Ride Time (1st bus stop to arrival at school)	Bus 154 - 21 minutes Bus 162 - 23 minutes Bus E141 - 45 minutes	Bus 159 - 43 minutes Bus 160 - 54 minutes Bus 132 - 47 minutes Bus 139 - 30 minutes Bus 28 - 43 minutes Bus 76 - 35 minutes Bus 89 - 18 minutes	Bus 128 - 38 minutes Bus 129 - 31 minutes Bus 55 - 10 minutes Bus 37 - 34 minutes

Ephesus Elementary

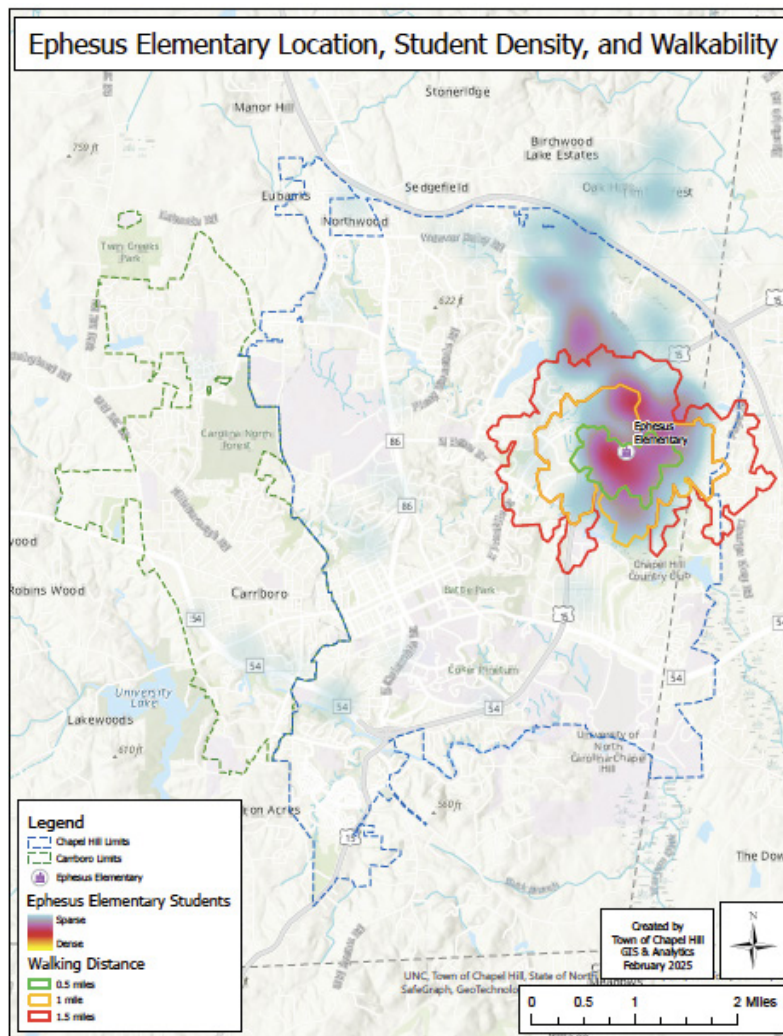
Estimated Additional Ride Time to Adjacent Elementary Schools (Rashkis and Estes Hills)

When considering potential changes to bus ride times, it is important to note that discussions around school closures are driven by imbalances in elementary school enrollment across the district. Addressing this issue would require a districtwide adjustment of elementary school boundaries, which would occur concurrently with any school closure(s). As a result, bus routes and ride times would be modified throughout the district.

Based on discussions with CHCCS transportation staff, it is estimated that bus routes serving students from the Ephesus Elementary School zone to the nearest adjacent schools (Estes Hills ES and Rashkis ES) could increase by approximately 2.3 to 3.3 miles, resulting in an additional 9-12 minutes of travel time. Actual impacts may vary depending on the final boundary adjustments and route configurations.

Town of Chapel Hill / CHCCS Safe Routes to School's Student Density and Walk Counts

The Town of Chapel Hill's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) partnered with CHCCS to determine the numbers of students living within 0-1.5 miles of its schools in their SRTS Action Plan (adopted by Town Council on June 11, 2025). Depicted below is a heatmap denoting in total, 99 students live within 0.5 miles, 93 live within 0.5-1 mile, and 59 live within 1-1.5 miles of Ephesus. Also noting that many students live over 1.5 miles away, north of US-15/501.



Ephesus Elementary

In addition, the Chapel Hill Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program conducted its walk counts as part of the broader SRTS Action Plan to gather empirical data on student travel patterns. These walk counts involved direct observation of students arriving at and departing from school campuses during specific, pre-determined timeframes. The observations, such as those conducted on November 12, 2024, at various schools including Ephesus Elementary, were designed to accurately quantify the number of students utilizing active transportation, specifically walking and biking, versus other modes of travel like riding the bus or being driven by parents. This data is critical for understanding existing transportation behaviors, assessing the effectiveness of current walk and bike zones, and informing future infrastructure and programming decisions related to safe student access.

For Ephesus Elementary, SRTS staff counted 64 walkers and 14 bikers out of 401 enrolled students at the time of the direct observation. This equates to approximately 16% walking and 3.5% biking (see table below).

Town of Chapel Hill / CHCCS Safe Routes to Schools Action Plan Walk Counts by School (observations Nov. 12, 2024)					
School	Walk	Bike	Student Enrollment	Walk %	Bike %
Ephesus ES	64	14	401	16.00%	3.50%
Estes Hills ES	58	11	355	16.30%	3.10%
FPG Bilingüe ES	30	1	528	5.70%	0.20%
Glenwood ES	38	7	408	9.30%	1.70%
Northside ES	51	5	399	12.80%	1.30%
Rashkis ES	38	19	437	8.70%	4.30%
Scroggs ES	115	16	406	28.30%	3.90%
Seawell ES	25	23	456	5.50%	5.00%
Culbreth MS	98	6	665	14.70%	0.90%
Phillips MS	34	6	575	5.90%	1.00%
Smith MS	98	21	750	13.10%	2.80%
Chapel Hill HS	127	46	1,642	7.70%	2.80%
East Chapel Hill HS	92	20	1,417	6.50%	1.40%
Phoenix Academy HS	1	0	38	2.60%	0.00%

Ephesus Elementary

Annual District Bus Operating Costs

As reported to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), in the 2024-25 school year, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools operated 55 buses, transported 3,880 students, and traveled 728,860 miles at a total cost of \$3,013,692. This equates to a \$4.13 cost per mile. The average operating cost per bus was \$54,794.40 with a cost per pupil of \$936.53.

NCDPI Table 32

Select School Year:

Search by LEA Name:

Table 32 - STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ON PUBLIC SCHOOL BUSES

Student Transportation on Public School Buses School Year 2024-25

Year	LEA ↑	LEA Name	Buses	Pupils	Miles	Cost	Cost Per Bus	Cost Per Pupil	Cost Per Mile
2025	681	Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	55	3,880	728,860	3,013,692	54,794.40	936.53	4.13

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1 - 1

Note: Transportation includes contract transportation.

Estimated Additional Transportation Costs

For this analysis, district transportation staff used students currently within the non-transportation zone (NTZ) as the basis for estimating additional ridership if Ephesus Elementary were to close. At Ephesus, approximately 125 students do not receive transportation services and instead walk, bike, or rely on parent-provided transportation.

To estimate costs, the district applied the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) average annual transportation cost per student. For the 2024–25 school year, NCDPI’s Table 32 – Student Transportation on Public School Buses reports that Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools spent an average of \$936.53 per pupil.

Applying this per-pupil cost to the 125 students who would no longer be in the NTZ results in an estimated additional annual transportation cost of approximately \$117,000. It is the goal of the transportation department to find other district inefficiencies during the boundary process that will allow buses to be reassigned to cover this additional cost.

Ephesus Elementary

Criteria #8

Site Adequacy

The evaluation of site adequacy, including whether each facility provides sufficient space and appropriate program fit to support current and potential programming, shall assess facility capacity and suitability, including considerations for programs such as Pre-Kindergarten, should relocation or reassignment become necessary.

Educational Adequacy (School Site)

Determining a school site's educational adequacy focuses on whether its physical spaces effectively support both the programs offered and the number of students served. It goes beyond simply counting rooms by evaluating how well those spaces function for teaching, learning, and student support.

The Woolpert study assessed all CHCCS classrooms to compare existing facilities against current North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) standards and best practices in K-12 educational design. In doing so, it centered on three key questions:

1. Did the school have all the necessary rooms?

This examines whether each facility includes the full range of spaces required for a comprehensive educational program. In addition to standard classrooms, this includes specialized areas such as science labs, art and music rooms, career and technical education (CTE) spaces, media centers, cafeterias, gyms, and support spaces (e.g., counseling, exceptional education, calming and sensory rooms, and multilingual learner (MLL) spaces). Adequacy requires that no essential space is missing.

2. Were the rooms appropriately sized?

Even when all required spaces are present, they must be large enough to support their intended use and student capacity. This involves comparing room sizes to enrollment and program standards - for example, ensuring classrooms can accommodate class sizes, labs provide safe working space, and shared areas can handle peak usage. Undersized spaces can limit instruction and create safety or accessibility concerns.

3. Did the rooms have the right equipment?

Adequacy also depends on whether each space is properly equipped. Classrooms require appropriate furniture and instructional technology, labs need specialized equipment and safety features, and programs such as CTE and the arts depend on industry-standard tools. A room may exist and be appropriately sized, but without proper equipment, it cannot fully support its intended function.

Ephesus Elementary

Together, these criteria assess educational adequacy in terms of completeness (having all required spaces), capacity (appropriate size), and functionality (proper equipment). A school meets adequacy standards only when all three are satisfied.

Overall, the Woolpert study found that older schools in the district scored lower in terms of the number and size of rooms compared to newer facilities. However, across the district, these schools generally scored higher in terms of having appropriate equipment and resources.

The table below denotes the level of educational adequacy determined by the 2023 study for Ephesus Elementary School.

Educational Adequacy for Ephesus Elementary					
School	Gross Square Footage	Year Built	Space Types	Space Types > minimum	Space Requirements
			Question #1	Question #2	Question #3
Ephesus ES	66,952	1972	72%	36%	88%
Glenwood ES	66,664	1952	76%	54%	86%
Seawell ES	66,198	1969	66%	33%	83%

Modular Units: Use at School

Ephesus Elementary presently has seven (7) modular units available on its campus. Below is a table that indicates their use and count.

Modular Units at Ephesus ES	
Use	Modular Unit Count
Pre-K	1
Pre-K	1
Pre-K	1
Pre-K	1
Unassigned	1
Unassigned	1
Unassigned	1
Total	7

Ephesus Elementary

Update: 10-Year CHCCS Enrollment Forecast

Based on the recently released Carolina Demography's *Student Membership Forecast: 2025-26 through 2035-36 for Orange County: Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools and Orange County Schools* report, CHCCS enrollment is not declining in speed or magnitude as previously anticipated. While Carolina Demography's report can inform decisions about CHCCS maximum operational efficiency, it should not serve as the sole driver for the purpose of this study. CHCCS enrollment is shifting in ways that have meaningful implications for how the district will continue to serve students in alignment with North Carolina legislation, funding, and its own priorities.

Review: CHCCS School Capacity and Orange County Growth Management

The Carolina Demography membership forecast report uses school capacity numbers originating from the Orange County School Adequate Public Facility Ordinance, or SAPFO. SAPFO capacity numbers are used to manage growth in Orange County from a public facility capacity to ensure new residential developments up for review will have adequate public services (capacity in K12 CHCCS Schools) generated by a new development. Thus, the SAPFO capacity numbers have historically been the method to determine whether or not additional schools were needed due to student growth versus closure.

The Path Ahead: CHCCS Academic Program Capacities

Decisions regarding district operations, facilities, and school assignments must also reflect DPI standards and the district's commitment to high-quality and accessible instructional support spaces. To align administrative recommendations with updated enrollment trends, the next critical step is developing a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of academic program capacity and educational adequacy which is commonly referred to as Program Capacity.

Design vs. Program Capacities

A school's designed seat capacity is often viewed in terms of physical space, meaning how many students a building can accommodate based on available seats. However, program capacity is more complex. A school may have available classrooms but lack the specialized spaces, staffing, or scheduling flexibility required to support programs such as exceptional children (EC), multilingual learners, or early childhood initiatives. Additionally, NCDPI K-3 class size requirements, service delivery models, and program-specific needs can significantly reduce what appears to be available capacity on paper.

Considering both program capacity and educational adequacy allows CHCCS to move from reactive to strategic decision-making. Rather than focusing solely on building utilization, the district can better align facilities, staffing, and programming to support the whole child.

Ephesus Elementary

Integrating K12 Enrollment Forecasting with Program Capacities

Ultimately, this student projection analysis is not just a forecast, it is a signal. It underscores the need to evaluate how CHCCS resources are distributed, how programs are delivered, and whether existing systems including academic programming, staffing allotments, and ultimately school boundaries can support the district's long-term goals. By developing a clearer understanding of Program Capacity and educational adequacy now, CHCCS will be better positioned to make informed, equitable, and sustainable decisions that ensure long-term access to high-quality education for all learners.

As a result, CHCCS consulted with North Carolina State University's Institution for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) and the SchoolCAMP team, which provides strategic consultation, planning, and analysis to public K12 school districts with respect to school planning, school boundary processes, and transportation routing/efficiencies. Their initial task was to assist CHCCS in better understanding how it uses its school building spaces, through inventorying and principal consultation, and to compare against North Carolina DPI's standards and best educational practices.

CHCCS School Capacity Review with Academic Programs

The Program Capacity of a K12 Classroom and School requires information on:

1. **Classrooms:** the number of built physical spaces within a school
2. **Size and Suitability:** the overall size of each classroom and the features it affords teachers and students - including bathrooms, sinks and hot water
3. **Students:** the grade and unique learning needs of the students within
4. **Program:** the classroom features and regulatory framework for instructional delivery

Example

- **School A** is a traditional, geographically-assigned (school boundary) Elementary
- **School B** is a lottery-assigned Dual Language Immersion Elementary
- **Classroom 100 for both schools is 900 square feet and serves First Grade**
 - The Program Capacity of School A for Room 100 is **16 students**
 - However, because School B is a DLI Program, the Program Capacity for Room 100 is **24 students**

Age of Facility and Educational Adequacy, Suitability

The average age of schools in North Carolina is 55 years old. The history of school construction reflects values and instructional priorities over time and era of school construction. Thus, older schools in North Carolina and the US have smaller classrooms dedicated for teacher-led instruction (i.e. desks pointed to the front of the chalkboard in minimally sized rooms). In addition, older schools tend to have a lack of academic support, or Resource Rooms, used for modern pull-out instruction, like ESL, AIG, Intervention, etc.

Beyond the core K12 Instructional Spaces and Resource Rooms, newer schools often have - and need - swing, or flex spaces. These rooms are used when student enrollment crests beyond the built classroom arrangements, and are flexible spaces that can be used both for lower K-2 and upper Grade 3-5 use on an as-needed basis.

Ephesus Elementary

CHCCS School Capacities: Woolpert / SAPFO / CHCCS Program and Use

The Orange County and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School community have historically evaluated the size, or capacity of schools, across several indicators. These include:

- **2023 Woolpert Report** - Utilized Square Footage per Student to evaluate the size and adequacy of school facilities for Orange County Bond support.
- **2024-25 SAPFO Capacities** - Often referred to as legacy capacities, these numbers indicate the maximum number of students that could receive academic instruction if all rooms were filled irrespective of community and academic programs, such as Exceptional Child Separate Setting Classrooms (EC AC), Pre-Kindergarten, AIG and Multi-Lingual Supports.
- **2026 CHCCS Program Capacity** - In coordination with CHCCS Operational, Academic and School Leadership, NCSU ITRE / SchoolCAMP Planners have evaluated the allotted and actual space use of all CHCCS Schools in accordance with classroom size, design, attributes and the academic programs being delivered at each campus. In addition, SchoolCAMP Planners met individually with each School Leadership team to produce a ‘ground up’ profile for each school that reflects EC AC, Pre-Kindergarten and additional programs that require space at each school.

CHCCS School Capacities

Label	Elementary School Name	Woolpert Capacity	SAPFO Capacity	CHCCS Program Capacity	2030-31 Project Enroll	2030-31 Utilization Rates
CES	Carrboro Elementary with DLI	543	518	520	398	77%
EES	Ephesus Elementary	578	436	416	417	100%
EHES	Estes Hills Elementary	528	516	464	389	84%
FPGES	FPG Bilingüe Elem. with DLI	589	522	576	498	87%
GES	Glenwood Elem. with DLI	407	412	420	421	100%
MSES	Scroggs Elementary	521	558	496	307	62%
MES	McDougle Elementary	550	548	432	511	118%
MGES	Morris Grove Elementary	547	568	484	356	74%
NES	Northside Elementary	583	568	484	291	60%
RES	Rashkis Elementary	532	568	462	253	55%
SES	Seawell Elementary	378	450	416	336	81%
Totals		5,756	5,664	5,170	4,177	81%

Ephesus Elementary

Analysis of School Capacities for CHCCS

The inclusion and adjustments for the CHCCS Academic Program relies on the following guidelines:

1. K-3 Classroom Size in accordance with NC House Bill 90
 - a. Kindergarten - Average 18 Students per Classroom, Maximum 21
 - b. First Grade - Average 16 Students per Classroom, Maximum 19
 - c. Second Grade - Average 17 Students per Classroom, Maximum 20
 - d. Third Grade - Average 17 Students per Classroom, Maximum 20
2. Fixed number of Classrooms at each school
3. Classroom attributes and features of each classroom
4. CHCCS Academic Program Spaces: Art, Music and ECAC require full sized classroom
5. CHCCS Support Spaces: Resource, AIG, Intervention, ESL
6. Orange County and CHCCS Program Shared Space: Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms in CHCCS School Facilities
7. Capacities do not reflect nor include the CHCCS Mobile Classroom Inventory - all capacities reflect bringing existing classrooms in temporary mobiles into “brick-and-mortar” buildings, including existing Pre-Kindergarten, K-5 Classroom and Resource Program placements

Ephesus Elementary

CHCCS Implications

Sustainable Operational Utilization Rate - School Systems

The overall enrollment and program capacity in a school system indicates the utilization, or operational efficiency. Maintaining an elementary school system operational utilization within the 85–95% program capacity range is best practice. School systems operating above or below the overall district percent utilization may consider adding or removing seat capacity in order to ensure sustainable district operations.

Analysis: By the school year 2030-31, it is projected that CHCCS will have 4,177 enrolled K-5 Students with an overall academic program seat capacity of 5,170 - resulting in an overall operational utilization rate of 81%. Decisions about facility operations - opening, expanding or consolidating will directly affect the overall school system utilization rate.

Balancing Operational Utilization Rates - Between Schools

Program capacity plays a major role in balancing student enrollment across school levels. Student assignment rules, school attendance boundaries, district transfer policies, and magnet lottery programs all shape how our students are assigned to elementary schools. These decisions must be made carefully - frequent student reassignment and/or academic program changes can disrupt communities; infrequent changes can allow imbalances to grow. Balancing operational utilization rates using program capacity and projected enrollment is recommended every five years as a standard of best practice.

Importance of Academic Programs and Impacts on Capacity

As demonstrated earlier, not all classrooms function the same way, and specialized programs such as EC services, dual language immersion, or intervention support often require smaller or larger class sizes or dedicated spaces. As a result, two schools with identical physical layouts can have very different effective capacities depending on the programs they house. State class size policies further influence this dynamic. Mandated limits, especially in early grades, directly determine how many students a building can accommodate. While some flexibility may exist to absorb short-term enrollment increases, sustained deviations can strain both staff and space.

