DECISION
OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
IN THE CLOSING OF
GOLDEN RING MIDDLE SCHOOL

To Whom It May Concern:

During its regular meeting of May 16, 2023, the Board of Education of Baltimore County voted to close Golden Ring Middle School at the end of the 2023-2024 academic year based on its consideration of the factors set forth in state regulation and as outlined by the administration in its April 17, 2023, Report, which is attached to this Decision.

This final decision of the Board of Education to close Golden Ring Middle School may be appealed to the Maryland State Board of Education, if such appeal is submitted in writing to the State Board within 30 days after this final decision of the Board of Education. The community will be so notified.

Jane Lichter
Chair

Darryl L. Williams
Secretary-Treasurer

May 17, 2023
RATIONALE FOR THE CLOSURE OF GOLDEN RING MIDDLE SCHOOL

Consideration has been given to the impact of the proposed closing of Golden Ring Middle School based on the following factors: (1) Student enrollment trends; (2) Age or condition of school buildings; (3) Transportation; (4) Educational programs; (5) Racial composition of student body; (6) Financial considerations; (7) Student relocation, and (8) Impact on community in geographic attendance area for school proposed to be closed and school, or schools, to which students will be relocating.

Attachment: April 17, 2023, Report
Baltimore County Public Schools

Golden Ring Middle School
Program Closure Proposal

April 17, 2023

Department of Schools

Department of Facilities Management and Strategic Planning
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BALTIMORE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Jane E. Lichter, Chair
Robin L. Harvey, Vice Chair
Dr. Darryl Williams, Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer

Maggie Litz Domanowski
Dr. Erin R. Hager
Julie C. Henn
Moalie S. Jose
Russell T. Kuehn
Rod McMillion
John H. Offerman, Jr.
Christina M. Pumprey
Dr. Brenda Savoy

Roah Hassan, Student Board Member

DIVISION OF THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Myriam Yarbrough, Deputy Superintendent

Department of Schools
Dr. Michael Zarchin, Chief of Schools
Ms. Larissa Santos, Executive Director
Ms. Charlyne Maul, Principal of Golden Ring Middle School

Department of Facilities Management and Strategic Planning
Pradeep Dixit, Executive Director

Office of Strategic Planning
Paul Taylor, Jr., Director
Melissa Appler, Coordinator
Michael Gotfredson, Specialist
Christopher Brocato, Data Analyst

Raising the bar, Closing gaps, Preparing for our future
INTRODUCTION

This is a proposal to officially close the Golden Ring Middle School program. The proposed closure supports a comprehensive strategy to improve learning environments and reduce projected overcrowding at middle schools in the northeast region of Baltimore County. This proposal is a required element of the school closure process regulated by COMAR and guided by Board Policy and Superintendent Rule 7610, *Permanent Closure of a School Building* (Exhibit A).

The plan to discontinue Golden Ring Middle School building as a school was established when the New Northeast Area MS project was approved by the Board in the FY2022 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The new middle school will have a state rated capacity of 1,364 offsetting the loss of seats at Golden Ring MS with a capacity of 844.

This new middle school, along with a renovation of Pine Grove Middle School, will improve learning environments for many middle school students and increase overall seating capacity by 606 in the region.

To benefit from the additional middle school seats being added to the region, a boundary process was initiated in the winter of 2022 to balance enrollment among 11 schools. The boundary recommendation for the Central and Northeast middle schools is scheduled to be voted on by the Board at its June 13, 2023, meeting. The redistribution of middle school students in that area, including those currently at Golden Ring Middle School, will be finalized at that time.

The target date for the completion of the two capital projects and the implementation of the new boundaries is fall of 2024.

The future use of the Golden Ring Middle School building has not yet been determined. There are no plans to surplus the facility but there is no plan to use it as a middle school. It will remain in the BCPS inventory.

Additional details related to various aspects of the closure including timeline, communication, factors of consideration, and implementation are contained in this proposal.
# TIMELINE

## Anticipated Schedule of Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 20, 2023</td>
<td>Recommendation to close the program at Golden Ring Middle School submitted to the superintendent for consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 11, 2023</td>
<td>Present the Golden Ring Program Closure Proposal to Superintendent’s Cabinet for approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18, 2023</td>
<td>Superintendent submits recommendation for program closure to the Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3, 2023 TBD</td>
<td>Board of Education holds public hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 16, 2023 TBD</td>
<td>Board of Education makes final decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2024</td>
<td>Golden Ring Middle School program closes – student and staff reassigned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Raising the bar, Closing gaps, Preparing for our future_
COMMUNICATION

Communication protocols for a closure process are described in Baltimore County Public Schools’ (BCPS) Superintendent Rule 7610. At a minimum, persons and organizations affiliated with Golden Ring Middle School shall receive communications as follows:

1. Notice of Superintendent's Proposal:
   a. Principal,
   b. Staff,
   c. The PTA/PTSA board, and
   d. The Area Education Advisory Council.

