



ENROLLMENT AND FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIO N

APRIL 2026

Cropper GIS

What This Recommendation Achieves

- Provides enrollment relief at Benjamin, Cedar Ridge, Parkside Elementary, Towanda, Evans Junior High, and Normal Community
- Reduces reliance on portable classrooms
- Improves building utilization so students have adequate space for learning
- Establishes a purpose-built Early Learning Center designed for PreK students
- Creates a fully accessible environment for the 18–22 transitional program

Specialized Learning Spaces: Early Learning & Special Programs

Early Learning Center

- Close Brigham and build a new Early Learning Center (ELC) to serve early learning students currently attending Brigham and Sugar Creek

18-22 Transitional Program

- Relocate the program from Eugene Field to a newly constructed or renovated facility designed to support accessibility and specialized programming needs

Specialized Services (SS)

- Redistribute some SS classrooms to schools with available capacity and no/minimal existing special programming in order to improve districtwide balance and utilization

Elementary Boundary & Capacity Adjustments

Benjamin Elementary Boundary Changes (to relieve enrollment pressure)

- Neighborhoods north of Empire, reassigned from Benjamin to **Sugar Creek**
- West of Hershey, reassigned from Benjamin to **Colene Hoose**

Cedar Ridge Boundary Changes (to relieve enrollment pressure)

- The western portion of Cedar Ridge (west of Morris Ave / west of N 1375 East Rd) and Tracy Drive, reassigned to **Pepper Ridge**
- Oak Creek Plaza, Donnie Drive, and Urban Street will remain at **Cedar Ridge**

Fox Creek Elementary

- Students in the Traditions neighborhood remain at **Fox Creek**

Parkside Elementary (to relieve enrollment pressure)

- The neighborhood south of Raab Rd and north of Orlando Ave (Northbrook/Golfcrest), is reassigned to **Glenn**

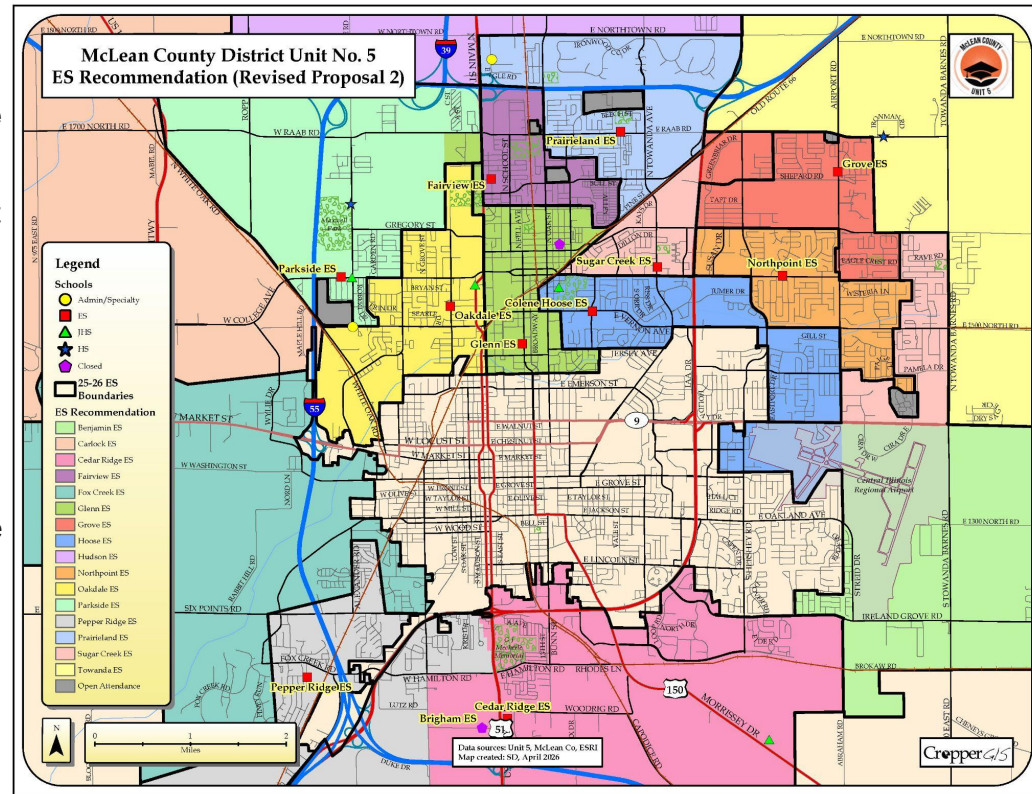
Sugar Creek Elementary - Becomes a K-5 school