In addition to the academic program impacting a school's capacity, the age of a school facility's design adds another layer of complexity. Capacity is not just about the number of classrooms, but also about how well the building supports daily operations through its educational adequacy. The district must also take into consideration core and support spaces like resource rooms, cafeterias, gyms, and arrival and dismissal areas can become bottlenecks even when classroom utilization appears to be within the target range.

Ephesus Elementary

Review: CHCCS Elementary School Program Capacity Utilization and Closure Scenarios

Over the next five years, Chapel Hill Carrboro City School's K-5 elementary enrollment and program capacity utilization is approximately 81%. The closure of one elementary school with a capacity between 400-500 seats would increase the overall CHCCS K-5 utilization from 81% to 87% - 89%. The closure of two 400-500 elementary schools would increase utilization rates to 95% - 100%.

Pre-Kindergarten Note: CHCCS Program Capacities reflect placing Pre-Kindergarten classes in CHCCS Elementary Schools. As younger students, Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms may require additional facility needs, and potentially modifications. Doing so also dedicates space to Pre-Kindergarten brick-and-mortar classrooms, moving students out of mobile classrooms - a desirable goal of the administration in addition to allowing schools to have some flexibility with their own school centric needs.

Overall, maintaining elementary schools within the 85 - 95% capacity range requires a careful balance of enrollment policies, program needs, and facility limitations. Factors such as specialized services, class size mandates, and building design all influence true capacity beyond simple classroom counts. While current utilization sits below the ideal range, and potential school closures could move the district closer to optimal levels, these decisions must also consider community stability and long term goals such as relocating prekindergarten programs into permanent facilities. Thoughtful, strategic planning is essential to ensure both efficient operations and a supportive learning environment.

Site Specific Programs

Overview of CHCCS Pre-Kindergarten Program

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) Pre-Kindergarten Program is a comprehensive early childhood education initiative, presently offered in 10 of the 11 elementary schools. The program serves three and four-year-olds and is designed to support the academic, communication, motor, social, and emotional development of young children through a structured, play-based learning environment.

CHCCS Pre-Kindergarten emphasizes whole-child development by integrating early literacy, math, and language skills with intentional opportunities to build social skills, independence, and self-confidence. Classrooms are led by licensed teachers and supported by trained instructional staff who use research-based curricula and developmentally appropriate practices.

In addition to supporting children, CHCCS Pre-Kindergarten fosters family well-being by offering parenting education, career development, and help with goal setting for housing, education, and financial stability.

Ephesus Elementary

The table below identifies in which school community the participating students enrolled at Ephesus Elementary reside.

List of Pre-K Students' Homeschools Enrolled at Ephesus ES		
School	Pre-K (3-year olds)	Pre-K (4-year olds)
Carrboro ES	0	1
Ephesus ES	9	11
Estes Hills ES	2	2
Glenwood ES	1	4
McDougle ES	0	0
Morris Grove ES	1	2
Northside ES	0	2
Rashkis ES	8	7
Scroggs ES	3	0
Seawell ES	1	0
Out of District	1	1
Subtotal	26	30
Total		56

For the 2025-26 school year, Ephesus Elementary presently has 4 classes with a total of 56 students enrolled. In the event the school is closed, the district facilities staff would be able to disperse the classes into other existing elementary schools in educational spaces in accordance with the program requirements.

Site Specific Program: Title I School Designation

CHCCS schools qualify for Title I funding based on the percentage of students from low-income families, as determined by free or reduced-price lunch eligibility or direct certification (e.g., students participating in SNAP, TANF, foster care, etc.). Ephesus Elementary is presently a school with the Title I designation.

It is difficult to assess the impact of a potential school closure at this time, as CHCCS will also undergo a subsequent districtwide redistricting process that will redistribute students across all elementary schools. The district is expected to review proposed redistricting models to determine how changes in student distribution may affect schools' eligibility for Title I funding.

Site Specific Program: Community Schools After-School Program

The CHCCS Community Schools After-School Program is designed to provide students with a safe, supportive, and enriching environment beyond the traditional school day. The program supports families by providing reliable, affordable care during after-school hours. Offered at all 11 elementary schools across the district, the program has the capacity to serve approximately 700 students, with up to 150 students per school. At Ephesus Elementary, the program presently supports 60 students. In the event the school is closed, the Community Schools administration states the students would be able to attend the program at another district elementary school.

Glenwood Elementary: Study of Proposed Closure

Introduction

Glenwood Elementary School is a hybrid-campus style design located on approximately a 10-acre parcel at 2 Prestwick Road in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and is one of eleven elementary schools within the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) district.



The school serves students in kindergarten through fifth grade and is home to the district's STEAM2 (science, technology, engineering, arts, math, and Mandarin) magnet program. Students can choose between Mandarin Dual Language Immersion and World Language pathways, which provide students with opportunities to develop global awareness and language proficiency while receiving a comprehensive elementary education.

Originally opened in 1952, Glenwood Elementary is the oldest school in CHCCS. In 1959, the school had a classroom addition added to its campus. Over the decades, the school has undergone a variety of renovations and programmatic changes as the district has expanded and diversified its instructional offerings.

Glenwood Elementary

Unlike most CHCCS elementary schools, Glenwood Elementary does not operate as a residentially assigned neighborhood school. Instead, the programs function as a districtwide lottery-based magnet. Enrollment in the program is open to families across the CHCCS district and is determined through an application and lottery process rather than by geographic attendance zones. Families apply during the district's magnet enrollment period, and available seats, primarily at the kindergarten level, are filled through a randomized lottery. This structure allows students from across CHCCS to participate in the program regardless of their residential school assignment.

The Mandarin Dual Language program follows a model in which students receive academic instruction in both Mandarin Chinese and English. Students learn core content areas through both languages. The goal of the program is to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, high academic achievement, and cross-cultural understanding. Students who begin the program in elementary school have opportunities to continue Mandarin language study in middle school within the CHCCS system. In addition to the Dual Language program, Glenwood Elementary also hosts the district's lottery-based elementary World Language program with STEAM2 and Mandarin language emphasis.

Glenwood Elementary

Criteria #1

Geographic Conditions

The study shall evaluate the geographic conditions of each school, including environmental factors such as flood zones, as well as the broader geographic impact on the district as a whole, including how a potential school closure could affect the distribution of schools across the district and the Board's future flexibility for districtwide planning.

Glenwood is just south of the junction where US-15/501 splits from NC-54. Glenwood is located on Prestwick Road, a two-lane road maintained by the Town of Chapel Hill. Glenwood is surrounded by low-density development to the south and west and medium- to high-density development along NC-54.

Wetlands and/or Floodplains

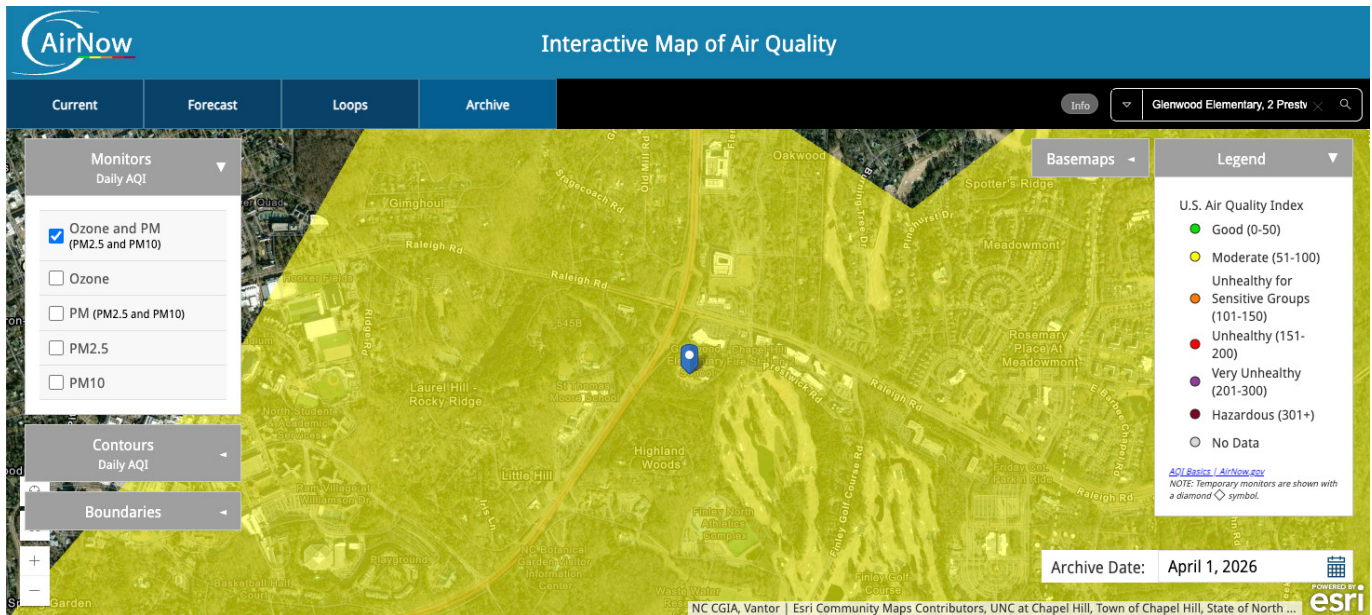
There are no identified wetlands or flood zone overlap located on the school site. However, the school site does have a substantial topographic variance which includes approximately 40 feet of elevation change from Prestwick Rd (300 feet) to the rear of the site (260 feet). With respect to streams, the school sits within the New Hope Creek watershed, which drains a large portion of eastern Chapel Hill. Unnamed tributaries (intermittent streams) run through wooded buffers and neighborhoods around Prestwick Road. These are typically small headwater streams often only visible in drainage swales or wooded areas. There is no prominent named stream directly bordering the campus, but small mapped tributaries exist close to the school site.

The 40 foot elevation change poses the greatest challenge to the site during some rain events. At times, the back athletic field may require an extended period of time to entirely dry out for school use. However, the intermittent streams outside of the Glenwood Elementary property have not posed any known concerns for the school.

Glenwood Elementary

Air Quality

The image below shows a snapshot from the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) AirNow interactive air quality map centered near Glenwood Elementary in Chapel Hill, North Carolina for April 1, 2026. The entire area is shaded in yellow, which corresponds to a "Moderate" Air Quality Index level, meaning values between 51 and 100. This indicates that the air quality is generally acceptable for most people, though there may be a slight risk for individuals who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.



Glenwood Elementary

Criteria #2

Anticipated Increase or Decrease in Enrollment

The study shall evaluate the anticipated increase or decrease in student enrollment, including analysis of demographic trends and information related to town planning, approved development projects, and projected student yield, in order to understand how future growth or decline may affect enrollment at each school under consideration.

- **Note:** Districtwide, school enrollment numbers change almost every day. That means, in this study, school enrollment data can vary based on the time the data became available or when it was pulled for a pre-existing report that contributed to a section of this study. As a result, you may notice minor differences in a school's enrollment count, but the differences do not impact the study in a significant manner.

Current Enrollment

Glenwood Elementary is a residentially zoned school that consists of two independent programs concentrating in Mandarin Dual Language and World Language, both with a STEAM2 (science, technology, engineering, arts, math, and Mandarin) emphasis for those that are selected through the existing lottery process. For Mandarin Dual Language, the core content includes classes such as Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. These classes are taught in English and/or Mandarin. There is also a weekly cultural enrichment class that is taught in Mandarin. In the World Language program, the core content is taught in English. The core content includes classes such as Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. There is a weekly special class that is taught in Mandarin. In addition, both programs have once per week STEAM special and Mandarin special classes. The World Language program is no different than what is offered in our other elementary schools with the exception of providing the once per week STEAM special class to its students.

Though both programs are lottery-based, students are able to enroll when entering Kindergarten while a language entry assessment is required for entry after the first semester of first grade for the Dual Language pathway. For zoned students who are not selected in the lottery, they can enroll at Estes Hills, Rashkis, or Scroggs Elementary schools depending upon their zoned residential address.

Upon completion of fifth grade, students are eligible to continue the Mandarin Dual Language program at Phillips Middle School. No continuation pathway exists for the World Language pathway at this time. In addition, none of the current middle schools offer a STEAM option.

Glenwood Elementary

As of March 2026, Glenwood had a total of 391 students enrolled with 188 students in the Mandarin Dual Language and 203 students enrolled in its World Language program. The initial Kindergarten enrollment requests indicate that Mandarin Dual Language and the World Language program will be at capacity for the 2026-27 school year.

Glenwood Elementary		
Grade	Dual Language Immersion	World Language
K	41	28
1	33	15
2	26	34
3	42	34
4	33	36
5	28	41
Subtotal	203	188
Total		391

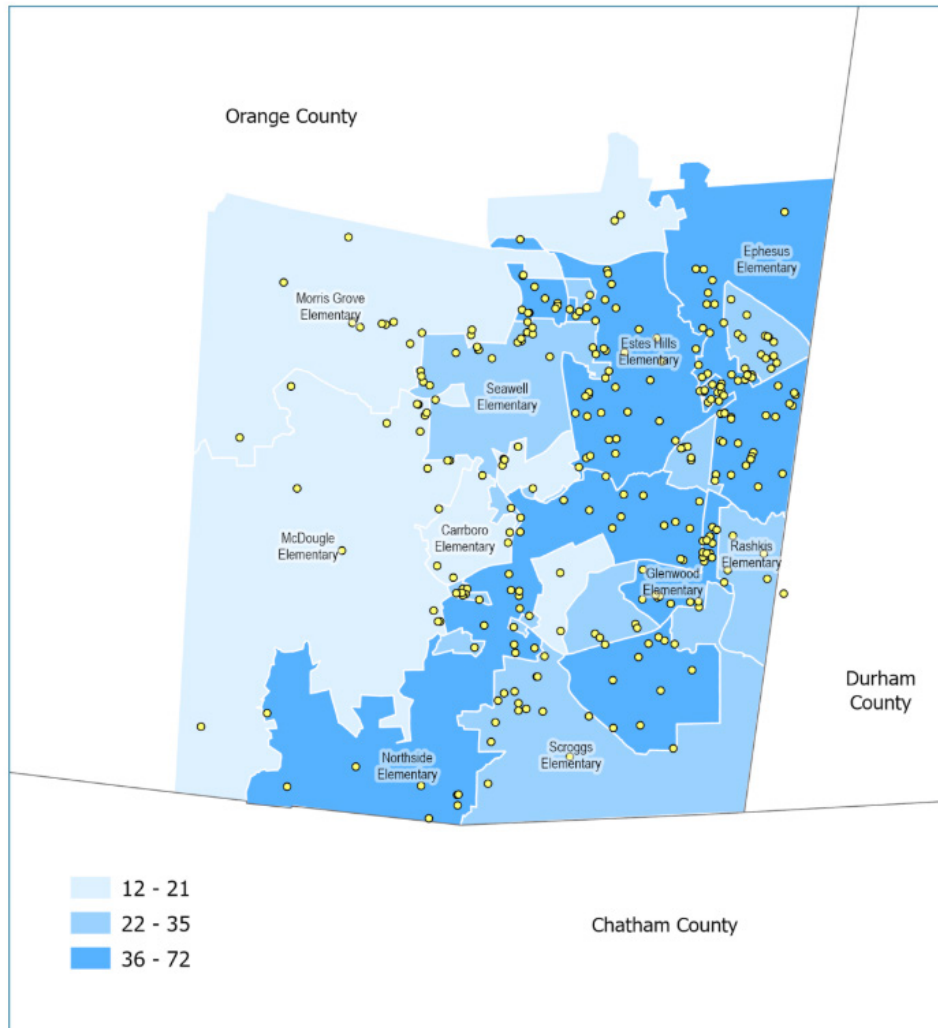
Out of the 391 students, the distribution of where students reside varies amongst other elementary school zones. See table below for distribution. Note: the “out of district” students represent CHCCS employees whose children attend our district.

List of Students’ Homeschools Enrolled at Glenwood ES			
School	Dual Language	World Language	Total # Students
Carrboro ES	12	2	14
Ephesus ES	29	25	54
Estes Hills ES	26	20	46
Glenwood ES	10	44	54
McDougle ES	14	8	22
Morris Grove ES	16	3	19
Northside ES	39	33	72
Rashkis ES	13	24	37
Scroggs ES	20	14	34
Seawell ES	24	7	31
Out of District	0	8	8
Total			391

Glenwood Elementary

Glenwood Elementary School Student Residential Locations by Attendance Zone

Based on 2025-2026 PMR2



Glenwood Elementary

Projected Enrollment

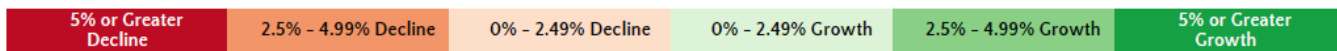
As part of its contract with Orange County, Carolina Demography conducted an analysis of all CHCCS schools, to include Glenwood Elementary, in its *Student Membership Forecast: 2025-26 through 2035-36 for Orange County: Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools and Orange County Schools* report.

Enrollment Trends

Though Glenwood is exclusively a lottery-based school (Mandarin Dual Language and World Language programs), the school does have a boundary designation for students who live within the community but are not participating in either program. With this being the case, the student membership is predetermined by the school and does not fluctuate as students move in and out of the school boundary. However, the demographer’s analysis does take the same approach as conducted with the other district schools as it pertains to projecting future student generation within the Glenwood Elementary zone. The forecast indicates that Glenwood will see a slight increase in student counts over the next ten years. Projections indicate an increase from approximately 394 students in 2025-26 to roughly 418 students by 2035-36. This increase in enrollment will have a small impact on the adjacent schools that students can attend when not participating in one of Glenwood’s programs.

ADM: 2025-26 Through 2035-36 by School, Colored by Year-Over-Year % Change

School	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Carrboro Elementary	462	444	430	413	409	398	395	395	392	390	388
Ephesus Elementary	343	375	387	394	405	417	421	420	422	422	423
Estes Hills Elementary	324	353	362	376	375	389	397	398	400	401	403
FPG Elementary	499	491	505	503	499	498	496	495	492	489	487
Glenwood Elementary	394	387	385	384	396	421	421	420	419	418	418
McDougle Elementary	469	487	495	491	510	511	505	501	499	496	495
Morris Grove Elementary	371	364	357	346	362	356	359	362	366	368	371
Northside Elementary	335	316	313	306	298	291	290	289	289	288	289
Rashkis Elementary	367	336	321	298	283	253	253	253	254	255	256
Scroggs Elementary	366	347	333	314	311	307	309	312	315	314	314
Seawell Elementary	364	354	344	335	343	336	341	344	343	341	340



The report indicates the growth is attributable to new housing developments within the school’s attendance zone, which are expected to generate approximately 12 additional students over the forecast period.

Development Impact: Glenwood Elementary

Development	Total Units	Units Already Completed	First Year Occupancy	Total Student Add
Glen Lennox	528	0	2029	11
Residence Inn Hotel and Summit Place Townhomes	52	0	2028	1
Total	580	0	—	12

Source: Data from Demographic Analytics Advisors, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and municipalities.

Glenwood Elementary

Capacity and Utilization

According to capacity utilization, Glenwood Elementary begins the forecast period at approximately 96% utilization in 2025–26 and increases to the mid-102% range, and then stabilizes around 101% through 2035–36. As stated previously, this projection is driven by forecasting methods for the school’s boundary and not by the lottery-based programs.

