

Save Decatur Schools

THE PROBLEM

On Friday, October 10, 2025, the community learned that the Board of Education for the City Schools of Decatur (CSD) and Superintendent Dr. Gyimah Whitaker plan to close one of the system's five lower elementary schools (K-2). The board has established an aggressive timeline to finalize their decision without adequate time for community input.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

TRANSPARENCY/LACK OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- The public only heard about the plans to close a school through media reporting and CSD has provided no information about why such a move is needed. This lack of transparency, as well as talk of additional school closures, breed distrust in district leadership moving forward.

CSD IS MOVING TOO QUICKLY

- School closures and redistricting have far-reaching impacts and should be undertaken thoughtfully and carefully. Currently, the entire process is scheduled to happen over just eight weeks (final vote Dec. 9) with limited opportunity for community engagement or alternate proposals.

THE NUMBERS

- CSD has not provided data or budget figures that explain why a school closure is necessary, nor the projected savings the district would achieve.

COMMUNITY/STUDENT IMPACT

- School closures negatively impact student achievement, including declines in math and reading, as well as increased absenteeism.
- Schools help build community. Research shows school closures often lead to parents/families disengaging from their school district, which is detrimental to all involved.
- No matter what school closes, all Decatur schools will be impacted by increased class sizes, student/staff reassignments and potential overcrowding.

HISTORY OF TRAUMATIC SCHOOL CLOSURES

- CSD closed Westchester Elementary in 2004 citing declining enrollment. The process caused painful rifts in the community which persist to this day. Ultimately, CSD reopened the school in 2014.