- The northeastern corner of Sugar Creek (east of Veterans Parkway) is reassigned to **Grove**

Towanda Elementary (to relieve enrollment pressure)

- A smaller addition is made to the **Towanda Elementary** to accommodate current needs only. Eliminates portables.

Note: Carlock and Glenn remain open as K-5 schools, and no new Open Attendance Areas (OAAs) are added.



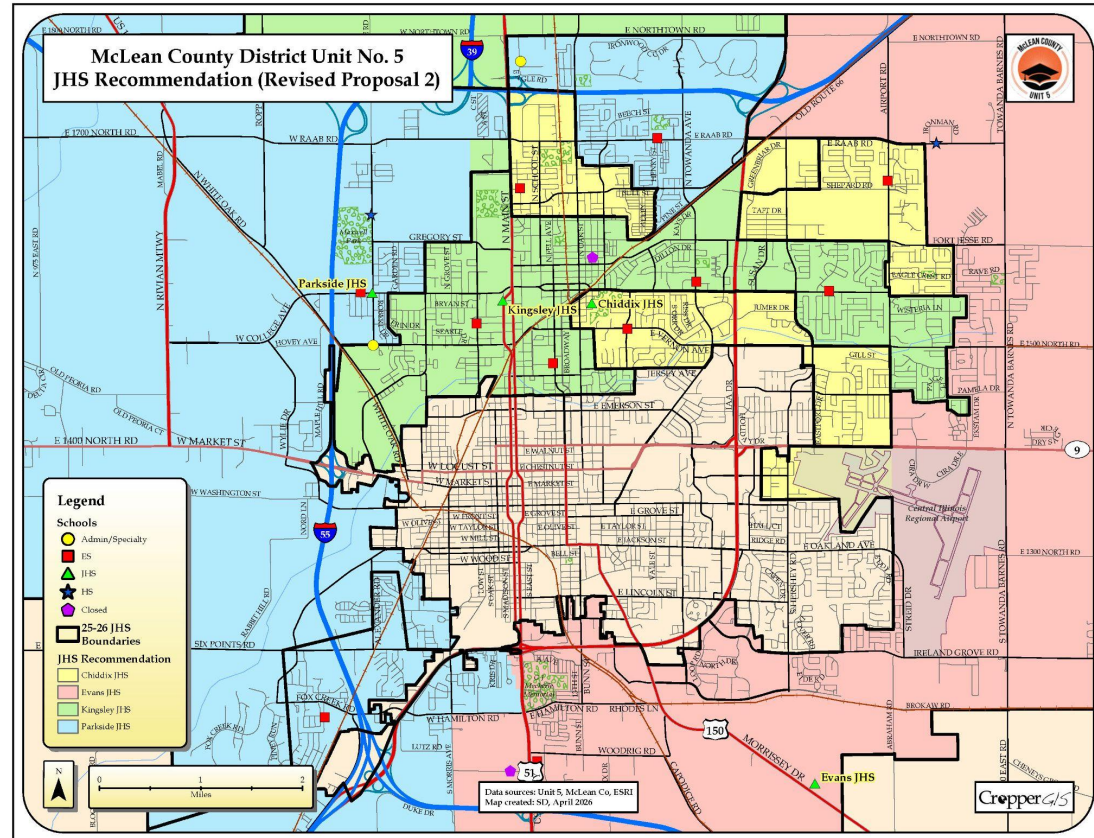
Secondary Boundary & Capacity Adjustments