Percent Capacity by School: 2025-2026 through 2035-2036

School Name	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031	2031-2032	2032-2033	2033-2034	2034-2035	2035-2036
Carrboro Elementary	89%	86%	83%	80%	79%	77%	76%	76%	76%	75%	75%
Ephesus Elementary	79%	86%	89%	90%	93%	96%	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%
Estes Hills Elementary	63%	68%	70%	73%	73%	75%	77%	77%	78%	78%	78%
FPG Elementary	96%	94%	97%	96%	96%	95%	95%	95%	94%	94%	93%
Glenwood Elementary	96%	94%	93%	93%	96%	102%	102%	102%	102%	101%	101%
McDougle Elementary	86%	89%	90%	90%	93%	93%	92%	91%	91%	91%	90%
Morris Grove Elementary	65%	64%	63%	61%	64%	63%	63%	64%	64%	65%	65%
Northside Elementary	59%	56%	55%	54%	52%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%
Rashkis Elementary	65%	59%	57%	52%	50%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%
Scroggs Elementary	66%	62%	60%	56%	56%	55%	55%	56%	56%	56%	56%
Seawell Elementary	81%	79%	76%	74%	76%	75%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%

Overall 10-Year ADM Impact to Elementary Schools

For elementary schools, Carolina Demography’s forecast projects CHCCS elementary school average daily membership (ADM) to decline from 4,294 students in the current school year to 4,191 within the next five years, marking a decrease of approximately 100 students. A further reduction to 4,183 is projected by the end of the forecast period (2035-36), resulting in an overall projected decline of about 111 students in elementary school ADM throughout the decade.

CHCCS Development Adjusted ADM Forecasts by Level: 2015-16 to 2025-26

Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Elementary Schools	5,501	5,555	5,508	5,472	5,349	4,926	4,716	4,641	4,552	4,510	4,294	4,255	4,232	4,161	4,191	4,176	4,188	4,190	4,190	4,181	4,183
Middle Schools	2,838	2,833	2,838	2,930	3,032	2,912	2,799	2,788	2,699	2,655	2,579	2,569	2,496	2,472	2,386	2,371	2,280	2,309	2,302	2,308	2,299
High Schools	3,665	3,738	3,910	3,903	3,922	3,926	3,896	3,923	3,949	3,934	3,885	3,795	3,710	3,693	3,584	3,536	3,529	3,382	3,331	3,294	3,206
Total	12,004	12,126	12,256	12,305	12,303	11,764	11,411	11,352	11,200	11,099	10,758	10,619	10,438	10,326	10,161	10,084	9,997	9,882	9,823	9,783	9,688

Source: CHCCS; Demographic Analytics Advisors (DAA) Forecast

Glenwood Elementary (Including Ephesus and Seawell Analysis)

Criteria #3

Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected

Evaluate the inconvenience or hardship that may result to affected students, including an equity impact analysis addressing potential effects on students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, multilingual learners, Black students, and Latinx students, and also include information regarding Pre-Kindergarten programming, including enrollment, classroom capacity, program placement, and any potential impacts on affected schools.

Introduction

Though the purpose of this study is to assist with the school closure decision, the district has made it known that a possible school closure(s) would coincide with a district-wide elementary boundary change process. In the absence of finalized attendance zones, it is difficult for the district to identify exactly the total number of students to be affected by any specific school closure scenario. Rather than making assumptions, the focus is on understanding potential risks and setting clear equity guardrails to guide future decisions. What is known, at this time, includes each school's demographics, academic outcomes, and attendance patterns, which together help frame the broader context even without student school assignments.

To stay grounded in student experience, universal risk factors exist that should apply across all schools. These include the importance of stable relationships with peers and teachers, continuity of instruction, access to programs and extracurricular opportunities, reliable transportation, and the timing of transitions, with the understanding that certain grade levels are more sensitive to change than others.

At the same time, the district should consider how different groups of students may experience transitions differently, without overgeneralizing entire schools. This includes reflecting on the potential impacts for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students already facing attendance challenges, and those in key transition years such as rising fifth and eighth graders. The central principle is to keep equity rooted in actual student experience rather than assumptions.

It is recommended that this work unfolds in 3 phases. In phase 1, after the closure decision is made and before attendance zones are established, the district should develop school level equity profiles, identifying universal risk factors, examining student level sensitivities, and being transparent about current limitations. In phase 2, once zones are created in partnership with a demographer, the analysis should shift to concrete impacts such as how students are redistributed, how demographics change, what transportation looks like, and how access to programs may shift. In phase 3, after decisions are made, the focus should turn to targeted mitigation strategies along with ongoing monitoring and adjustment to ensure student needs are met.

Glenwood Elementary (Including Ephesus and Seawell Analysis)

Student Groups

As reported to the NC Department of Public Instruction, the table below presents a snapshot of student demographics and program participation across Ephesus Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and Seawell Elementary which is based on the October 2025 “20th” day enrollment data. Each school reflects a distinct demographic composition, while also showing some common trends in student needs and enrollment patterns.

Ephesus Elementary has the largest share of White students at 50.6%, with smaller but relatively balanced representation among Asian (14.3%), Black (15.3%), and Latinx (13.0%) students. Multiracial students account for 6.4%. Over one-third of students (34.5%) are identified as Economically Disadvantaged (EDS), and 13.3% receive Special Education services (SWD).

Glenwood Elementary stands out for its higher percentage of Asian students (38.0%), the largest among the three schools, while its White student population is 35.4%. Other groups include Black (8.6%), Latinx (4.6%), and Multiracial students (12.9%). Glenwood has the lowest percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students (17.5%) and Students with Disabilities (9.1%) among the three schools.

Seawell Elementary presents a more evenly distributed demographic profile, with White students making up 34.9% of the population, followed by Asian (28.6%), Black (16.5%), and Latinx (11.1%) students. Multiracial students account for 8.9%. Similar to Ephesus, Seawell has a relatively high percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students (32.2%) and the highest proportion of Multilingual Learners (16.5%) among the three schools.

The differences in demographic composition and program participation (EDS, ML, SWD), and available seats highlight varying levels of diversity and student needs (see next table).

Glenwood Elementary (Including Ephesus and Seawell Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools - *Demographic Breakdown*

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	EDS	ML	SWD	Enrolled	Open Seats
Carrboro*	2.4%	2.4%	35.6%	4.5%	55.1%	34.4%	20.4%	14.0%	494	24
Estes Hills	8.6%	10.4%	12.2%	12.5%	56.4%	25.8%	8.3%	12.8%	337	179
Ephesus	14.3%	15.3%	13.0%	6.4%	50.6%	34.5%	10.2%	13.3%	391	45
Frank P Graham *	1.3%	4.6%	50.9%	4.8%	38.5%	38.5%	29.9%	8.8%	525	-3
Glenwood^	38.0%	8.6%	4.6%	12.9%	35.4%	17.5%	11.6%	9.1%	395	17
McDougle	3.5%	13.3%	18.4%	8.5%	56.3%	30.6%	11.0%	15.9%	483	65
Morris Grove	15.6%	8.1%	14.2%	8.1%	53.8%	24.5%	10.8%	16.7%	372	196
Northside	11.0%	27.7%	14.0%	6.3%	40.7%	49.7%	11.5%	17.6%	364	204
Rashkis	21.1%	22.7%	16.4%	8.1%	31.6%	51.7%	19.6%	19.8%	383	185
Scroggs	10.9%	15.7%	15.4%	7.3%	50.8%	29.0%	11.1%	15.4%	396	162
Seawell	28.6%	16.5%	11.1%	8.9%	34.9%	32.2%	16.5%	13.4%	395	55
<i>(2025-26 20th Day Enrollment)</i>			*Spanish Dual Language Program				^Mandarin Dual Language Program			

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

CHCCS Elementary Schools - *Demographic Breakdown for Schools Under Consideration of Closure*

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	EDS	ML	SWD	Enrolled	Open Seats	
Ephesus	14.3%	15.3%	13.0%	6.4%	50.6%	34.5%	10.2%	13.3%	391	45	
Glenwood^	38.0%	8.6%	4.6%	12.9%	35.4%	17.5%	11.6%	9.1%	395	17	
Seawell	28.6%	16.5%	11.1%	8.9%	34.9%	32.2%	16.5%	13.4%	395	55	
<i>(2025-26 20th Day Enrollment)</i>			^Mandarin Dual Language Program								

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Glenwood Elementary (Including Ephesus and Seawell Analysis)

Reading and Math Academic Performance for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

The 2024 Reading and Math academic performance data for Ephesus Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and Seawell Elementary shows generally strong outcomes across both subjects, with some notable differences in achievement and growth patterns.


Overall, Glenwood Elementary stands out as the highest-performing school, earning an A in Math and a B in Reading. It leads in both Reading Achievement (84) and Math Achievement (86), as well as the highest SPG scores in both subjects (81 in Reading and 87 in Math). However, its Reading Growth (70) is the lowest among the three schools, suggesting that while students are performing at a high level, their year-over-year progress in reading is comparatively slower.

Seawell Elementary demonstrates balanced performance across all measures. With B grades in both Reading and Math, it maintains consistent scores in SPG (77 in both subjects) and Achievement (77 Reading, 76 Math). Its Growth scores (78 Reading, 82 Math) indicate steady student progress, positioning Seawell as the most consistent performer without major strengths or weaknesses.

Ephesus Elementary shows solid growth despite lower achievement levels. While it holds B grades in both subjects and has the lowest Reading Achievement (67) and relatively lower SPG scores (71 Reading, 78 Math), it excels in Growth, particularly in Math (91) and Reading (85). This suggests that although overall proficiency is lower, students at Ephesus are making significant academic gains.

2024 Reading & Math Academic Performance			
	Ephesus ES	Glenwood ES	Seawell ES
Reading Grade	B	B	B
Math Grade	B	A	B
Reading SPG Score	71	81	77
Math SPG Score	78	87	77
Reading Achievement	67	84	77
Math Achievement	76	86	76
Reading Growth	85	70	78
Math Growth	91	91	82

School Performance Grades



Ephesus ES

Reading

B
2024-29

SPG Score: **71**

Achievement: **67**

Growth: **85**


Math

B
2024-25

SPG Score: **78**

Achievement: **76**

Growth: **91**



Glenwood ES

Reading

B
2024-25

SPG Score: **81**

Achievement: **84**

Growth: **70**


Math

A
2024-25

SPG Score: **87**

Achievement: **86**

Growth: **91**



Seawell ES

Reading

B
2024-21

SPG Score: **77**

Achievement: **77**

Growth: **78**

Math

B
2024-25

SPG Score: **77**

Achievement: **76**

Growth: **82**

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools | chccs.org

Glenwood Elementary (Including Ephesus and Seawell Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools - Student Attendance

As prepared by the Office of Research, Assessment, and Student Information, the 2024-25 Average Daily Attendance data (see table below) highlights a strong overall commitment to student presence across schools from August through June, with most campuses maintaining attendance rates in the mid 90 percent range. This consistency reflects a district wide emphasis on engagement and the importance of daily participation in learning.

Across student groups, attendance remains relatively balanced, though some variation is visible. White and Multiracial students tend to show slightly higher attendance rates overall, while attendance among Black and Latinx students, though still solid, trends a bit lower in comparison. These differences, while not drastic, point to opportunities for targeted support to ensure equitable access and engagement for all student populations.

School attendance performance shows a similarly positive picture, with several schools such as Estes Hills, Glenwood, and McDougale demonstrating particularly strong attendance across multiple subgroups. At the same time, a few schools and student groups reflect modest dips, suggesting areas where focused interventions or additional resources could further strengthen outcomes.

Attendance among Multilingual Learners (ML) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) generally aligns with overall trends but shows slightly more variability, reinforcing the importance of continued monitoring and tailored strategies to support these groups. Note: The State doesn't have comparable data posted publicly on the internet, so the Office of Research, Assessment and Student Information calculated it from the data in Infinite Campus.

2024-25 Average Daily Attendance - Percent Attendance from August - June

	All	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	ML	SWD
Carrboro	95.0	94.5	94.2	94.9	95.3	95.0	95.0	92.4
Ephesus	95.0	95.8	92.9	94.5	95.9	95.4	94.6	93.7
Estes Hills	95.6	95.7	92.0	95.2	95.8	96.4	94.8	93.2
FPG	95.3	97.5	97.1	94.5	96.7	96.1	94.0	95.0
Glenwood	95.3	96.0	94.8	94.9	95.9	95.8	96.2	95.1
McDougale	95.8	97.0	93.1	92.6	94.5	95.9	91.9	93.7
Morris Grove	94.8	96.0	92.1	95.2	96.3	95.6	95.0	94.8
Northside	95.4	96.0	92.4	93.2	93.2	95.0	95.2	91.2
Rashkis	94.2	96.0	93.2	92.7	93.6	95.4	95.0	91.9
Scroggs	94.5	95.8	92.4	92.5	95.1	95.3	92.9	92.2
Seawell	94.6	96.2	95.1	94.8	95.0	94.9	95.5	93.2

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Glenwood Elementary (Including Ephesus and Seawell Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools -

Student Attendance for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

Overall, Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell are all performing at a high level, with percentages mostly in the mid-90s across student groups. Glenwood has the highest overall score at 95.3%, followed closely by Ephesus at 95.0%, while Seawell is slightly lower at 94.6%.

Looking at specific student groups:

- Asian students perform consistently well across all schools, with Seawell leading at 96.2%, followed by Glenwood at 96.0% and Ephesus at 95.8%.
- For Black students, Seawell again has the highest performance at 95.1%, followed by Glenwood at 94.8%, while Ephesus is lower at 92.9%, representing the largest gap among schools for any subgroup.
- Among Latinx students, results are very similar across schools, with Glenwood slightly ahead at 94.9%, Seawell at 94.8%, and Ephesus at 94.5%.
- In the Multiracial group, Ephesus and Glenwood are tied at 95.9%, while Seawell is slightly lower at 95.0%.
- For White students, Glenwood again has the highest score at 95.8%, followed by Ephesus at 95.4% and Seawell at 94.9%.

2024-25 Average Daily Attendance - Percent Attendance from August - June

	All	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	ML	SWD
Ephesus	95.0	95.8	92.9	94.5	95.9	95.4	94.6	93.7
Glenwood	95.3	96.0	94.8	94.9	95.9	95.8	96.2	95.1
Seawell	94.6	96.2	95.1	94.8	95.0	94.9	95.5	93.2

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Glenwood Elementary (Including Ephesus and Seawell Analysis)

Exceptional Children Services

In considering the potential closure of Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell Elementary Schools, it is important to recognize that a school is not simply a place of instruction for students receiving exceptional children (EC) services. It is a carefully developed ecosystem of support, predictability, and relationships that must be thoughtfully considered.

While none of these schools house our Exceptional Children's Adapted Curriculum (ECAC) programs, our most medically fragile and severely disabled students, it is equally important that we make every effort to think through the challenges that our exceptional student population at each school will face. For all students with individualized education plans (IEPs), significant time and effort has been invested in building trust with teachers and designing for specially designed instruction. The relationships with instructional assistants, therapists, and other related support staff are not incidental; they are foundational to student progress.

Legally, if a school were to close, services would follow the student. The district would remain responsible for providing a free appropriate public education, and IEPs would continue to be implemented in a new setting. This would also not have an impact on caseload ratios for teachers. Our caseloads are well below state average. While this suggests continuity on paper, the reality is that transitions introduce variables that can disproportionately affect students with disabilities if not carefully planned for in advance.

A new school environment may involve unfamiliar hallways, louder cafeterias, different classroom layouts, and altered schedules. For students who rely on consistency and structure, these changes can lead to anxiety, regression, or behavioral challenges initially if these factors are not taken into consideration prior to their occurrence.

It is important to acknowledge that while legal compliance ensures services continue, it does not fully capture the student experience. The key question is not only whether services can be delivered elsewhere, but whether they can be delivered with the same level of effectiveness, stability, and responsiveness that students currently experience at Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell.

Any decision regarding closure should therefore include a careful, student-centered transition plan. This should involve advance preparation for students, additional teacher training, opportunities to visit new environments, thoughtful placement decisions, continuity of key staff when possible, and clear communication with families.

Glenwood Elementary

Criteria #4

Additional Facility Costs

Cost of Providing Additional Facilities

Additional facility costs are not applicable to this study, as the Board of Education is evaluating school closure based on the district's existing elementary school portfolio rather than consolidation.

Criteria #5

Recent and Projected Capital Expenditures

Recent District Capital Expenditures (2020-2025)

Over the past five years, capital expenditures have been largely directed toward targeted repairs, safety systems, and facility upgrades approximating \$769,023 (see next table).

Projected District Capital Expenditures (2026-2036)

District facilities staff conducted a survey of the school's facility and building systems. This projection shifts from targeted repairs to large, system-wide infrastructure replacements and estimates approximately \$23,328,649 needed over the next ten years using a 4% annual escalation factor. These projects include a cooling tower replacement, roof replacement, stormwater and sewer infrastructure replacements, and multiple facility improvements, amongst other work (see next table).

Glenwood Elementary

High Priority Maintenance Project	2020-2025	2025	2030 (5 Years)	2035 (10 Years)
Security System Upgrades (Camera/Door Access)	\$97,703	-	-	-
Library Renovation	\$150,000	-	-	-
Fire Alarm Replacement	\$78,000	-	-	-
Concrete Replacement	\$38,000	-	-	-
Tree Removal	\$59,000	-	-	-
Fencing	\$32,000	-	-	-
3/5 Playground	\$260,000	-	-	-
Mobil Units 2/3/4 Roof Replacement	\$25,320	-	-	-
Erosion Control	\$29,000	-	-	-
Main Building HVAC WSHP Replacement	-	\$1,200,000	\$1,459,983	\$1,776,293
Cooling Tower Replacement	-	\$125,000	\$152,082	\$185,031
Storm Water Pipe Replacement	-	\$1,550,000	\$1,885,812	\$2,294,379
Exterior Sanitary Sewer Pipe Replacement	-	\$1,475,000	\$1,794,563	\$2,183,360
Interior Sanitary Sewer Pipe Replacement	-	\$2,800,000	\$3,406,628	\$4,144,684
Main Building/Multi Purpose Roof Replacement	-	\$2,200,000	\$2,676,636	\$3,256,537
Schoolwide VCT/Terrazzo Tile Replacement	-	\$750,000	\$912,490	\$1,110,183
Domestic Water Piping Replacement	-	\$955,000	\$1,161,904	\$1,413,633
Replace Cabins (5 Cabins Total)	-	\$675,000	\$821,241	\$999,165
Schoolwide Ceiling Grid and Tile Replacement	-	\$275,000	\$334,580	\$407,067
Kitchen Renovation/Equipment Replacement	-	\$1,575,000	\$1,916,228	\$2,331,385
Bathroom Renovations Schoolwide	-	\$750,000	\$912,490	\$1,110,183
Gymnasium Floor Replacement	-	\$175,000	\$212,914	\$259,043
Lighting Fixture Replacement	-	\$280,000	\$340,663	\$414,468
Abatement	-	\$300,000	\$364,996	\$444,073
Playground Replacement (2)	-	\$550,000	\$669,159	\$814,134
Blacktop Play Area Resurfacing	-	\$125,000	\$152,082	\$185,031
District Total	\$769,023	\$15,760,000	\$19,174,451	\$23,328,649

Glenwood Elementary

Woolpert Projected Capital Expenditures (Comfortable and Safe)

In 2023, Orange County contracted with Woolpert, Inc. to conduct a facilities assessment for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City and Orange County Schools in order to develop a fiscal planning document on future capital maintenance expenditures. Option B was developed to represent a comprehensive approach focused on restoring all existing facilities to a safe, functional, and “like-new” condition with an overall total projected investment of \$675.1 million over ten years. This plan fully addresses the needs identified in the district’s facility condition assessment. The intent of this option was to ensure that all buildings are comfortable, reliable, and free of deferred maintenance concerns, creating a stable and secure environment for students and staff.

