

## **EDDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLOSURE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)**

### **Why must Eddy Elementary School close?**

The consideration to close Eddy is not one that was taken lightly. Discussions regarding the closure of this particular school have been ongoing for several years. With the District's continual enrollment decreases and resulting revenue decline, significant cost saving measures must be taken. Current and previous facility studies indicate that the infrastructure needs at Eddy are the greatest among the District's five elementary schools. This is due in large part to Eddy being the oldest facility, and as the oldest facility, renovation is often more difficult and expensive.

### **What is the educational impact on the students?**

In many cases, class sizes will be reduced as a result of consolidating class sections into two buildings rather than three. In any event, class sizes are limited by the teacher's contract ensuring class sizes will not be greater than is currently allowed. Consolidating the grade levels also allows for increased teacher collaboration and greater opportunities for socialization among students.

All K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students will continue to receive the same educational opportunities that are currently offered including their "special" classes (e.g., Art, Media, Music, PE, Spanish). The teachers of these courses will be allocated according to class sections.

### **Where will Eddy's former students attend school?**

Next year's K-4<sup>th</sup> graders from Eddy will be distributed between Gearing and Pine River Elementary Schools. Current school of choice students to Eddy will be assigned to Pine River while all others will be divided based on residential boundary lines. All students who reside north of Vine Street in the City of St. Clair will attend Gearing Elementary while those students south of Vine Street will attend Pine River Elementary. Currently, 114 students are scheduled to be reassigned to Gearing while 109 are scheduled for Pine River. Letters notifying parents of their students' placement were mailed on May 30, 2019.

### **If Pine River and Gearing Elementary Schools will now be grade K-4 buildings, where will the 5<sup>th</sup> graders attend school?**

The 5<sup>th</sup> graders from Eddy, Gearing, and Pine River Elementary Schools will attend St. Clair Middle School. These students will be in a separate, dedicated wing of the middle school. They will have their own lunch and recess schedule independent of the 6-8 graders. They will continue to operate as an "elementary" schedule with self-contained classrooms. The playground structure at Eddy will be moved to the middle school to provide the 5<sup>th</sup> graders with free play during recess time. Age appropriate books and reading materials from the elementary media centers will also be relocated to the middle school for use by the 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

5<sup>th</sup> grade students will be provided with the opportunity to participate in the Positivity Project at the middle school. The Positivity Project supports social/emotional learning, confidence building, leadership development, and positive peer relationships.

**Will before and after school child care (latchkey services) be available for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at the middle school?**

Yes, with the addition of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, the District will now be able to offer latchkey services at the middle school. Services will be held in the auxiliary gym starting at 6:30 a.m. until the start of school and then immediately after school until 6:00 p.m.

**What happens to the “Building Leaders” when 5<sup>th</sup> Graders are moved to the middle school?**

With the transition of 5<sup>th</sup> grade to the middle school, 4<sup>th</sup> graders will now take the role of “leader” within the elementary schools. As a leader, they will be provided with opportunities to develop their leadership skills by being a safety patrol, service squad, lunch aide, teacher helper, and book buddy.

**Will there be any end of the year and school closing celebrations?**

Several end of the year celebrations are being planned. Current 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders will have a middle school sendoff celebration at the end of the school year.

**Will my child be able to tour his/her new school prior to the start of the new school year?**

Welcome events for former Eddy students coming to Gearing and Pine River Elementary Schools will be held on August 21 at 4:00 p.m. at each of these schools. In addition, an all school Open House is scheduled for August 27, 2019 at Pine River Elementary and August 28, 2019 at Gearing Elementary, both events will begin at 4:00 p.m.

Two special events are also planned at St. Clair Middle School to welcome the incoming 5<sup>th</sup> graders from Eddy, Gearing, and Pine River Elementary Schools. An orientation will be held on June 6, 2019 for students and parents to tour the building, meet the administrators, and ask questions about the transition. The event will be followed by a 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy Open House which will be held closer to the start of school on August 22, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

**Will School of Choice options still be available?**

The District will continue to follow our existing guidelines for both in-District and County School of Choice applicants. Applications are approved based on space availability at the grade and school requested.

**What will happen to the Eddy teachers?**

The teachers who currently teach at Eddy will be reassigned to St. Clair Middle School, Pine River or Gearing Elementary Schools. Assignments will be made according to teacher certification, current grade level, seniority within the District, and teacher preference as available.

**When will I know who my child’s teacher will be next year?**

All efforts are being made to help with a smooth transition of students to their new buildings. Ms. Card and Mr. Russell, the Principals of Pine River and Gearing Elementary Schools, are meeting with all teachers, including those coming from Eddy, to receive their input about classroom placements. Priority consideration will be given to those who submitted teacher request forms in the Spring. Parents will be notified of the classroom placements by the end of June.

**How will transportation be affected?**

Each summer the Transportation Department reviews ridership and makes determinations for bus stops and bus runs. All efforts are put forth to establish routes with the lowest route times and cost possible.

As in the past, bus routes including student pick-up and drop-off times will be posted on the District's website ([www.ecsd.us](http://www.ecsd.us)) in late summer.

Elementary students who are not familiar with riding a school bus will be provided an opportunity to take a short bus ride during the schools' open houses in August.

**What can I review with my child regarding school bus safety?**

Parents are encouraged to discuss bus safety with their children. Specifically students must never enter an area outside of indicated safe boarding, exiting and crossing zones. The sides, front and back of a school bus are particularly dangerous areas.

If something is dropped in or around a danger zone, students must be taught not to attempt retrieval. Students must never run toward the bus upon its approach or stop. Students should recognize the signal from a driver for when to cross a street (often eye contact and a wave) and when to advance to the door (often eye contact and opening of the door).

Practice alertness and always follow the directions of the driver. Parent tip: Calling out to your child as he/she is exiting or boarding can inadvertently disrupt important communications. Students carrying medication (i.e. inhaler, epinephrine), must be authorized to carry the medication and trained not to remove the contents unless the circumstances are warranted.