2. Notice of Superintendent's Recommendation to the Board:
   a. Parents and guardians of schools closing and receiving,
   b. The PTA/PTSA board,
   c. The Area Education Advisory Council, and
   d. A Press Release to the public.

3. Notice of Board Public Hearing:
   a. Advertisement to general public,
   b. Parents and guardians of schools closing and receiving, and
   c. The BCPS Web site.

4. Notice of Board’s decision:
   a. Communities in attendance area of schools closing and receiving, and
   b. Parents and guardians of schools closing and receiving.

In addition to the above, a communication to the community dated March 2023 has been distributed (Exhibit B).
CONSIDERATION OF FACTORS

Student Enrollment Trends

The table below shows September 30 official enrollment over the previous ten years for Golden Ring Middle School, which has an SRC of 844.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTUAL ENROLLMENT</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>7/63</td>
<td>7/93</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Students Count and Official BCPS September 30 Enrollments

The table below shows September 30 projected enrollment over the next ten years for Golden Ring Middle School, which has an SRC of 844.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>2024</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2026</th>
<th>2027</th>
<th>2028</th>
<th>2029</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>2031</th>
<th>2032</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROJECTED ENROLLMENT</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>975</td>
<td>963</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Students Count 2022

Age and Condition of School Building

Golden Ring Middle School was originally constructed in 1931. It received numerous additions between 1940 and 1969 as well as a variety of renovations between 1985 and 1996. The Multi-Year Improvement Plan for All Schools (MYIPAS) study ranked it within the lower 25% of schools in terms of conditions. It ranked extremely low in terms of educational adequacy and equity due to its age. For this reason, the decision to close the school and construct a new middle school was widely supported as in the best interests of students.

Transportation

The Office of Transportation will adjust bus routes and related schedules to support the redistricting of students from Golden Ring Middle School to other middle schools.

Educational Programs

The Health Sciences Magnet program at Golden Ring Middle School will move to the new middle school. Special Education programs at Golden Ring Middle School include Social Emotional Learning Support (SELS) and Functional Academic Learning Support (FALS). Both of which will be provided in the new middle school.

Racial Composition of Student Body

See section on Student Demographics

Raising the bar, Closing gaps, Preparing for our future
Financial Considerations

The future use of the Golden Ring Middle School building has not yet been determined. There are no plans to surplus the facility. It will remain in the BCPS inventory. Funding will continue to be needed to properly maintain the building systems and grounds. The building will also be partially occupied by Facilities Operations’ staff for security purposes.

Student Relocation

See section on Student Attendance Area

Impact on Community

The future use of the Golden Ring Middle School building has not yet been determined. The impact that a new use has on the community cannot be assessed at this time. There are no plans to surplus the facility. It is anticipated that the building will serve the space needs of BCPS for non-instructional operations in the future.

The closure of Golden Ring Middle School is closely aligned with the redistricting study for middle schools in the region currently underway. There has been significant community participation in the redistricting process. Students currently attending Golden Ring Middle School will be redistricted to the new middle school under construction or another middle school in that region.

Community Input

The recommendation to close Golden Ring Middle School is anticipated to be presented to the board on April 18, 2023. A Board hearing is tentatively scheduled for May 3, 2023. The community will be afforded the opportunity to testify before the Board regarding the proposed closure of Golden Ring Middle School. The final vote on the closure is anticipated to take place on May 16, 2023.

Student Demographics

The following are student demographics for Golden Ring Middle School on September 30, 2022.

- American Indian <5%
- Asian 6%
- Black 60%
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <5%
- White 16%
- Multiracial <5%
- Hispanic 13%
- FARMS 63%
- English Language Learners <5%

Source: Central/Northeast Area Boundary Study Background Report
Student Attendance Area

The map below indicates the current attendance area of Golden Ring Middle School. Students residing in this area will be redistricted to other middle schools in this region as a result of the Central and Northeast Area Middle School Boundary Study which is currently underway. It is anticipated that new boundaries will be approved by the Board on June 13, 2023, and implemented in the fall of 2024.