While Option B successfully resolves all identified facility deficiencies, it is important to note that it does not include enhancements to educational spaces or address issues of school capacity. Classrooms, layouts, and instructional environments would remain largely unchanged, meaning the plan does not modernize learning spaces or adapt them to evolving educational needs. Additionally, this option does not provide for new school construction or significant renovations that would expand or reimagine existing facilities.

For Glenwood Elementary, Option B recommended that approximately \$16.3M is needed to address the school’s maintenance needs over the next ten years (see table below).

CHCCS OPTIONS DETAILS

	OPTION A COMFORTABLE AND SAFE	OPTION B COMFORTABLE AND SAFE, PLUS 10-YEAR FACILITY NEEDS	COMFORTABLE AND SAFE,
SCHOOL NAME	BUDGET	BUDGET	STRATEGY
CARRBORO ES	\$0.0 M	\$22.0 M	Replacement School
EPHESUS ES	\$8.5 M	\$28.2 M	High Priority Needs
ESTES HILLS ES	\$3.4 M	\$29.5 M	Replacement School
FRANK PORTER GRAHAM ES	\$5.4 M	\$30.9 M	Consolidate
GLENWOOD ES	\$1.0 M	\$16.3 M	High Priority Needs
MORRIS GROVE ES	\$4.5 M	\$24.6 M	High Priority Needs
NORTHSIDE ES	\$0.0 M	\$13.3 M	High Priority Needs
RASHKIS ES	\$6.4 M	\$29.7 M	High Priority Needs
SCROGGS ES	\$4.4 M	\$29.9 M	High Priority Needs
SEAWELL ES	\$0.5 M	\$23.1 M	High Priority Needs
MCDUGLE ES	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CARRBORO HS	\$9.2 M	\$67.1 M	High Priority Needs
CHAPEL HILL HS	\$10.9 M	\$29.6 M	High Priority Needs
E. CHAPEL HILL HS	\$23.2 M	\$75.6 M	High Priority Needs
PHOENIX ACADEMY	\$1.5 M	\$2.8 M	Renovation
MCDUGLE MS	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CULBRETH MS	\$8.9 M	\$44.6 M	Replacement School
PHILLIPS MS	\$3.6 M	\$29.0 M	High Priority Needs
SMITH MS	\$12.5 M	\$42.2 M	Adequacy (Learning Tools)
LINCOLN CENTER	\$5.2 M	\$15.0 M	-

Glenwood Elementary

Criteria #6

Building Adjacency to Middle or High Schools

The study shall evaluate the adjacency of each school to nearby middle or high schools, including potential programmatic and academic impacts, opportunities for cross-school collaboration, and any long-range planning considerations. (Notes/Comments: Proximity can make academic acceleration more logistically feasible, allowing elementary students to take classes at the middle or high school level.)

Neither a middle or high school is contiguous to Glenwood Elementary School.

Criteria #7

Transportation Costs

The study shall evaluate transportation costs and impacts, including all modes of student transportation, such as bus eligibility, actual bus ridership, walk zones, and other transportation patterns, to assess the potential operational and financial effects associated with student reassignment.

Glenwood Elementary School serves approximately 391 students, with transportation patterns heavily oriented toward bus eligibility but distributed across multiple commuting methods. Of the total student population, 389 students (approximately 99%) are eligible for school-provided transportation, indicating that nearly the entire student body qualifies for bus service due to the school operating entirely as a lottery-based school.

As a result, the school operates seven regular transportation buses. Bus ridership includes approximately 170 students, representing 43% of total enrollment. Despite near-universal eligibility, more than half of students do not utilize bus transportation on a typical day.

Non-transportation zone (NTZ) data shows minimal presence of non-eligible students. Infinite Campus identifies 0 students as NTZ, while the transportation routing system (TIMS) identifies 2 students. After inquiring with transportation staff, this 2-student discrepancy reflects students who recently enrolled in a residence adjacent to the fire department who were not included in Infinite Campus when the data was originally obtained.

Though the Town of Chapel Hill's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) audit observations recorded 38 students walking and 7 students biking, one item to be aware of is that the walker count includes any observed student who walks onto the school's property. In the case of Glenwood's observation, the majority of walkers observed (38) came from a retail parking lot and bank adjacent to the school where their parents parked in lieu of using the school's parent drop off location. As a result, the Town acknowledges that the school may only have 2-4 walkers daily and not the 38 observed on the day of their observation. In addition, approximately 160 students are driven to school daily by parents. If you take into account the approximately 34 students who walked from the adjacent retail parking lot and bank, the number of students being driven to school daily is close to 220. This makes the parent-driven vehicle transportation the dominant commuting method despite widespread bus eligibility.

Bus ride times average approximately 38 minutes across routes, with substantial variation. The shortest average ride time is 18 minutes (Bus 89), while the longest is 54 minutes (Bus 160).

Glenwood Elementary

Other routes include Bus 139 at 30 minutes, Bus 76 at 35 minutes, Buses 159 and 28 at 43 minutes, and Bus 132 at 47 minutes. The overall range of 36 minutes between the shortest and longest routes indicates significant variability in route length, geographic coverage, and potential routing efficiency.

Overall, student transportation at Glenwood reflects primarily a bi-modal distribution: approximately 43% bus ridership (morning), <1% active transportation (walk/bike), and 56% parent-driven travel. Glenwood Elementary's transportation landscape reflects a combination of primarily bus usage and parent-driven travel.

See table below for comparison amongst the 3 closure study schools.

School Bus Information / Student Counts / Methods of Transportation			
Information	Ephesus ES	Glenwood ES	Seawell ES
~ # of Students Eligible for Bus Transportation	253	389	282
~ # of Regular/EC Buses at School	3 buses	7 buses	4 buses
~ # of Students Counted Riding Bus (AM)	140	170	147
~ # of Students Identified as Non-Transportation Zone (Infinite Campus)	164	0	121
~ Adjusted # of Students Identified as Non-Transportation Zone by Transportation (TIMS)	125	2	120
# of Students Observed Walking to School (SRTS Audit)	64	38 (4)	25
~ # of Students Biking to School (SRTS Audit)	14	7	23
~ # of Students Driven to School by Parents	160	210	207
~ Average School Bus Ride Time (first bus stop to arrival at school)	30 minutes	38 minutes	28 minutes
~ Average Individual School Bus Ride Time (1st bus stop to arrival at school)	Bus 154 - 21 minutes Bus 162 - 23 minutes Bus E141 - 45 minutes	Bus 159 - 43 minutes Bus 160 - 54 minutes Bus 132 - 47 minutes Bus 139 - 30 minutes Bus 28 - 43 minutes Bus 76 - 35 minutes Bus 89 - 18 minutes	Bus 128 - 38 minutes Bus 129 - 31 minutes Bus 55 - 10 minutes Bus 37 - 34 minutes

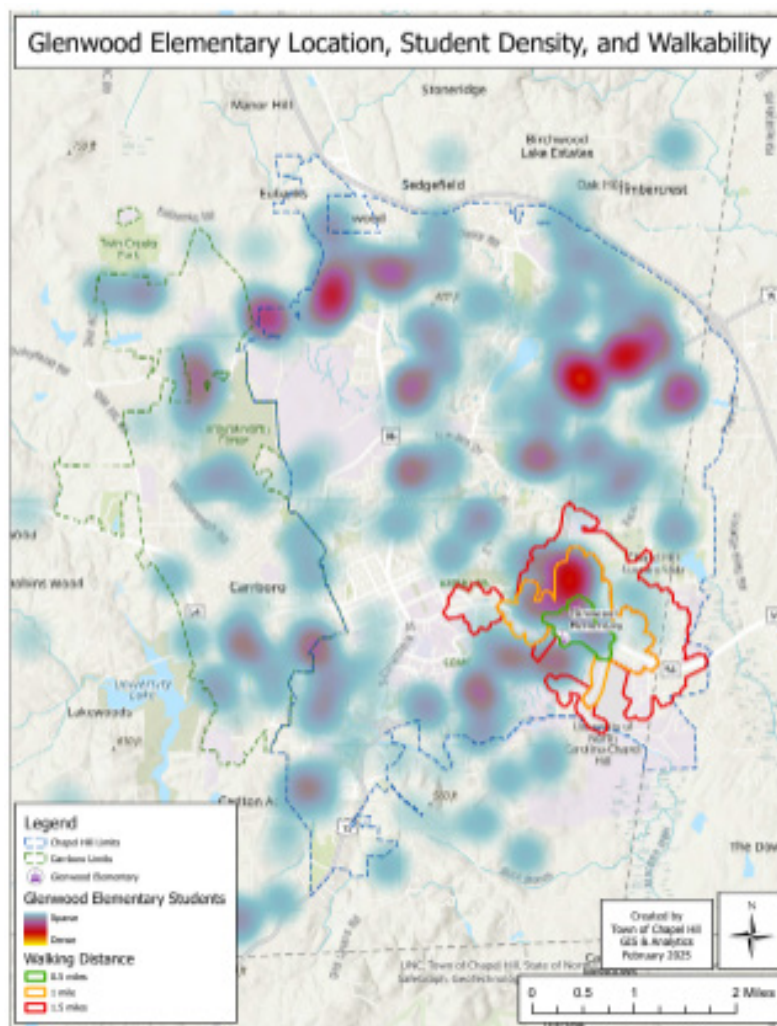
Glenwood Elementary

Estimated Additional Ride Time to New Elementary School(s) Location

Since Glenwood Elementary is a lottery-based school, the program(s) would need to be relocated to a school that is able to accommodate the student enrollment. This determination would need to be made after the school closure decision is decided and the district-wide elementary boundary change process is underway. Until that occurs, it is difficult to estimate if average ride times will change or not. It is the desire of the transportation department to identify a location(s) that can reduce the existing number of buses and average ride time of 38 minutes.

Town of Chapel Hill / CHCCS Safe Routes to School's Student Density and Walk Counts

The Town of Chapel Hill Safe Routes to School (SRTS) partnered with CHCCS to determine the numbers of students living within 0-1.5 miles of its schools in their SRTS Action Plan (adopted by Town Council on June 11, 2025). Depicted below is a heatmap denoting in total, 6 students live within 0.5 miles, 22 live within 0.5-1 mile, and 10 live within 1-1.5 miles of Glenwood.



Glenwood Elementary

In addition, the Chapel Hill Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program conducted its walk counts as part of the broader SRTS Action Plan to gather empirical data on student travel patterns. These walk counts involved direct observation of students arriving at and departing from school campuses during specific, pre-determined timeframes. The observations, such as those conducted on November 12, 2024, at various schools including Glenwood Elementary, were designed to accurately quantify the number of students utilizing active transportation, specifically walking and biking, versus other modes of travel like riding the bus or being driven by parents. This data is critical for understanding existing transportation behaviors, assessing the effectiveness of current walk and bike zones, and informing future infrastructure and programming decisions related to safe student access.

According to the CHCCS transportation department, the entire school resides in a transportation-eligible zone (with the exception of a few apartments near the Chapel Hill Fire Department). However, Chapel Hill SRTS staff counted 38 walkers and 7 bikers out of 408 enrolled students at the time of the direct observation. This equates to approximately 9.3% walking and 1.7% biking (see table below). In speaking with the Town of Chapel Hill SRTS staff, one item to be aware of is that the walker count includes any observed student who walks onto the school’s property. In the case of Glenwood’s observation, the majority of walkers observed (38) came from a retail parking lot adjacent to the school where their parents parked in lieu of using the school’s parent drop off location. Presently, all Glenwood students are eligible for transportation services as no students are identified as walkers by the district. In the SRTS estimate, 2-4 students may have actually walked to school from their residence versus parking their vehicle adjacent to the school’s property.

Town of Chapel Hill / CHCCS Safe Routes to Schools Action Plan Walk Counts by School (observations Nov. 12, 2024)

School	Walk	Bike	Student Enrollment	Walk %	Bike %
Ephesus ES	64	14	401	16.00%	3.50%
Estes Hills ES	58	11	355	16.30%	3.10%
FPG Bilingüe ES	30	1	528	5.70%	0.20%
Glenwood ES	38	7	408	9.30%	1.70%
Northside ES	51	5	399	12.80%	1.30%
Rashkis ES	38	19	437	8.70%	4.30%
Scroggs ES	115	16	406	28.30%	3.90%
Seawell ES	25	23	456	5.50%	5.00%
Culbreth MS	98	6	665	14.70%	0.90%
Phillips MS	34	6	575	5.90%	1.00%
Smith MS	98	21	750	13.10%	2.80%
Chapel Hill HS	127	46	1,642	7.70%	2.80%
East Chapel Hill HS	92	20	1,417	6.50%	1.40%
Phoenix Academy HS	1	0	38	2.60%	0.00%

Glenwood Elementary

Annual District Bus Operating Costs

As reported to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), in the 2024-25 school year, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools operated 55 buses, transported 3,880 students, and traveled 728,860 miles at a total cost of \$3,013,692. This equates to a \$4.13 cost per mile. The average operating cost per bus was \$54,794.40 with a cost per pupil of \$936.53.

NCDPI Table 32

Select School Year:

Search by LEA Name:

Table 32 - STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ON PUBLIC SCHOOL BUSES									
Student Transportation on Public School Buses School Year 2024-25									
Year	LEA ↑	LEA Name	Buses	Pupils	Miles	Cost	Cost Per Bus	Cost Per Pupil	Cost Per Mile
2025	681	Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	55	3,880	728,860	3,013,692	54,794.40	936.53	4.13
Export to Excel									
1 - 1									

Note: Transportation includes contract transportation.

Estimated Additional Transportation Costs

Depending on the new location(s) for Glenwood’s programs, district staff believe the average cost would be similar to the costs associated with its current location.

To estimate present costs, the district applied the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) average annual transportation cost per student. For the 2024–25 school year, NCDPI’s Table 32 – Student Transportation on Public School Buses reports that Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools spent an average of \$936.53 per pupil. The present cost with 170 bus riders is approximately \$159,210. If all 391 students rode the bus versus parent-driven travel, the estimated total cost would be approximately \$366,183. Since it is a lottery-based school, the transportation department estimates that the majority of parents driving their students to Glenwood would be similar to the current number of parent-driven students. The number of students riding the bus may actually decrease if the new placement(s) of the two language program offerings were to be located in a school that already pulls students from that area (see table in criteria #2).

Glenwood Elementary

Criteria #8

Site Adequacy

The evaluation of site adequacy, including whether each facility provides sufficient space and appropriate program fit to support current and potential programming, shall assess facility capacity and suitability, including considerations for programs such as Pre-Kindergarten, should relocation or reassignment become necessary.

Educational Adequacy (School Site)

Determining a school site's educational adequacy focuses on whether its physical spaces effectively support both the programs offered and the number of students served. It goes beyond simply counting rooms by evaluating how well those spaces function for teaching, learning, and student support.

The Woolpert study assessed all CHCCS classrooms to compare existing facilities against current North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) standards and best practices in K-12 educational design. In doing so, it centered on three key questions:

1. Did the school have all the necessary rooms?

This examines whether each facility includes the full range of spaces required for a comprehensive educational program. In addition to standard classrooms, this includes specialized areas such as science labs, art and music rooms, career and technical education (CTE) spaces, media centers, cafeterias, gyms, and support spaces (e.g., counseling, exceptional education, calming and sensory rooms, and multilingual learner (MLL) spaces). Adequacy requires that no essential space is missing.

2. Were the rooms appropriately sized?

Even when all required spaces are present, they must be large enough to support their intended use and student capacity. This involves comparing room sizes to enrollment and program standards - for example, ensuring classrooms can accommodate class sizes, labs provide safe working space, and shared areas can handle peak usage. Undersized spaces can limit instruction and create safety or accessibility concerns.

3. Did the rooms have the right equipment?

Adequacy also depends on whether each space is properly equipped. Classrooms require appropriate furniture and instructional technology, labs need specialized equipment and safety features, and programs such as CTE and the arts depend on industry-standard tools. A room may exist and be appropriately sized, but without proper equipment, it cannot fully support its intended function.

Glenwood Elementary

Together, these criteria assess educational adequacy in terms of completeness (having all required spaces), capacity (appropriate size), and functionality (proper equipment). A school meets adequacy standards only when all three are satisfied.

Overall, the Woolpert study found that older schools in the district scored lower in terms of the number and size of rooms compared to newer facilities. However, across the district, these schools generally scored higher in terms of having appropriate equipment and resources.

The table below denotes the level of educational adequacy determined by the 2023 study for Glenwood Elementary School.

Educational Adequacy for Glenwood Elementary					
School	Gross Square Footage	Year Built	Space Types	Space Types > minimum	Space Requirements
			Question #1	Question #2	Question #3
Ephesus ES	66,952	1972	72%	36%	88%
Glenwood ES	66,664	1952	76%	54%	86%
Seawell ES	66,198	1969	66%	33%	83%

Modular Units: Use at School

Glenwood Elementary presently has five (5) modular units available on its campus. Below is a table that indicates their use and count.

Modular Units at Glenwood ES	
Use	Modular Unit Count
Kindergarten Class	1
2nd Grade Class	1
3rd Grade Class	1
3rd Grade Class	1
Office/Psych/OT/PT	1
Total	5

Glenwood Elementary

Update: 10-Year CHCCS Enrollment Forecast

Based on the recently released Carolina Demography's *Student Membership Forecast: 2025-26 through 2035-36 for Orange County: Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools and Orange County Schools* report, CHCCS enrollment is not declining in speed or magnitude as previously anticipated. While Carolina Demography's report can inform decisions about CHCCS maximum operational efficiency, it should not serve as the sole driver for the purpose of this study. CHCCS enrollment is shifting in ways that have meaningful implications for how the district will continue to serve students in alignment with North Carolina legislation, funding, and its own priorities.

Review: CHCCS School Capacity and Orange County Growth Management

The Carolina Demography membership forecast report uses school capacity numbers originating from the Orange County School Adequate Public Facility Ordinance, or SAPFO. SAPFO capacity numbers are used to manage growth in Orange County from a public facility capacity to ensure new residential developments up for review will have adequate public services (capacity in K12 CHCCS Schools) generated by a new development. Thus, the SAPFO capacity numbers have historically been the method to determine whether or not additional schools were needed due to student growth versus closure.

The Path Ahead: CHCCS Academic Program Capacities

Decisions regarding district operations, facilities, and school assignments must also reflect DPI standards and the district's commitment to high-quality and accessible instructional support spaces. To align administrative recommendations with updated enrollment trends, the next critical step is developing a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of academic program capacity and educational adequacy which is commonly referred to as Program Capacity.

Design vs. Program Capacities

A school's designed seat capacity is often viewed in terms of physical space, meaning how many students a building can accommodate based on available seats. However, program capacity is more complex. A school may have available classrooms but lack the specialized spaces, staffing, or scheduling flexibility required to support programs such as exceptional children (EC), multilingual learners, or early childhood initiatives. Additionally, NCDPI K-3 class size requirements, service delivery models, and program-specific needs can significantly reduce what appears to be available capacity on paper.

Considering both program capacity and educational adequacy allows CHCCS to move from reactive to strategic decision-making. Rather than focusing solely on building utilization, the district can better align facilities, staffing, and programming to support the whole child.

Glenwood Elementary

Integrating K12 Enrollment Forecasting with Program Capacities

Ultimately, this student projection analysis is not just a forecast, it is a signal. It underscores the need to evaluate how CHCCS resources are distributed, how programs are delivered, and whether existing systems including academic programming, staffing allotments, and ultimately school boundaries can support the district's long-term goals. By developing a clearer understanding of Program Capacity and educational adequacy now, CHCCS will be better positioned to make informed, equitable, and sustainable decisions that ensure long-term access to high-quality education for all learners.

As a result, CHCCS consulted with North Carolina State University's Institution for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) and the SchoolCAMP team, which provides strategic consultation, planning, and analysis to public K12 school districts with respect to school planning, school boundary processes, and transportation routing/efficiencies. Their initial task was to assist CHCCS in better understanding how it uses its school building spaces, through inventorying and principal consultation, and to compare against North Carolina DPI's standards and best educational practices.

CHCCS School Capacity Review with Academic Programs

The Program Capacity of a K12 Classroom and School requires information on:

1. **Classrooms:** the number of built physical spaces within a school
2. **Size and Suitability:** the overall size of each classroom and the features it affords teachers and students - including bathrooms, sinks and hot water
3. **Students:** the grade and unique learning needs of the students within
4. **Program:** the classroom features and regulatory framework for instructional delivery

Example

- **School A** is a traditional, geographically-assigned (school boundary) Elementary
- **School B** is a lottery-assigned Dual Language Immersion Elementary
- **Classroom 100 for both schools is 900 square feet and serves First Grade**
 - The Program Capacity of School A for Room 100 is **16 students**
 - However, because School B is a DLI Program, the Program Capacity for Room 100 is **24 students**

Age of Facility and Educational Adequacy, Suitability

The average age of schools in North Carolina is 55 years old. The history of school construction reflects values and instructional priorities over time and era of school construction. Thus, older schools in North Carolina and the US have smaller classrooms dedicated for teacher-led instruction (i.e. desks pointed to the front of the chalkboard in minimally sized rooms). In addition, older schools tend to have a lack of academic support, or Resource Rooms, used for modern pull-out instruction, like ESL, AIG, Intervention, etc.

Beyond the core K12 Instructional Spaces and Resource Rooms, newer schools often have - and need - swing, or flex spaces. These rooms are used when student enrollment crests beyond the built classroom arrangements, and are flexible spaces that can be used both for lower K-2 and upper Grade 3-5 use on an as-needed basis.

Glenwood Elementary

CHCCS School Capacities: Woolpert / SAPFO / CHCCS Program and Use

The Orange County and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School community have historically evaluated the size, or capacity of schools, across several indicators. These include:

- **2023 Woolpert Report** - Utilized Square Footage per Student to evaluate the size and adequacy of school facilities for Orange County Bond support.
- **2024-25 SAPFO Capacities** - Often referred to as legacy capacities, these numbers indicate the maximum number of students that could receive academic instruction if all rooms were filled irrespective of community and academic programs, such as Exceptional Child Separate Setting Classrooms (EC AC), Pre-Kindergarten, AIG and Multi-Lingual Supports.
- **2026 CHCCS Program Capacity** - In coordination with CHCCS Operational, Academic and School Leadership, NCSU ITRE / SchoolCAMP Planners have evaluated the allotted and actual space use of all CHCCS Schools in accordance with classroom size, design, attributes and the academic programs being delivered at each campus. In addition, SchoolCAMP Planners met individually with each School Leadership team to produce a ‘ground up’ profile for each school that reflects EC AC, Pre-Kindergarten and additional programs that require space at each school.

CHCCS School Capacities

Label	Elementary School Name	Woolpert Capacity	SAPFO Capacity	CHCCS Program Capacity	2030-31 Project Enroll	2030-31 Utilization Rates
CES	Carrboro Elementary with DLI	543	518	520	398	77%
EES	Ephesus Elementary	578	436	416	417	100%
EHES	Estes Hills Elementary	528	516	464	389	84%
FPGES	FPG Bilingüe Elem. with DLI	589	522	576	498	87%
GES	Glenwood Elem. with DLI	407	412	420	421	100%
MSES	Scroggs Elementary	521	558	496	307	62%
MES	McDougle Elementary	550	548	432	511	118%
MGES	Morris Grove Elementary	547	568	484	356	74%
NES	Northside Elementary	583	568	484	291	60%
RES	Rashkis Elementary	532	568	462	253	55%
SES	Seawell Elementary	378	450	416	336	81%
Totals		5,756	5,664	5,170	4,177	81%

Glenwood Elementary

Analysis of School Capacities for CHCCS

The inclusion and adjustments for the CHCCS Academic Program relies on the following guidelines:

1. K-3 Classroom Size in accordance with NC House Bill 90
 - a. Kindergarten - Average 18 Students per Classroom, Maximum 21
 - b. First Grade - Average 16 Students per Classroom, Maximum 19
 - c. Second Grade - Average 17 Students per Classroom, Maximum 20
 - d. Third Grade - Average 17 Students per Classroom, Maximum 20
2. Fixed number of Classrooms at each school
3. Classroom attributes and features of each classroom
4. CHCCS Academic Program Spaces: Art, Music and ECAC require full sized classroom
5. CHCCS Support Spaces: Resource, AIG, Intervention, ESL
6. Orange County and CHCCS Program Shared Space: Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms in CHCCS School Facilities
7. Capacities do not reflect nor include the CHCCS Mobile Classroom Inventory - all capacities reflect bringing existing classrooms in temporary mobiles into “brick-and-mortar” buildings, including existing Pre-Kindergarten, K-5 Classroom and Resource Program placements

Glenwood Elementary

CHCCS Implications

Sustainable Operational Utilization Rate - School Systems

The overall enrollment and program capacity in a school system indicates the utilization, or operational efficiency. Maintaining an elementary school system operational utilization within the 85–95% program capacity range is best practice. School systems operating above or below the overall district percent utilization may consider adding or removing seat capacity in order to ensure sustainable district operations.

Analysis: By the school year 2030-31, it is projected that CHCCS will have 4,177 enrolled K-5 Students with an overall academic program seat capacity of 5,170 - resulting in an overall operational utilization rate of 81%. Decisions about facility operations - opening, expanding or consolidating will directly affect the overall school system utilization rate.

Balancing Operational Utilization Rates - Between Schools

Program capacity plays a major role in balancing student enrollment across school levels. Student assignment rules, school attendance boundaries, district transfer policies, and magnet lottery programs all shape how our students are assigned to elementary schools. These decisions must be made carefully - frequent student reassignment and/or academic program changes can disrupt communities; infrequent changes can allow imbalances to grow. Balancing operational utilization rates using program capacity and projected enrollment is recommended every five years as a standard of best practice.

Importance of Academic Programs and Impacts on Capacity

As demonstrated earlier, not all classrooms function the same way, and specialized programs such as EC services, dual language immersion, or intervention support often require smaller or larger class sizes or dedicated spaces. As a result, two schools with identical physical layouts can have very different effective capacities depending on the programs they house. State class size policies further influence this dynamic. Mandated limits, especially in early grades, directly determine how many students a building can accommodate. While some flexibility may exist to absorb short-term enrollment increases, sustained deviations can strain both staff and space.

In addition to the academic program impacting a school's capacity, the age of a school facility's design adds another layer of complexity. Capacity is not just about the number of classrooms, but also about how well the building supports daily operations through its educational adequacy. The district must also take into consideration core and support spaces like resource rooms, cafeterias, gyms, and arrival and dismissal areas can become bottlenecks even when classroom utilization appears to be within the target range.

Review: CHCCS Elementary School Program Capacity Utilization and Closure Scenarios

Over the next five years, Chapel Hill Carrboro City School's K-5 elementary enrollment and program capacity utilization is approximately 81%. The closure of one elementary school with a capacity between 400-500 seats would increase the overall CHCCS K-5 utilization from 81% to 87% - 89%. The closure of two 400-500 elementary schools would increase utilization rates to 95% - 100%.

Glenwood Elementary

Pre-Kindergarten Note: CHCCS Program Capacities reflect placing Pre-Kindergarten classes in CHCCS Elementary Schools. As younger students, Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms may require additional facility needs, and potentially modifications. Doing so also dedicates space to Pre-Kindergarten brick-and-mortar classrooms, moving students out of mobile classrooms - a desirable goal of the administration in addition to allowing schools to have some flexibility with their own school centric needs.

Overall, maintaining elementary schools within the 85 - 95% capacity range requires a careful balance of enrollment policies, program needs, and facility limitations. Factors such as specialized services, class size mandates, and building design all influence true capacity beyond simple classroom counts. While current utilization sits below the ideal range, and potential school closures could move the district closer to optimal levels, these decisions must also consider community stability and long term goals such as relocating prekindergarten programs into permanent facilities. Thoughtful, strategic planning is essential to ensure both efficient operations and a supportive learning environment.

Site Specific Programs

Community Schools After-School Program

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) Community Schools After-School Program is designed to provide students with a safe, supportive, and enriching environment beyond the traditional school day. The program supports families by providing reliable, affordable care during after-school hours. Offered at all 11 elementary schools across the district, the program has the capacity to serve approximately 700 students, with up to 150 students per school. At Glenwood Elementary, the program presently supports 60 students. If the school was to be closed, the Community Schools administration states the students would be able to attend the program at another district elementary school.

American School of Asian Culture After School Program

The American School of Asian Culture (ASAC) after-school program at Glenwood Elementary is a community-based enrichment initiative that provides language, cultural, and academic programming for elementary students within CHCCS. Operated by a nonprofit educational organization founded in 2004, ASAC's mission is to promote Mandarin Chinese language acquisition and cultural understanding while supporting students' broader academic and developmental needs.

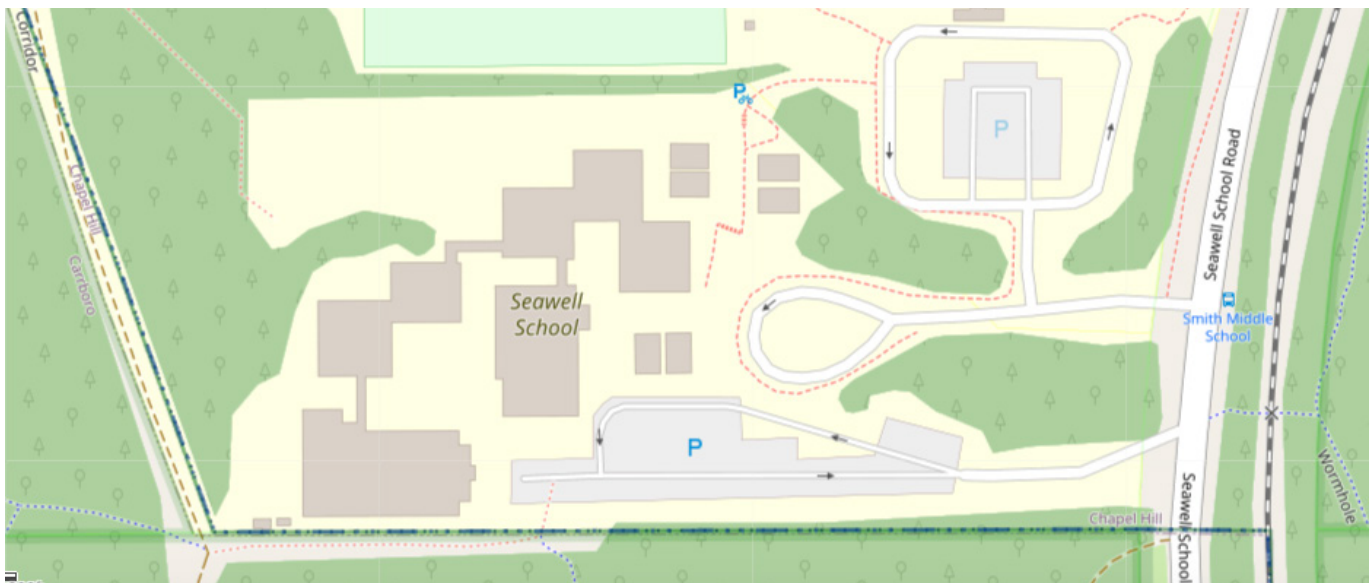
While the program operates on-site at Glenwood Elementary and serves approximately 30 students, it is not directly affiliated with CHCCS. ASAC functions as an independent provider and utilizes school space through the district's facility rental program, currently leasing three classrooms at Glenwood to deliver its programming.

From a district perspective, ASAC represents a community partnership that expands after-school opportunities without direct district oversight or staffing. It contributes to the range of enrichment and childcare options available to CHCCS families while operating independently under established facility use agreements. In the event the school is closed, the program would need to reapply their application for another school site in order to continue its program.

Seawell Elementary: Study of Proposed Closure

Introduction

Seawell Elementary School is a hybrid-campus style design located on approximately an 11-acre parcel at 9115 Seawell School Road in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and is one of eleven elementary schools within the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) district. The school serves students in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade and provides a comprehensive elementary education program that includes core academic instruction, enrichment opportunities, and a variety of student support services designed to meet the needs of a diverse student population.



Originally opened in 1969, Seawell Elementary has served generations of families in the Chapel Hill community. In addition, two classroom buildings were constructed in 1976 and 1989. Over the decades, the campus has undergone a variety of renovations and updates to support modern instructional needs, though portions of the facility reflect the age of the original structure. As with several older schools in the district, the condition and long-term maintenance needs of the building have been part of broader district discussions related to facilities planning and capital investment.

Seawell Elementary

Seawell Elementary serves a diverse student population and offers a range of academic and support services, including Exceptional Children (EC) programs, multilingual learner support, and academically gifted services. The school also provides enrichment opportunities that complement classroom instruction and support the district's commitment to whole-child education. These programs are designed to ensure that students receive individualized support while maintaining strong academic expectations. The school serves approximately 402 students and hosts the district's LEAP (Learning Environment for Advanced Programming) program. The purpose of LEAP is to provide profoundly gifted students who, when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment, require specialized programming beyond what is provided by the regular educational setting. The LEAP option provides a learning environment that provides advanced curriculum and instruction designed to meet the needs of profoundly gifted students in grades four through eight. These profoundly gifted students consistently exceed grade level performance expectations, well beyond their age and grade level peers. These students present an extreme need for differentiation in all subject areas, particularly reading and math.

Enrollment in the LEAP program is not residentially based and does not operate as a traditional neighborhood assignment. Instead, students are identified and placed in the program. Placement into the LEAP program is a selective process. Students are identified through a combination of achievement data, aptitude testing, and qualitative evidence ensuring that those who enter the program truly require this level of advanced instruction. Upon completion of grade 5, students are eligible to continue the LEAP program at Smith Middle School which is adjacent to Seawell Elementary.

Seawell Elementary

Criteria #1

Geographic Conditions

The study shall evaluate the geographic conditions of each school, including environmental factors such as flood zones, as well as the broader geographic impact on the district as a whole, including how a potential school closure could affect the distribution of schools across the district and the Board's future flexibility for districtwide planning.

Seawell is located on Seawell School Road, a two-lane road maintained by NCDOT. Seawell is immediately surrounded by low-density development including the Carolina North Forest.

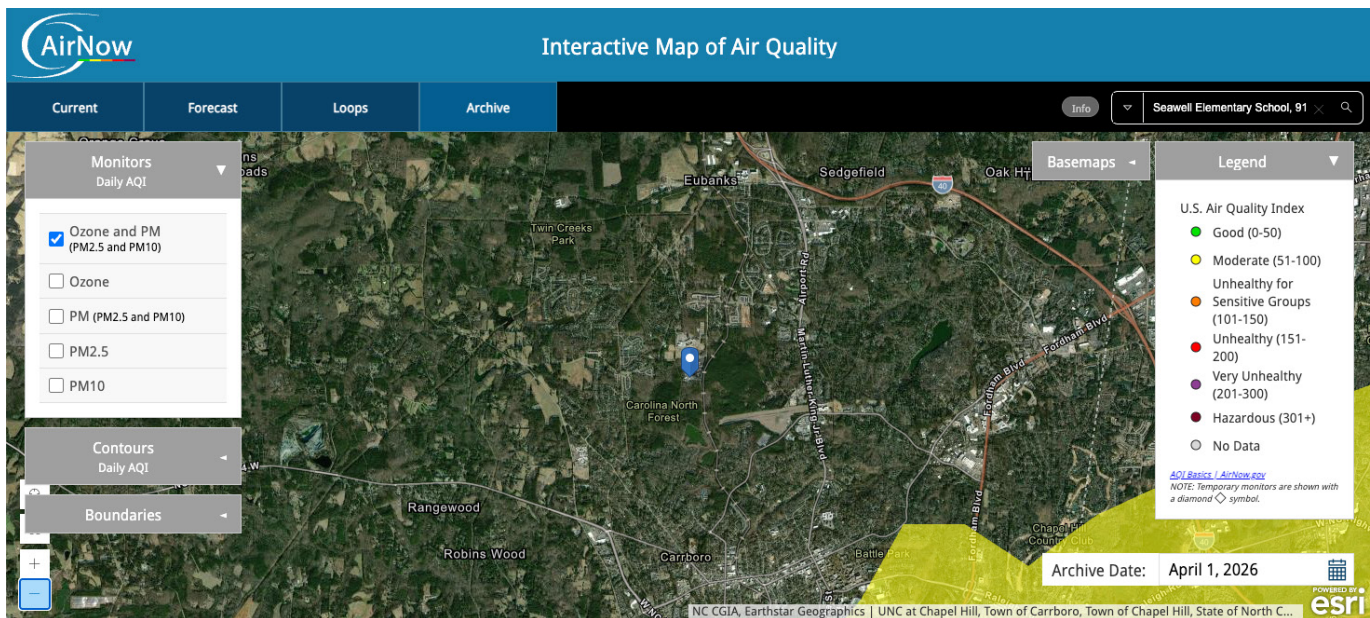
Wetlands and/or Floodplains

With respect to streams and floodplains, Bolin Creek runs very close to Seawell Elementary, but is not located on the school's property. As a result, Bolin Creek has not posed any known flooding concerns for the school property. The property also does not have any identified wetlands or flood zone overlap.

Air Quality

The image below shows a snapshot from the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) AirNow interactive air quality map centered around the Chapel Hill and Carrboro area in North Carolina, with a specific focus near Seawell Elementary School on April 1, 2026. The map is set to display daily Air Quality Index readings using a combination of ozone and particulate matter, including both PM2.5 and PM10.

On the right side, the legend explains how air quality is categorized, ranging from good to hazardous, with color coding that helps users quickly interpret conditions. Although the map itself does not clearly show a colored overlay at this zoom level, a faint yellow shading appears in the lower right corner, which corresponds to moderate air quality. Though not indicated directly for Seawell Elementary, this suggests that at least part of the surrounding region is experiencing air conditions that are acceptable but may pose a concern for unusually sensitive individuals.



Seawell Elementary

Criteria #2

Anticipated Increase or Decrease in Enrollment

The study shall evaluate the anticipated increase or decrease in student enrollment, including analysis of demographic trends and information related to town planning, approved development projects, and projected student yield, in order to understand how future growth or decline may affect enrollment at each school under consideration.

- **Note:** Districtwide, school enrollment numbers change almost every day. That means, in this study, school enrollment data can vary based on the time the data became available or when it was pulled for a pre-existing report that contributed to a section of this study. As a result, you may notice minor differences in a school’s enrollment count, but the differences do not impact the study in a significant manner.

Current Enrollment

As of March 2026, Seawell had a total of 402 students enrolled including 27 Pre-Kindergarten students and 58 students enrolled in LEAP (grades 4/5). For the 2026-27 school year, the current accepted enrollment is 12 students in grade 4 and approximately 29 students in grade 5. The enrollment reduction in grade 4 is attributed to a change in admission standards.