![Map of attendance area]

Source: Central/Northeast Area Boundary Study Background Report

Equity

The closure of Golden Ring Middle School is closely aligned with the redistricting study for middle schools in the region currently underway. A primary consideration that guides the boundary study includes maintaining or increasing the diversity among schools to reflect the diversity of the region and the school system. Significant analysis of student demographics is integral to determining new attendance areas for Golden Ring Middle School students.
**Staffing Impact**

Current staff of Golden Ring Middle School will be reassigned in accordance with standard human resource procedures and master agreements. Staff will be reassigned beginning with school year 2024–2025.

**Fiscal Impact for Redistribution of Students or Programs**

The budget for Golden Ring Middle School that supports its students, staff, and programs will be redistributed to the schools where the students, staff, and programs are being relocated.
IMPLEMENTATION

The Department of Facilities Management and Strategic Planning:

- Shall notify the Maryland State Department of Planning, the Maryland State Superintendent of Schools, and the Interagency Commission on Public School Construction of the change in status of Golden Ring Middle School.
- Shall reassign and/or surplus assets.

Reassignment of Students and Staff:

- Students will be reassigned in coordination with the boundary process. Staff will be reassigned through the transfer process and in accordance with Master Agreements.
Exhibit A. Baltimore County Public Schools’ *Superintendent’s Rule 7610: Permanent Closure of a School Building*

FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION: Property

Permanent Closure of a School Building

I. Purpose

To implement Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) Policy 7610 by establishing guidelines for the permanent closure of a Baltimore County Public School (BCPS) building.

II. Definitions

A. *Attendance Area* – The geographical boundary of a school where students are assigned based on the location of where the student is domiciled with the student’s parent/guardian.

B. *Equity* – Providing each student with what is necessary to achieve high academic outcomes.

C. *Student* – A school-aged child who meets specified conditions for establishing domicile in Baltimore County and who is currently enrolled in a BCPS.

D. *Student Demographics* – Student demographics include, but may not be limited to: enrollment, race/ethnicity, grade level, special programs and free and reduced-price meals (FARMS) status.

III. Process

A. Proposal

1. After recommendation for permanent closure of a school building has been made to the Superintendent, the Superintendent will designate appropriate community superintendent(s) and department heads to develop a proposal to permanently close a school building.

2. In making its proposal, staff shall consider the following:
   a. Factors set forth in State Regulation:
      (1) Student enrollment trends;
      (2) Age or condition of school buildings;
      (3) Transportation;
      (4) Educational programs;
      (5) Racial composition of student body;
(6) Financial considerations;
(7) Student relocation; and
(8) Impact on community in geographic attendance area for school proposed to be closed and school, or schools, to which students will be relocating.

b. Other factors shall include but not be limited to:

(1) Community input;
(2) Student demographics;
(3) Student attendance areas;
(4) Equity and the impact the school closure may have on all students, with a focus placed on marginalized student groups;
(5) Staffing impact; and
(6) Fiscal impact plan for redistribution of students or programs.

3. The community superintendent will submit the proposal to close a school building to the Superintendent for approval.

B. Notice of the Superintendent’s Proposal

Prior to making a recommendation to the Board to permanently close a school building, the Superintendent will provide notice of the proposed school closure to the following:

1. Principal(s) of the affected school(s);
2. Staff of the affected school(s);
3. PTA/PTSA board of the affected school(s); and
4. Area Education Advisory Council(s) (AEAC) of the affected school(s).

C. Recommendation to the Board

1. The Superintendent shall recommend the permanent closure of a school building during a regular meeting of the Board.
2. Notice of the Superintendent’s recommendation to the Board to permanently close a school building shall be conveyed as follows:

   a. Each principal of the school building recommended for closure will provide written notification to the parents/guardians of all students attending the school recommended for closure and to the parents/guardians of the school or schools to which students will be relocating;
   b. The Superintendent will provide written notification to the PTA/PTSA board of the school(s) recommended for closure;
c. The Superintendent will provide written notification to the AEAC(s) of the affected school(s); and
d. The Department of Communications and Community Outreach ("Communications") shall issue a press release announcing the recommendation.