Seawell Elementary			
Grade	Non-Program Students	Pre-K	LEAP Students
Pre-K	-	27	0
K	40	-	0
1	52	-	0
2	45	-	0
3	56	-	0
4	54	-	29
5	70	-	29
Subtotal	317	27	58
Total			402

Seawell Elementary

With the 27 Pre-Kindergarten students, the distribution of where students reside varies amongst other elementary school zones. See the table below for distribution.

List of Pre-K Students' Homeschools Enrolled at Seawell ES		
School	Pre-K (3-year olds)	Pre-K (4-year olds)
Carrboro ES	1	0
Ephesus ES	0	0
Estes Hills ES	1	1
Glenwood ES	0	0
McDougle ES	2	2
Morris Grove ES	2	2
Northside ES	1	1
Rashkis ES	0	0
Scroggs ES	1	0
Seawell ES	4	8
Out of District	1	0
Subtotal	13	14
Total		27

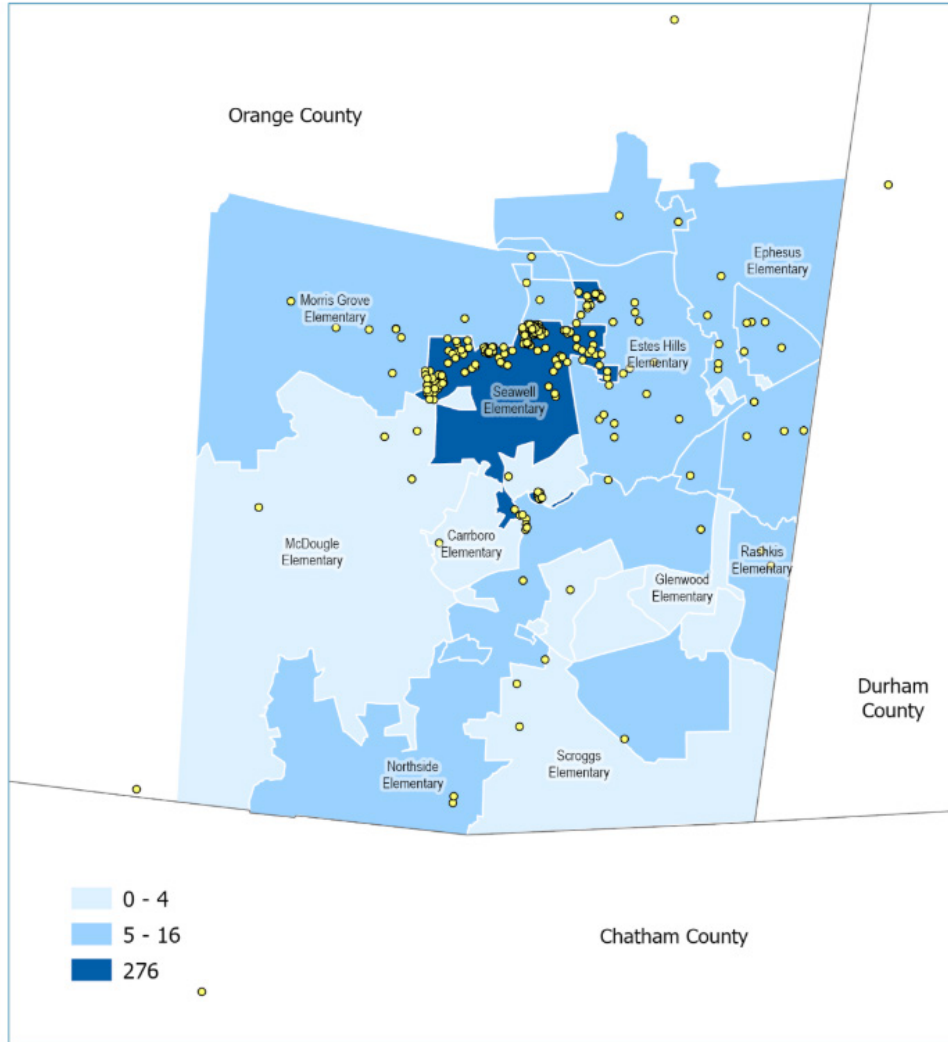
With the 58 LEAP students, the distribution of where students reside varies amongst other elementary school zones. See table below for distribution.

List of LEAP Students' Homeschools Enrolled at Seawell ES	
School	# Students
Carrboro ES	2
Ephesus ES	8
Estes Hills ES	12
McDougle ES	1
Morris Grove ES	8
Northside ES	9
Rashkis ES	7
Scroggs ES	2
Seawell ES	9
Total	58

Seawell Elementary

Seawell Elementary School Student Residential Locations by Attendance Zone

Based on 2025-2026 PMR2



Projected Enrollment

As part of its contract with Orange County, Carolina Demography conducted an analysis of all CHCCS schools, to include Seawell Elementary, in its *Student Membership Forecast: 2025-26 through 2035-36 for Orange County: Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools and Orange County Schools* report.

Enrollment Trends

Seawell Elementary is identified as one of the schools experiencing a more pronounced near-term enrollment decline. The forecast indicates that Seawell will see decreasing student counts despite accounting for new residential development in the area.

Projections indicate a decrease from approximately 364 students in 2025-26 to roughly 340 students by 2035-36.

Seawell Elementary

ADM: 2025-26 Through 2035-36 by School, Colored by Year-Over-Year % Change

School	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Carrboro Elementary	462	444	430	413	409	398	395	395	392	390	388
Ephesus Elementary	343	375	387	394	405	417	421	420	422	422	423
Estes Hills Elementary	324	353	362	376	375	389	397	398	400	401	403
FPG Elementary	499	491	505	503	499	498	496	495	492	489	487
Glenwood Elementary	394	387	385	384	396	421	421	420	419	418	418
McDougle Elementary	469	487	495	491	510	511	505	501	499	496	495
Morris Grove Elementary	371	364	357	346	362	356	359	362	366	368	371
Northside Elementary	335	316	313	306	298	291	290	289	289	288	289
Rashkis Elementary	367	336	321	298	283	253	253	253	254	255	256
Scroggs Elementary	366	347	333	314	311	307	309	312	315	314	314
Seawell Elementary	364	354	344	335	343	336	341	344	343	341	340

5% or Greater Decline	2.5% - 4.99% Decline	0% - 2.49% Decline	0% - 2.49% Growth	2.5% - 4.99% Growth	5% or Greater Growth
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The report indicates the growth is largely attributable to new housing developments within the school's attendance zone, which are expected to generate approximately 18 additional students over the forecast period.

Development Impact: Seawell Elementary

Development	Total Units	Units Already Completed	First Year Occupancy	Total Student Add
Homestead Gardens	92	0	2028	8
Homestead Road Tri-Point PH 1	63	63	2027	4
Newbury-2	24	0	2028	3
Homestead Road Tri-Point PH 2	55	0	2028	3
Newbury-1	12	0	2028	1
Lightbridge	5	0	2029	0
Total	251	63	—	18

Source: Data from Demographic Analytics Advisors, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and municipalities.

Seawell Elementary

Capacity and Utilization

According to capacity utilization, Seawell Elementary begins the forecast period at approximately 81% utilization in 2025–26 and declines to the mid-70% range, stabilizing around 76% through 2035-36.

Percent Capacity by School: 2025-2026 through 2035-2036

School Name	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031	2031-2032	2032-2033	2033-2034	2034-2035	2035-2036
Carrboro Elementary	89%	86%	83%	80%	79%	77%	76%	76%	76%	75%	75%
Ephesus Elementary	79%	86%	89%	90%	93%	96%	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%
Estes Hills Elementary	63%	68%	70%	73%	73%	75%	77%	77%	78%	78%	78%
FPG Elementary	96%	94%	97%	96%	96%	95%	95%	95%	94%	94%	93%
Glenwood Elementary	96%	94%	93%	93%	96%	102%	102%	102%	102%	101%	101%
McDougle Elementary	86%	89%	90%	90%	93%	93%	92%	91%	91%	91%	90%
Morris Grove Elementary	65%	64%	63%	61%	64%	63%	63%	64%	64%	65%	65%
Northside Elementary	59%	56%	55%	54%	52%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%
Rashkis Elementary	65%	59%	57%	52%	50%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%
Scroggs Elementary	66%	62%	60%	56%	56%	55%	55%	56%	56%	56%	56%
Seawell Elementary	81%	79%	76%	74%	76%	75%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%

Overall 10-Year ADM Impact to Elementary Schools

For elementary schools, Carolina Demography’s forecast projects CHCCS elementary school average daily membership (ADM) to decline from 4,294 students in the current school year to 4,191 within the next five years, marking a decrease of approximately 100 students. A further reduction to 4,183 is projected by the end of the forecast period (2035-36), resulting in an overall projected decline of about 111 students in elementary school ADM throughout the decade.

CHCCS Development Adjusted ADM Forecasts by Level: 2015-16 to 2025-26

Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Elementary Schools	5,501	5,555	5,508	5,472	5,349	4,926	4,716	4,641	4,552	4,510	4,294	4,255	4,232	4,161	4,191	4,176	4,188	4,190	4,190	4,181	4,183
Middle Schools	2,838	2,833	2,838	2,930	3,032	2,912	2,799	2,788	2,699	2,655	2,579	2,569	2,496	2,472	2,386	2,371	2,280	2,309	2,302	2,308	2,299
High Schools	3,665	3,738	3,910	3,903	3,922	3,926	3,896	3,923	3,949	3,934	3,885	3,795	3,710	3,693	3,584	3,536	3,529	3,382	3,331	3,294	3,206
Total	12,004	12,126	12,256	12,305	12,303	11,764	11,411	11,352	11,200	11,099	10,758	10,619	10,438	10,326	10,161	10,084	9,997	9,882	9,823	9,783	9,688

Source: CHCCS; Demographic Analytics Advisors (DAA) Forecast

Seawell Elementary (Including Ephesus and Glenwood Analysis)

Criteria #3

Inconvenience or Hardship to Pupils Affected

Evaluate the inconvenience or hardship that may result to affected students, including an equity impact analysis addressing potential effects on students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, multilingual learners, Black students, and Latinx students, and also include information regarding Pre-Kindergarten programming, including enrollment, classroom capacity, program placement, and any potential impacts on affected schools.

Introduction

Though the purpose of this study is to assist with the school closure decision, the district has made it known that a possible school closure(s) would coincide with a district-wide elementary boundary change process. In the absence of finalized attendance zones, it is difficult for the district to identify exactly the total number of students to be affected by any specific school closure scenario. Rather than making assumptions, the focus is on understanding potential risks and setting clear equity guardrails to guide future decisions. What is known, at this time, includes each school's demographics, academic outcomes, and attendance patterns, which together help frame the broader context even without student school assignments.

To stay grounded in student experience, universal risk factors exist that should apply across all schools. These include the importance of stable relationships with peers and teachers, continuity of instruction, access to programs and extracurricular opportunities, reliable transportation, and the timing of transitions, with the understanding that certain grade levels are more sensitive to change than others.

At the same time, the district should consider how different groups of students may experience transitions differently, without overgeneralizing entire schools. This includes reflecting on the potential impacts for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students already facing attendance challenges, and those in key transition years such as rising fifth and eighth graders. The central principle is to keep equity rooted in actual student experience rather than assumptions.

It is recommended that this work unfolds in 3 phases. In phase 1, after the closure decision is made and before attendance zones are established, the district should develop school level equity profiles, identifying universal risk factors, examining student level sensitivities, and being transparent about current limitations. In phase 2, once zones are created in partnership with a demographer, the analysis should shift to concrete impacts such as how students are redistributed, how demographics change, what transportation looks like, and how access to programs may shift. In phase 3, after decisions are made, the focus should turn to targeted mitigation strategies along with ongoing monitoring and adjustment to ensure student needs are met.

Seawell Elementary (Including Ephesus and Glenwood Analysis)

Student Groups

As reported to the NC Department of Public Instruction, the table below presents a snapshot of student demographics and program participation across Ephesus Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and Seawell Elementary which is based on the October 2025 “20th” day enrollment data. Each school reflects a distinct demographic composition, while also showing some common trends in student needs and enrollment patterns.

Ephesus Elementary has the largest share of White students at 50.6%, with smaller but relatively balanced representation among Asian (14.3%), Black (15.3%), and Latinx (13.0%) students. Multiracial students account for 6.4%. Over one-third of students (34.5%) are identified as Economically Disadvantaged (EDS), and 13.3% receive Special Education services (SWD).

Glenwood Elementary stands out for its higher percentage of Asian students (38.0%), the largest among the three schools, while its White student population is 35.4%. Other groups include Black (8.6%), Latinx (4.6%), and Multiracial students (12.9%). Glenwood has the lowest percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students (17.5%) and Students with Disabilities (9.1%) among the three schools.

Seawell Elementary presents a more evenly distributed demographic profile, with White students making up 34.9% of the population, followed by Asian (28.6%), Black (16.5%), and Latinx (11.1%) students. Multiracial students account for 8.9%. Similar to Ephesus, Seawell has a relatively high percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students (32.2%) and the highest proportion of Multilingual Learners (16.5%) among the three schools.

The differences in demographic composition and program participation (EDS, ML, SWD), and available seats highlight varying levels of diversity and student needs (see next table).

Seawell Elementary (Including Ephesus and Glenwood Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools - Demographic Breakdown

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	EDS	ML	SWD	Enrolled	Open Seats
Carrboro*	2.4%	2.4%	35.6%	4.5%	55.1%	34.4%	20.4%	14.0%	494	24
Estes Hills	8.6%	10.4%	12.2%	12.5%	56.4%	25.8%	8.3%	12.8%	337	179
Ephesus	14.3%	15.3%	13.0%	6.4%	50.6%	34.5%	10.2%	13.3%	391	45
Frank P Graham *	1.3%	4.6%	50.9%	4.8%	38.5%	38.5%	29.9%	8.8%	525	-3
Glenwood^	38.0%	8.6%	4.6%	12.9%	35.4%	17.5%	11.6%	9.1%	395	17
McDougle	3.5%	13.3%	18.4%	8.5%	56.3%	30.6%	11.0%	15.9%	483	65
Morris Grove	15.6%	8.1%	14.2%	8.1%	53.8%	24.5%	10.8%	16.7%	372	196
Northside	11.0%	27.7%	14.0%	6.3%	40.7%	49.7%	11.5%	17.6%	364	204
Rashkis	21.1%	22.7%	16.4%	8.1%	31.6%	51.7%	19.6%	19.8%	383	185
Scroggs	10.9%	15.7%	15.4%	7.3%	50.8%	29.0%	11.1%	15.4%	396	162
Seawell	28.6%	16.5%	11.1%	8.9%	34.9%	32.2%	16.5%	13.4%	395	55
<i>(2025-26 20th Day Enrollment)</i>			*Spanish Dual Language Program				^Mandarin Dual Language Program			

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

CHCCS Elementary Schools - Demographic Breakdown for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	EDS	ML	SWD	Enrolled	Open Seats	
Ephesus	14.3%	15.3%	13.0%	6.4%	50.6%	34.5%	10.2%	13.3%	391	45	
Glenwood^	38.0%	8.6%	4.6%	12.9%	35.4%	17.5%	11.6%	9.1%	395	17	
Seawell	28.6%	16.5%	11.1%	8.9%	34.9%	32.2%	16.5%	13.4%	395	55	
<i>(2025-26 20th Day Enrollment)</i>			^Mandarin Dual Language Program								

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Seawell Elementary

(Including Ephesus and Glenwood Analysis)

Reading and Math Academic Performance for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

The 2024 Reading and Math academic performance data for Ephesus Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and Seawell Elementary shows generally strong outcomes across both subjects, with some notable differences in achievement and growth patterns.


Overall, Glenwood Elementary stands out as the highest-performing school, earning an A in Math and a B in Reading. It leads in both Reading Achievement (84) and Math Achievement (86), as well as the highest SPG scores in both subjects (81 in Reading and 87 in Math). However, its Reading Growth (70) is the lowest among the three schools, suggesting that while students are performing at a high level, their year-over-year progress in reading is comparatively slower.

Seawell Elementary demonstrates balanced performance across all measures. With B grades in both Reading and Math, it maintains consistent scores in SPG (77 in both subjects) and Achievement (77 Reading, 76 Math). Its Growth scores (78 Reading, 82 Math) indicate steady student progress, positioning Seawell as the most consistent performer without major strengths or weaknesses.

Ephesus Elementary shows solid growth despite lower achievement levels. While it holds B grades in both subjects and has the lowest Reading Achievement (67) and relatively lower SPG scores (71 Reading, 78 Math), it excels in Growth, particularly in Math (91) and Reading (85). This suggests that although overall proficiency is lower, students at Ephesus are making significant academic gains.

2024 Reading & Math Academic Performance			
	Ephesus ES	Glenwood ES	Seawell ES
Reading Grade	B	B	B
Math Grade	B	A	B
Reading SPG Score	71	81	77
Math SPG Score	78	87	77
Reading Achievement	67	84	77
Math Achievement	76	86	76
Reading Growth	85	70	78
Math Growth	91	91	82

School Performance Grades



Ephesus ES

Reading

B
2024-29

SPG Score: **71**

Achievement: **67**

Growth: **85**


Math

B
2024-25

SPG Score: **78**

Achievement: **76**

Growth: **91**



Glenwood ES

Reading

B
2024-25

SPG Score: **81**

Achievement: **84**

Growth: **70**


Math

A
2024-25

SPG Score: **87**

Achievement: **86**

Growth: **91**



Seawell ES

Reading

B
2024-21

SPG Score: **77**

Achievement: **77**

Growth: **78**

Math

B
2024-25

SPG Score: **77**

Achievement: **76**

Growth: **82**

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Seawell Elementary (Including Ephesus and Glenwood Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools - Student Attendance

As prepared by the Office of Research, Assessment, and Student Information, the 2024-25 Average Daily Attendance data (see table below) highlights a strong overall commitment to student presence across schools from August through June, with most campuses maintaining attendance rates in the mid 90 percent range. This consistency reflects a district wide emphasis on engagement and the importance of daily participation in learning.

Across student groups, attendance remains relatively balanced, though some variation is visible. White and Multiracial students tend to show slightly higher attendance rates overall, while attendance among Black and Latinx students, though still solid, trends a bit lower in comparison. These differences, while not drastic, point to opportunities for targeted support to ensure equitable access and engagement for all student populations.

School level attendance shows a similarly positive picture, with several schools such as Estes Hills, Glenwood, and McDougle demonstrating particularly strong attendance across multiple subgroups. At the same time, a few schools and student groups reflect modest dips, suggesting areas where focused interventions or additional resources could further strengthen outcomes.

Attendance among Multilingual Learners (ML) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) generally aligns with overall trends but shows slightly more variability, reinforcing the importance of continued monitoring and tailored strategies to support these groups. Note: The State doesn't have comparable data posted publicly on the internet, so the Office of Research, Assessment and Student Information calculated it from the data in Infinite Campus.

2024-25 Average Daily Attendance - Percent Attendance from August - June

	All	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	ML	SWD
Carrboro	95.0	94.5	94.2	94.9	95.3	95.0	95.0	92.4
Ephesus	95.0	95.8	92.9	94.5	95.9	95.4	94.6	93.7
Estes Hills	95.6	95.7	92.0	95.2	95.8	96.4	94.8	93.2
FPG	95.3	97.5	97.1	94.5	96.7	96.1	94.0	95.0
Glenwood	95.3	96.0	94.8	94.9	95.9	95.8	96.2	95.1
McDougle	95.8	97.0	93.1	92.6	94.5	95.9	91.9	93.7
Morris Grove	94.8	96.0	92.1	95.2	96.3	95.6	95.0	94.8
Northside	95.4	96.0	92.4	93.2	93.2	95.0	95.2	91.2
Rashkis	94.2	96.0	93.2	92.7	93.6	95.4	95.0	91.9
Scroggs	94.5	95.8	92.4	92.5	95.1	95.3	92.9	92.2
Seawell	94.6	96.2	95.1	94.8	95.0	94.9	95.5	93.2

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Seawell Elementary (Including Ephesus and Glenwood Analysis)

CHCCS Elementary Schools -

Student Attendance for Schools Under Consideration of Closure

Overall, Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell are all performing at a high level, with percentages mostly in the mid-90s across student groups. Glenwood has the highest overall score at 95.3%, followed closely by Ephesus at 95.0%, while Seawell is slightly lower at 94.6%.

Looking at specific student groups:

- Asian students perform consistently well across all schools, with Seawell leading at 96.2%, followed by Glenwood at 96.0% and Ephesus at 95.8%.
- For Black students, Seawell again has the highest performance at 95.1%, followed by Glenwood at 94.8%, while Ephesus is lower at 92.9%, representing the largest gap among schools for any subgroup.
- Among Latinx students, results are very similar across schools, with Glenwood slightly ahead at 94.9%, Seawell at 94.8%, and Ephesus at 94.5%.
- In the Multiracial group, Ephesus and Glenwood are tied at 95.9%, while Seawell is slightly lower at 95.0%.
- For White students, Glenwood again has the highest score at 95.8%, followed by Ephesus at 95.4% and Seawell at 94.9%.

2024-25 Average Daily Attendance - Percent Attendance from August - June

	All	Asian	Black	Latinx	Multiracial	White	ML	SWD
Ephesus	95.0	95.8	92.9	94.5	95.9	95.4	94.6	93.7
Glenwood	95.3	96.0	94.8	94.9	95.9	95.8	96.2	95.1
Seawell	94.6	96.2	95.1	94.8	95.0	94.9	95.5	93.2

EDS - Economically Disadvantaged
ML - Multilingual Learners
SWD - Students with Disabilities

Seawell Elementary (Including Ephesus and Glenwood Analysis)

Exceptional Children Services

In considering the potential closure of Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell Elementary Schools, it is important to recognize that a school is not simply a place of instruction for students receiving exceptional children (EC) services. It is a carefully developed ecosystem of support, predictability, and relationships that must be thoughtfully considered.

While none of these schools house our Exceptional Children's Adapted Curriculum (ECAC) programs, our most medically fragile and severely disabled students, it is equally important that we make every effort to think through the challenges that our exceptional student population at each school will face. For all students with individualized education plans (IEPs), significant time and effort has been invested in building trust with teachers and designing for specially designed instruction. The relationships with instructional assistants, therapists, and other related support staff are not incidental; they are foundational to student progress.

Legally, if a school were to close, services would follow the student. The district would remain responsible for providing a free appropriate public education, and IEPs would continue to be implemented in a new setting. This would also not have an impact on caseload ratios for teachers. Our caseloads are well below state average. While this suggests continuity on paper, the reality is that transitions introduce variables that can disproportionately affect students with disabilities if not carefully planned for in advance.

A new school environment may involve unfamiliar hallways, louder cafeterias, different classroom layouts, and altered schedules. For students who rely on consistency and structure, these changes can lead to anxiety, regression, or behavioral challenges initially if these factors are not taken into consideration prior to their occurrence.

It is important to acknowledge that while legal compliance ensures services continue, it does not fully capture the student experience. The key question is not only whether services can be delivered elsewhere, but whether they can be delivered with the same level of effectiveness, stability, and responsiveness that students currently experience at Ephesus, Glenwood, and Seawell.

Any decision regarding closure should therefore include a careful, student-centered transition plan. This should involve advance preparation for students, additional teacher training, opportunities to visit new environments, thoughtful placement decisions, continuity of key staff when possible, and clear communication with families.

Seawell Elementary

Criteria #4

Additional Facility Costs

Cost of Providing Additional Facilities

Additional facility costs are not applicable to this study, as the Board of Education is evaluating school closure based on the district's existing elementary school portfolio rather than consolidation.

Criteria #5

Recent and Projected Capital Expenditures

Recent District Capital Expenditures (2020-2025)

Over the past 5-years, capital expenditures have been largely directed toward targeted repairs, safety systems, building restoration, and facility upgrades approximating \$2,614,769 (see next table).

Projected District Capital Expenditures (2026-2036)

District facilities staff conducted a survey of the school's facility and building systems. This projection shifts from targeted repairs to large, system wide infrastructure replacements and estimates approximately \$21,641,171 needed over the next 10-years using a 4% annual escalation factor. These projects include multiple building roof replacements, stormwater and sewer infrastructure replacements, asphalt replacements, and major kitchen/bathroom improvements in addition to other projects (see next below).

Seawell Elementary

High Priority Maintenance Project	2020-2025	2025	2030 (5 Years)	2035 (10 Years)
Fencing	\$53,000	-	-	-
Security System Upgrade (Camera/Door Access)	\$101,769	-	-	-
Fire Alarm Replacement	\$94,000	-	-	-
3/5 Playground	\$296,000	-	-	-
Pre-K Playground	\$160,000	-	-	-
ADA Ramp Replacement	\$20,000	-	-	-
Cafeteria Ceiling/Lighting Replacement	\$50,000	-	-	-
Lawler Building HVAC/Lighting Replacement	\$1,000,000	-	-	-
Concrete Replacement	\$80,000	-	-	-
Storm Water Flow Line Pod C and E	\$10,000	-	-	-
Admin Building HVAC Replacement (Encumbered)	\$750,000	-	-	-
Pod HVAC Replacement	-	\$525,000	\$638,743	\$777,128
Storm Water Pipe Replacement (multi-bldg)	-	\$1,100,000	\$1,338,318	\$1,628,269
Exterior Sanitary Sewer Pipe Replacement (multi-bldg)	-	\$1,225,000	\$1,490,400	\$1,813,299
Interior Sanitary Sewer Pipe Replacement (multi-bldg)	-	\$2,250,000	\$2,737,469	\$3,330,550
Asphalt Replacement/Vehicle Queuing	-	\$1,200,000	\$1,459,983	\$1,776,293
Admin Building Roof Replacement	-	\$950,000	\$1,155,820	\$1,406,232
Pod Roof Replacement	-	\$1,500,000	\$1,824,979	\$2,220,366
B Building Roof Replacement	-	\$1,200,000	\$1,459,983	\$1,776,293
Schoolwide VCT Tile Replacement	-	\$250,000	\$304,163	\$370,061
Domestic Water Piping Replacement	-	\$560,000	\$681,326	\$828,937
Replace Cabins (6 Cabins Total)	-	\$720,000	\$875,990	\$1,065,776
Schoolwide Ceiling Grid and Tile Replacement	-	\$150,000	\$182,498	\$222,037
Kitchen Renovation/Equipment Replacement	-	\$1,100,000	\$1,338,318	\$1,628,269
Bathroom Renovations Schoolwide	-	\$1,125,000	\$1,368,735	\$1,665,275
Gymnasium Floor Replacement	-	\$140,000	\$170,331	\$207,234
Lighting Fixture Replacement	-	\$225,000	\$273,747	\$333,055
Abatement	-	\$50,000	\$60,833	\$74,012
Playground Replacement	-	\$350,000	\$425,829	\$518,085
District Total	\$2,614,769	\$14,620,000	\$17,787,465	\$21,641,171

Seawell Elementary

Woolpert Projected Capital Expenditures (Comfortable and Safe)

In 2023, Orange County contracted with Woolpert, Inc. to conduct a facilities assessment for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City and Orange County Schools in order to develop a fiscal planning document on future capital maintenance expenditures. Option B was developed to represent a comprehensive approach focused on restoring all existing facilities to a safe, functional, and “like-new” condition with an overall total projected investment of \$675.1 million over ten years. This plan fully addresses the needs identified in the district’s facility condition assessment. The intent of this option was to ensure that all buildings are comfortable, reliable, and free of deferred maintenance concerns, creating a stable and secure environment for students and staff.

While Option B successfully resolves all identified facility deficiencies, it is important to note that it does not include enhancements to educational spaces or address issues of school capacity. Classrooms, layouts, and instructional environments would remain largely unchanged, meaning the plan does not modernize learning spaces or adapt them to evolving educational needs. Additionally, this option does not provide for new school construction or significant renovations that would expand or reimagine existing facilities.

For Seawell Elementary, Option B recommended that approximately \$23.1M is needed to address the school’s maintenance needs over the next ten years (see table below).

CHCCS OPTIONS DETAILS

	OPTION A COMFORTABLE AND SAFE	OPTION B COMFORTABLE AND SAFE, PLUS 10-YEAR FACILITY NEEDS	COMFORTABLE AND SAFE,
SCHOOL NAME	BUDGET	BUDGET	STRATEGY
CARRBORO ES	\$0.0 M	\$22.0 M	Replacement School
EPHESUS ES	\$8.5 M	\$28.2 M	High Priority Needs
ESTES HILLS ES	\$3.4 M	\$29.5 M	Replacement School
FRANK PORTER GRAHAM ES	\$5.4 M	\$30.9 M	Consolidate
GLENWOOD ES	\$1.0 M	\$16.3 M	High Priority Needs
MORRIS GROVE ES	\$4.5 M	\$24.6 M	High Priority Needs
NORTHSIDE ES	\$0.0 M	\$13.3 M	High Priority Needs
RASHKIS ES	\$6.4 M	\$29.7 M	High Priority Needs
SCROGGS ES	\$4.4 M	\$29.9 M	High Priority Needs
SEAWELL ES	\$0.5 M	\$23.1 M	High Priority Needs
MCDUGLE ES	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CARRBORO HS	\$9.2 M	\$67.1 M	High Priority Needs
CHAPEL HILL HS	\$10.9 M	\$29.6 M	High Priority Needs
E. CHAPEL HILL HS	\$23.2 M	\$75.6 M	High Priority Needs
PHOENIX ACADEMY	\$1.5 M	\$2.8 M	Renovation
MCDUGLE MS	\$15.3 M	\$60.8 M	High Priority Needs
CULBRETH MS	\$8.9 M	\$44.6 M	Replacement School
PHILLIPS MS	\$3.6 M	\$29.0 M	High Priority Needs
SMITH MS	\$12.5 M	\$42.2 M	Adequacy (Learning Tools)
LINCOLN CENTER	\$5.2 M	\$15.0 M	-

Seawell Elementary

Criteria #6

Building Adjacency to Middle or High Schools

The study shall evaluate the adjacency of each school to nearby middle or high schools, including potential programmatic and academic impacts, opportunities for cross-school collaboration, and any long-range planning considerations. (Notes/Comments: Proximity can make academic acceleration more logistically feasible, allowing elementary students to take classes at the middle or high school level.)

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools has three campuses that are composed of 2 or more schools (McDougle ES/MS, Estes Hills ES/Phillips MS, and Seawell ES/Smith MS/Chapel Hill HS). Another adjacent campus could be added to the district's school portfolio following FPG Bilingue replacement next to Culbreth MS. For Seawell Elementary, Smith Middle and Chapel Hill High Schools are contiguous to Seawell Elementary School. Presently, there are no Seawell students enrolled in courses at Smith Middle or Chapel Hill High. However, on occasion, there are instances where students from Smith Middle and/or Chapel Hill High students participate in student activities with Seawell Elementary students.

It is noted that a shared campus can offer families a level of convenience and efficiency that can significantly simplify the daily routine of getting children to and from school. Instead of coordinating drop-offs and pick-ups at different geographic locations, parents can bring all of their children attending adjacent schools to a single campus. This consolidation can reduce travel time, minimizes logistical complexity, and allows families to establish a more predictable and manageable daily schedule when facing existing work schedule challenges.

In addition, having all children on one campus simplifies participation in school-related activities. If schools align schedules, parent-teacher conferences, performances, extracurricular events, and meetings can often be scheduled in a way that minimizes additional travel and time away from work or home responsibilities. This accessibility can lead to greater family engagement in the school community.

Seawell Elementary

Criteria #7

Transportation Costs

The study shall evaluate transportation costs and impacts, including all modes of student transportation, such as bus eligibility, actual bus ridership, walk zones, and other transportation patterns, to assess the potential operational and financial effects associated with student reassignment.

Seawell Elementary School serves approximately 402 students, with transportation patterns distributed across CHCCS bus transportation, walking/biking, and parent-driven travel. Of the total student population, 282 students (approximately 70%) are eligible for school-provided transportation.

The school operates four regular/exceptional transportation buses. Morning ridership includes approximately 147 students, representing 52% of eligible riders and 37% of total enrollment. This indicates that nearly half of transportation-eligible students are not utilizing bus service on a daily basis.

Non-transportation zone (NTZ) data shows strong alignment between systems. Infinite Campus identifies 121 students as NTZ, while the transportation routing system (TIMS) identifies 120 students. After inquiring with transportation staff, this 1-student discrepancy reflects a student who is provided bus transportation within the NTZ due to environmental factors making it unsafe to walk to school. The Infinite Campus counts do not reflect this transportation modification.

Alternative transportation methods (walking/biking) account for a substantial share of student travel. The Town of Chapel Hill's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) audit observations recorded 25 students walking and 23 students biking. Combined, walking/biking represents approximately 12% of the student population. In contrast, approximately 207 students (51%) are driven to and from school daily by private vehicle, making parent driven transportation the dominant commuting method.

Seawell Elementary

Bus ride times average approximately 28 minutes across routes, with considerable variation. Bus 55 has the shortest average ride time at 10 minutes, while Bus 128 has the longest at 38 minutes. Bus 129 averages 31 minutes, and Bus 37 averages 34 minutes. The overall range of 28 minutes between the shortest and longest routes indicates variability in route length, coverage area, and potential routing efficiency.

Overall, student transportation at Seawell reflects a multi-modal distribution: approximately 37% bus ridership (morning), 12% active transportation (walk/bike), and 51% parent-driven travel. Seawell Elementary's transportation landscape reflects a combination of bus usage, walking/biking, and parent-driven travel.

See table below for comparison amongst the 3 closure study schools.

School Bus Information / Student Counts / Methods of Transportation			
Information	Ephesus ES	Glenwood ES	Seawell ES
~ # of Students Eligible for Bus Transportation	253	389	282
~ # of Regular/EC Buses at School	3 buses	7 buses	4 buses
~ # of Students Counted Riding Bus (AM)	140	170	147
~ # of Students Identified as Non-Transportation Zone (Infinite Campus)	164	0	121
~ Adjusted # of Students Identified as Non-Transportation Zone by Transportation (TIMS)	125	2	120
# of Students Observed Walking to School (SRTS Audit)	64	38 (4)	25
~ # of Students Biking to School (SRTS Audit)	14	7	23
~ # of Students Driven to School by Parents	160	210	207
~ Average School Bus Ride Time (first bus stop to arrival at school)	30 minutes	38 minutes	28 minutes
~ Average Individual School Bus Ride Time (1st bus stop to arrival at school)	Bus 154 - 21 minutes Bus 162 - 23 minutes Bus E141 - 45 minutes	Bus 159 - 43 minutes Bus 160 - 54 minutes Bus 132 - 47 minutes Bus 139 - 30 minutes Bus 28 - 43 minutes Bus 76 - 35 minutes Bus 89 - 18 minutes	Bus 128 - 38 minutes Bus 129 - 31 minutes Bus 55 - 10 minutes Bus 37 - 34 minutes

Seawell Elementary

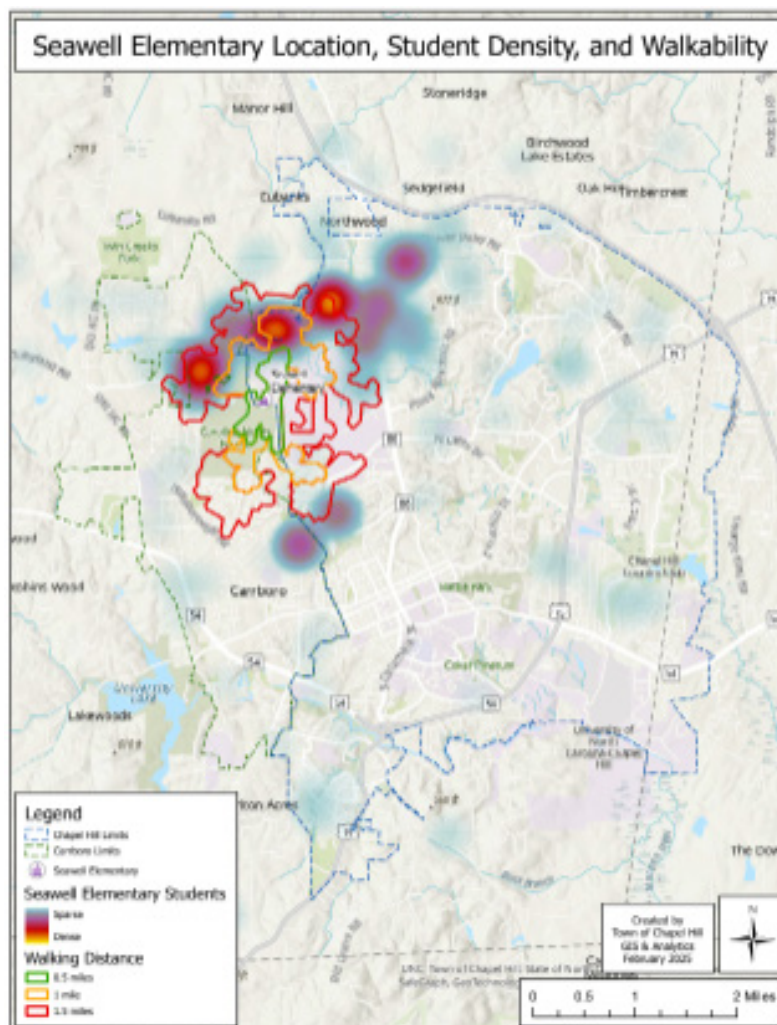
Estimated Additional Ride Time to Adjacent Elementary Schools (Estes Hills ES, Morris Grove ES, and Northside ES)

When considering potential changes to bus ride times, it is important to note that discussions around school closures are driven by imbalances in elementary school enrollment across the district. Addressing this issue would require a districtwide adjustment of elementary school boundaries, which would occur concurrently with any school closure(s). As a result, bus routes and ride times would be modified throughout the district.

Based on discussions with CHCCS transportation staff, it is estimated that bus routes serving students from the Seawell Elementary School zone to the nearest adjacent schools (Estes Hills ES, Morris Grove ES, and Northside ES) could increase by approximately 3.0 to 5.0 miles, resulting in an additional 8–12 minutes of travel time. Actual impacts may vary depending on the final boundary adjustments and route configurations.

Town of Chapel Hill / CHCCS Safe Routes to School’s Student Density and Walk Counts

The Town of Chapel Hill Safe Routes to School partnered with CHCCS to determine the numbers of students living within 0-1.5 miles of its schools in their SRTS Action Plan (adopted by Town Council on June 11, 2025). Depicted below is a heatmap denoting in total, 0 students live within 0.5 miles, 60 live within 0.5-1 mile, and 107 live within 1-1.5 miles of Seawell. Also noting that most students live north of Seawell along Homestead Road and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard.