D. Public Hearing
1. Following the announcement of the recommendation to the Board and prior to making a final decision to permanently close a school building, the Board shall convene a public hearing to permit interested citizens to submit oral or written testimony or data on the proposed school building closure.
2. Notice of the Board's public hearing will be provided at least 2 weeks in advance of the public hearing on the proposed school building closure and shall include:
   a. The date, time and location of the public hearing;
   b. Clear time limits for submitting written testimony or data;
   c. The procedures that will be followed by the Board in making its final decision; and
   d. The proposed date of the Board's vote on the Superintendent's recommendation.
3. Communications is responsible for ensuring that notice of the public hearing is:
   a. Advertised in at least 2 newspapers having general circulation in the affected area(s) of the county;
   b. Transmitted to the parents/guardians of the students who attend the school building identified for closure and to the parents/guardians of the school or schools to which students will be relocating; and
   c. Posted on the BCPS Web site.

III. Decision

A. At a regular meeting of the Board, subsequent to the public hearing, the Board shall issue its final decision regarding the recommendation to permanently close a school building. The final decision shall:

1. Be in writing and include the rationale for the school building closure and address the factors set forth in Paragraph III(A)(2) above; and
2. Include notification of the right to appeal to the Maryland State Board of Education as set forth in state regulation.
B. Communications is responsible for ensuring that notice of the Board’s decision to permanently close a school building is disseminated as follows:

1. To the community in the geographic attendance area of the school proposed to be permanently closed and school or schools to which these students will be relocating;
2. Transmitted to parents/guardians of the students who attend the school identified for closure and to the parents/guardians of the school or schools to which these students will be relocating.
3. The written notification required under this Paragraph shall include the right to appeal the decision to the Maryland State Board of Education as set forth in state regulation.

C. Except in emergency circumstances, the decision to permanently close a school building shall be announced at least 90 days before the date the school building is scheduled for closure, but not later than April 30 of any school year.

IV. Implementation

A. The Department of Facilities Management and Strategic Planning shall:

1. Prepare documentation as appropriate to notify the Maryland State Department of Planning, the Maryland State Superintendent of Schools and the Interagency Commission on Public School Construction regarding the change in the status of the school(s); and
2. Coordinate, as appropriate, the property transfer to Baltimore County government.

B. Reassignment of Students and Staff

1. Students will be reassigned in accordance with Board Policy and Superintendent’s Rules.
2. Staff who are assigned to a school approved by the Board for closure will be reassigned through the transfer process and in accordance with the Board’s collective bargaining agreements.

C. Redistribution of Assets

1. The Office of Logistics shall oversee reassignment of assets and shall coordinate with all offices responsible for the assets.
2. Materials or equipment that have been deemed surplus, obsolete or broken will be disposed of in accordance with Board policies, Superintendent’s rules and operating procedures.
Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-109,
  Establishment of Public Schools
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-115, Acquisition and
Disposition of Real Property: Construction, etc., of School Buildings
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-119, Condemnation
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-205, Powers and Duties of
County Superintendent
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 9-111, Use of School Site or
Building for Public Charter School
COMAR 13A.01.06, Educational Equity
COMAR 13A.02.09, Adoption of Procedures to Govern School Closings

Related Policies:  Board of Education Policy 0100, Equity
Board of Education Policy 1230, Area Education Advisory Councils (AEAC)
Board of Education Policy 1280, Boundary Changes
Board of Education Policy 3620, Inventories
Board of Education Policy 3640, Disposal of Surplus or Excess Property
Board of Education Policy 7110, Determining Needs

Other:  *State of Maryland Public School Construction Program Administrative
  Procedures Guide, § 501, Facilities Changes

Rule

Superintendent of Schools

Approved:  02/03/15
Revised:  01/19/21
Dear Golden Ring Middle School Community,

We are writing to keep you updated about the status of Golden Ring Middle School for the 2024-2025 school year. We have heard from many members of the community who have questions about the potential closure of our school and want to make sure that you are well-informed about the Board’s established process.

As you know, the school system is currently building a new northeast area middle school on 5210 King Avenue, Baltimore 21237. Baltimore County Public Schools is currently conducting a boundary study to establish an attendance area for that school. The boundary process will also determine where students, currently zoned for Golden Ring Middle School, will attend school.

Staff and families have also inquired about the process to close a school building. The steps outlined in both Board Policy and Superintendent’s Rule 7610 must be followed, and those steps include:

- Superintendent must make a closure recommendation to the Board of Education.
- The Board must announce and convene a public hearing on the recommendation.
- The Board must make a final decision and must notify the public of its decision and the public’s right to appeal the Board’s decision.

We are committed to providing you with updates throughout the process. Thank you for your patience and support.

Mr. Pradeep “Pete” Dixit
Executive Director, Facilities and Strategic Planning

Ms. Charlyne Maul
Principal