Seawell Elementary

In addition, the Chapel Hill Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program conducted its walk counts as part of the broader SRTS Action Plan to gather empirical data on student travel patterns. These walk counts involved direct observation of students arriving at and departing from school campuses during specific, pre-determined timeframes. The observations, such as those conducted on November 12, 2024, at various schools including Seawell Elementary, were designed to accurately quantify the number of students utilizing active transportation, specifically walking and biking, versus other modes of travel like riding the bus or being driven by parents. This data is critical for understanding existing transportation behaviors, assessing the effectiveness of current walk and bike zones, and informing future infrastructure and programming decisions related to safe student access.

For Seawell Elementary, SRTS staff counted 25 walkers and 23 bikers out of 456 enrolled students at the time of the direct observation. This equates to approximately 5.5% walking and 5.0% biking (see table below).

Town of Chapel Hill / CHCCS Safe Routes to Schools Action Plan Walk Counts by School (observations Nov. 12, 2024)					
School	Walk	Bike	Student Enrollment	Walk %	Bike %
Ephesus ES	64	14	401	16.00%	3.50%
Estes Hills ES	58	11	355	16.30%	3.10%
FPG Bilingüe ES	30	1	528	5.70%	0.20%
Glenwood ES	38	7	408	9.30%	1.70%
Northside ES	51	5	399	12.80%	1.30%
Rashkis ES	38	19	437	8.70%	4.30%
Scroggs ES	115	16	406	28.30%	3.90%
Seawell ES	25	23	456	5.50%	5.00%
Culbreth MS	98	6	665	14.70%	0.90%
Phillips MS	34	6	575	5.90%	1.00%
Smith MS	98	21	750	13.10%	2.80%
Chapel Hill HS	127	46	1,642	7.70%	2.80%
East Chapel Hill HS	92	20	1,417	6.50%	1.40%
Phoenix Academy HS	1	0	38	2.60%	0.00%

Seawell Elementary

Annual District Bus Operating Costs

As reported to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), in the 2024-25 school year, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools operated 55 buses, transported 3,880 students, and traveled 728,860 miles at a total cost of \$3,013,692. This equates to a \$4.13 cost per mile. The average operating cost per bus was \$54,794.40 with a cost per pupil of \$936.53.

NCDPI Table 32

Select School Year:

Search by LEA Name:

Table 32 - STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ON PUBLIC SCHOOL BUSES

Student Transportation on Public School Buses School Year 2024-25

Year	LEA ↑	LEA Name	Buses	Pupils	Miles	Cost	Cost Per Bus	Cost Per Pupil	Cost Per Mile
2025	681	Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	55	3,880	728,860	3,013,692	54,794.40	936.53	4.13

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1 - 1

Note: Transportation includes contract transportation.

Estimated Additional Transportation Costs

For this analysis, district transportation staff used students currently within the non-transportation zone (NTZ) as the basis for estimating additional ridership if Seawell Elementary were to close. At Seawell, approximately 120 students do not receive transportation services and instead walk, bike, or rely on parent-provided transportation.

To estimate costs, the district applied the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) average annual transportation cost per student. For the 2024–25 school year, NCDPI’s Table 32 – Student Transportation on Public School Buses reports that Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools spent an average of \$936.53 per pupil.

Applying this per-pupil cost to the 120 students who would no longer be in the NTZ results in an estimated additional annual transportation cost of approximately \$112,383. This would necessitate up to 2 additional buses for this increase. It is the goal of the transportation department to find other district inefficiencies during the boundary process that will allow buses to be reassigned to cover this additional cost.

Seawell Elementary

Criteria #8

Site Adequacy

The evaluation of site adequacy, including whether each facility provides sufficient space and appropriate program fit to support current and potential programming, shall assess facility capacity and suitability, including considerations for programs such as Pre-Kindergarten, should relocation or reassignment become necessary.

Educational Adequacy (School Site)

Determining a school site's educational adequacy focuses on whether its physical spaces effectively support both the programs offered and the number of students served. It goes beyond simply counting rooms by evaluating how well those spaces function for teaching, learning, and student support.

The Woolpert study assessed all CHCCS classrooms to compare existing facilities against current North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) standards and best practices in K-12 educational design. In doing so, it centered on three key questions:

1. Did the school have all the necessary rooms?

This examines whether each facility includes the full range of spaces required for a comprehensive educational program. In addition to standard classrooms, this includes specialized areas such as science labs, art and music rooms, career and technical education (CTE) spaces, media centers, cafeterias, gyms, and support spaces (e.g., counseling, exceptional education, calming and sensory rooms, and multilingual learner (MLL) spaces). Adequacy requires that no essential space is missing.

2. Were the rooms appropriately sized?

Even when all required spaces are present, they must be large enough to support their intended use and student capacity. This involves comparing room sizes to enrollment and program standards - for example, ensuring classrooms can accommodate class sizes, labs provide safe working space, and shared areas can handle peak usage. Undersized spaces can limit instruction and create safety or accessibility concerns.

3. Did the rooms have the right equipment?

Adequacy also depends on whether each space is properly equipped. Classrooms require appropriate furniture and instructional technology, labs need specialized equipment and safety features, and programs such as CTE and the arts depend on industry-standard tools. A room may exist and be appropriately sized, but without proper equipment, it cannot fully support its intended function.

Seawell Elementary

Together, these criteria assess educational adequacy in terms of completeness (having all required spaces), capacity (appropriate size), and functionality (proper equipment). A school meets adequacy standards only when all three are satisfied.

Overall, the Woolpert study found that older schools in the district scored lower in terms of the number and size of rooms compared to newer facilities. However, across the district, these schools generally scored higher in terms of having appropriate equipment and resources.

The table below denotes the level of educational adequacy determined by the 2023 study for Seawell Elementary School.

Educational Adequacy for Seawell Elementary					
School	Gross Square Footage	Year Built	Space Types	Space Types > minimum	Space Requirements
			Question #1	Question #2	Question #3
Ephesus ES	66,952	1972	72%	36%	88%
Glenwood ES	66,664	1952	76%	54%	86%
Seawell ES	66,198	1969	66%	33%	83%

Modular Units: Use at School

Seawell Elementary presently has six (6) modular units available on its campus. Below is a table that indicates their use and count.

Modular Units at Seawell ES	
Use	Modular Unit Count
Pre-K	1
Pre-K	1
Spanish	1
PLC/Conf. Room	1
MakerSpace	1
Unassigned	1
Total	6

Seawell Elementary

Update: 10-Year CHCCS Enrollment Forecast

Based on the recently released Carolina Demography's *Student Membership Forecast: 2025-26 through 2035-36 for Orange County: Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools and Orange County Schools* report, CHCCS enrollment is not declining in speed or magnitude as previously anticipated. While Carolina Demography's report can inform decisions about CHCCS maximum operational efficiency, it should not serve as the sole driver for the purpose of this study. CHCCS enrollment is shifting in ways that have meaningful implications for how the district will continue to serve students in alignment with North Carolina legislation, funding, and its own priorities.

Review: CHCCS School Capacity and Orange County Growth Management

The Carolina Demography membership forecast report uses school capacity numbers originating from the Orange County School Adequate Public Facility Ordinance, or SAPFO. SAPFO capacity numbers are used to manage growth in Orange County from a public facility capacity to ensure new residential developments up for review will have adequate public services (capacity in K12 CHCCS Schools) generated by a new development. Thus, the SAPFO capacity numbers have historically been the method to determine whether or not additional schools were needed due to student growth versus closure.

The Path Ahead: CHCCS Academic Program Capacities

Decisions regarding district operations, facilities, and school assignments must also reflect DPI standards and the district's commitment to high-quality and accessible instructional support spaces. To align administrative recommendations with updated enrollment trends, the next critical step is developing a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of academic program capacity and educational adequacy which is commonly referred to as Program Capacity.

Design vs. Program Capacities

A school's designed seat capacity is often viewed in terms of physical space, meaning how many students a building can accommodate based on available seats. However, program capacity is more complex. A school may have available classrooms but lack the specialized spaces, staffing, or scheduling flexibility required to support programs such as exceptional children (EC), multilingual learners, or early childhood initiatives. Additionally, NCDPI K-3 class size requirements, service delivery models, and program-specific needs can significantly reduce what appears to be available capacity on paper.

Considering both program capacity and educational adequacy allows CHCCS to move from reactive to strategic decision-making. Rather than focusing solely on building utilization, the district can better align facilities, staffing, and programming to support the whole child.

Seawell Elementary

Integrating K12 Enrollment Forecasting with Program Capacities

Ultimately, this student projection analysis is not just a forecast, it is a signal. It underscores the need to evaluate how CHCCS resources are distributed, how programs are delivered, and whether existing systems including academic programming, staffing allotments, and ultimately school boundaries can support the district's long-term goals. By developing a clearer understanding of Program Capacity and educational adequacy now, CHCCS will be better positioned to make informed, equitable, and sustainable decisions that ensure long-term access to high-quality education for all learners.

As a result, CHCCS consulted with North Carolina State University's Institution for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) and the SchoolCAMP team, which provides strategic consultation, planning, and analysis to public K12 school districts with respect to school planning, school boundary processes, and transportation routing/efficiencies. Their initial task was to assist CHCCS in better understanding how it uses its school building spaces, through inventorying and principal consultation, and to compare against North Carolina DPI's standards and best educational practices.

CHCCS School Capacity Review with Academic Programs

The Program Capacity of a K12 Classroom and School requires information on:

1. **Classrooms:** the number of built physical spaces within a school
2. **Size and Suitability:** the overall size of each classroom and the features it affords teachers and students - including bathrooms, sinks and hot water
3. **Students:** the grade and unique learning needs of the students within
4. **Program:** the classroom features and regulatory framework for instructional delivery

Example

- **School A** is a traditional, geographically-assigned (school boundary) Elementary
- **School B** is a lottery-assigned Dual Language Immersion Elementary
- **Classroom 100 for both schools is 900 square feet and serves First Grade**
 - The Program Capacity of School A for Room 100 is **16 students**
 - However, because School B is a DLI Program, the Program Capacity for Room 100 is **24 students**

Age of Facility and Educational Adequacy, Suitability

The average age of schools in North Carolina is 55 years old. The history of school construction reflects values and instructional priorities over time and era of school construction. Thus, older schools in North Carolina and the US have smaller classrooms dedicated for teacher-led instruction (i.e. desks pointed to the front of the chalkboard in minimally sized rooms). In addition, older schools tend to have a lack of academic support, or Resource Rooms, used for modern pull-out instruction, like ESL, AIG, Intervention, etc.

Beyond the core K12 Instructional Spaces and Resource Rooms, newer schools often have - and need - swing, or flex spaces. These rooms are used when student enrollment crests beyond the built classroom arrangements, and are flexible spaces that can be used both for lower K-2 and upper Grade 3-5 use on an as-needed basis.

Seawell Elementary

CHCCS School Capacities: Woolpert / SAPFO / CHCCS Program and Use

The Orange County and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School community have historically evaluated the size, or capacity of schools, across several indicators. These include:

- **2023 Woolpert Report** - Utilized Square Footage per Student to evaluate the size and adequacy of school facilities for Orange County Bond support.
- **2024-25 SAPFO Capacities** - Often referred to as legacy capacities, these numbers indicate the maximum number of students that could receive academic instruction if all rooms were filled irrespective of community and academic programs, such as Exceptional Child Separate Setting Classrooms (EC AC), Pre-Kindergarten, AIG and Multi-Lingual Supports.
- **2026 CHCCS Program Capacity** - In coordination with CHCCS Operational, Academic and School Leadership, NCSU ITRE / SchoolCAMP Planners have evaluated the allotted and actual space use of all CHCCS Schools in accordance with classroom size, design, attributes and the academic programs being delivered at each campus. In addition, SchoolCAMP Planners met individually with each School Leadership team to produce a ‘ground up’ profile for each school that reflects EC AC, Pre-Kindergarten and additional programs that require space at each school.

CHCCS School Capacities

Label	Elementary School Name	Woolpert Capacity	SAPFO Capacity	CHCCS Program Capacity	2030-31 Project Enroll	2030-31 Utilization Rates
CES	Carrboro Elementary with DLI	543	518	520	398	77%
EES	Ephesus Elementary	578	436	416	417	100%
EHES	Estes Hills Elementary	528	516	464	389	84%
FPGES	FPG Bilingüe Elem. with DLI	589	522	576	498	87%
GES	Glenwood Elem. with DLI	407	412	420	421	100%
MSES	Scroggs Elementary	521	558	496	307	62%
MES	McDougle Elementary	550	548	432	511	118%
MGES	Morris Grove Elementary	547	568	484	356	74%
NES	Northside Elementary	583	568	484	291	60%
RES	Rashkis Elementary	532	568	462	253	55%
SES	Seawell Elementary	378	450	416	336	81%
Totals		5,756	5,664	5,170	4,177	81%

Seawell Elementary

Analysis of School Capacities for CHCCS

The inclusion and adjustments for the CHCCS Academic Program relies on the following guidelines:

1. K-3 Classroom Size in accordance with NC House Bill 90
 - a. Kindergarten - Average 18 Students per Classroom, Maximum 21
 - b. First Grade - Average 16 Students per Classroom, Maximum 19
 - c. Second Grade - Average 17 Students per Classroom, Maximum 20
 - d. Third Grade - Average 17 Students per Classroom, Maximum 20
2. Fixed number of Classrooms at each school
3. Classroom attributes and features of each classroom
4. CHCCS Academic Program Spaces: Art, Music and ECAC require full sized classroom
5. CHCCS Support Spaces: Resource, AIG, Intervention, ESL
6. Orange County and CHCCS Program Shared Space: Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms in CHCCS School Facilities
7. Capacities do not reflect nor include the CHCCS Mobile Classroom Inventory - all capacities reflect bringing existing classrooms in temporary mobiles into “brick-and-mortar” buildings, including existing Pre-Kindergarten, K-5 Classroom and Resource Program placements

Seawell Elementary

CHCCS Implications

Sustainable Operational Utilization Rate - School Systems

The overall enrollment and program capacity in a school system indicates the utilization, or operational efficiency. Maintaining an elementary school system operational utilization within the 85–95% program capacity range is best practice. School systems operating above or below the overall district percent utilization may consider adding or removing seat capacity in order to ensure sustainable district operations.

Analysis: By the school year 2030-31, it is projected that CHCCS will have 4,177 enrolled K-5 Students with an overall academic program seat capacity of 5,170 - resulting in an overall operational utilization rate of 81%. Decisions about facility operations - opening, expanding or consolidating will directly affect the overall school system utilization rate.

Balancing Operational Utilization Rates - Between Schools

Program capacity plays a major role in balancing student enrollment across school levels. Student assignment rules, school attendance boundaries, district transfer policies, and magnet lottery programs all shape how our students are assigned to elementary schools. These decisions must be made carefully - frequent student reassignment and/or academic program changes can disrupt communities; infrequent changes can allow imbalances to grow. Balancing operational utilization rates using program capacity and projected enrollment is recommended every five years as a standard of best practice.

Importance of Academic Programs and Impacts on Capacity

As demonstrated earlier, not all classrooms function the same way, and specialized programs such as EC services, dual language immersion, or intervention support often require smaller or larger class sizes or dedicated spaces. As a result, two schools with identical physical layouts can have very different effective capacities depending on the programs they house. State class size policies further influence this dynamic. Mandated limits, especially in early grades, directly determine how many students a building can accommodate. While some flexibility may exist to absorb short-term enrollment increases, sustained deviations can strain both staff and space.

In addition to the academic program impacting a school's capacity, the age of a school facility's design adds another layer of complexity. Capacity is not just about the number of classrooms, but also about how well the building supports daily operations through its educational adequacy. The district must also take into consideration core and support spaces like resource rooms, cafeterias, gyms, and arrival and dismissal areas can become bottlenecks even when classroom utilization appears to be within the target range.

Review: CHCCS Elementary School Program Capacity Utilization and Closure Scenarios

Over the next five years, Chapel Hill Carrboro City School's K-5 elementary enrollment and program capacity utilization is approximately 81%. The closure of one elementary school with a capacity between 400-500 seats would increase the overall CHCCS K-5 utilization from 81% to 87% - 89%. The closure of two 400-500 elementary schools would increase utilization rates to 95% - 100%.

Seawell Elementary

Pre-Kindergarten Note: CHCCS Program Capacities reflect placing Pre-Kindergarten classes in CHCCS Elementary Schools. As younger students, Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms may require additional facility needs, and potentially modifications. Doing so also dedicates space to Pre-Kindergarten brick-and-mortar classrooms, moving students out of mobile classrooms - a desirable goal of the administration in addition to allowing schools to have some flexibility with their own school centric needs.

Overall, maintaining elementary schools within the 85 - 95% capacity range requires a careful balance of enrollment policies, program needs, and facility limitations. Factors such as specialized services, class size mandates, and building design all influence true capacity beyond simple classroom counts. While current utilization sits below the ideal range, and potential school closures could move the district closer to optimal levels, these decisions must also consider community stability and long term goals such as relocating prekindergarten programs into permanent facilities. Thoughtful, strategic planning is essential to ensure both efficient operations and a supportive learning environment.

Site Specific Programs

Overview of CHCCS Pre-Kindergarten Program

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) Pre-Kindergarten Program is a comprehensive early childhood education initiative, presently offered in 10 of the 11 elementary schools. The program serves three and four-year-olds and is designed to support the academic, communication, motor, social, and emotional development of young children through a structured, play-based learning environment.

CHCCS Pre-Kindergarten emphasizes whole-child development by integrating early literacy, math, and language skills with intentional opportunities to build social skills, independence, and self-confidence. Classrooms are led by licensed teachers and supported by trained instructional staff who use research-based curricula and developmentally appropriate practices.

In addition to supporting children, CHCCS Pre-Kindergarten fosters family well-being by offering parenting education, career development and help with goal setting for housing, education, and financial stability.

Seawell Elementary

The table below identifies which school community the participating students reside.

List of Pre-K Students' Homeschools Enrolled at Seawell ES		
School	Pre-K (3-year olds)	Pre-K (4-year olds)
Carrboro ES	1	0
Ephesus ES	0	0
Estes Hills ES	1	1
Glenwood ES	0	0
McDougle ES	2	2
Morris Grove ES	2	2
Northside ES	1	1
Rashkis ES	0	0
Scroggs ES	1	0
Seawell ES	4	8
Out of District	1	0
Subtotal	13	14
Total		27

For the 2025-26 school year, Seawell Elementary presently has 2 classes with a total of 27 students enrolled. In the event the school is closed, the district facilities staff would be able to disperse the classes into other existing elementary schools in educational spaces in accordance with the program requirements.

Site Specific Program: Community Schools After-School Program

The CHCCS Community Schools After-School Program is designed to provide students with a safe, supportive, and enriching environment beyond the traditional school day. The program supports families by providing reliable, affordable care during after-school hours. Offered at all 11 elementary schools across the district, the program has the capacity to serve approximately 700 students, with up to 150 students per school. At Seawell Elementary, the program presently supports 40 students. If the school was to be closed, the Community Schools administration states the students would be able to attend the program at another district elementary school.

Site Specific Enrichment Opportunity: Critter Corner

The Critter Corner program at Seawell Elementary is a volunteer-run enrichment opportunity that focuses on educating students about wildlife and promoting environmental stewardship. Its operation, started in 1992, is independent of the school and exclusively relies on dedicated volunteer support and specialized animal care. If Seawell Elementary was to be closed, CHCCS would need to first determine if the program is a necessary component of its instructional programming before deciding upon its relocation to another school site.

CHAPEL HILL- CARRBORO CITY SCHOOLS