Junior High Changes

- Pepper Ridge students, including boundary changes above), are reassigned to **Parkside Junior High** to provide relief at Evans Junior High. An addition to Parkside Junior High is recommended to add capacity.
- Students in the northeast corner of the Sugar Creek boundary who are being reassigned to Grove will now attend **Chiddix Junior High**
- Neighborhoods north of Empire (Benjamin to Sugar Creek) will attend **Evans Junior High**
- Northbrook/Golfcrest (Parkside E. to Glenn) will attend **Kingsley Junior High**

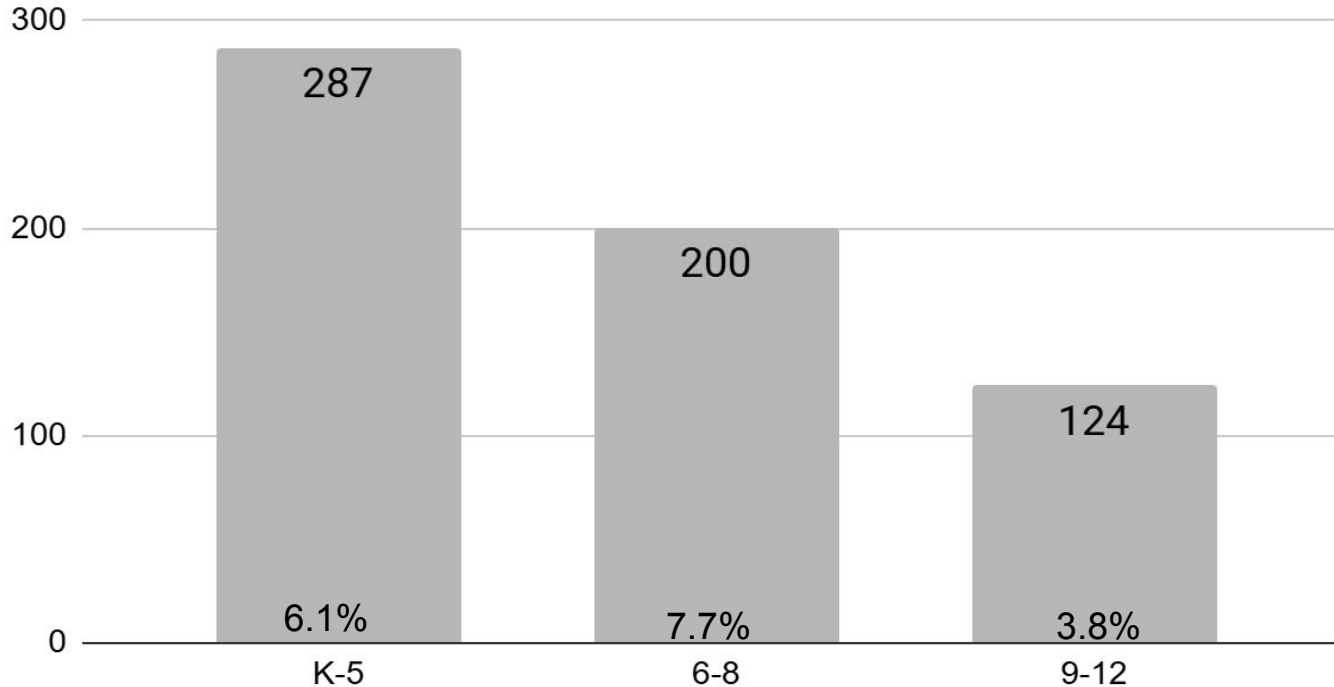
High School Changes

- Neighborhoods east of Linden Street, north of Pine Street, and west of Henry Street are moved to **Normal West**



Students Impacted

Students Impacted: Total Live and Attend In



Early Learning: Current enrollment is approximately 533 students (enrollment available for up to 640). Enrollment fluctuates throughout the year as additional children become eligible after turning three.

Eugene Field: Currently serves 46 students in the 18-22 programs and supports an additional 100 students through VTAP. Enrollment and service levels vary year to year based on student needs and IEPs.

Demographics - Early Learning & Transitional Program

	Race								Ethnicity		Lunch Code	
	Total Students	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian or other	White	Two or more races	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Free or Reduced	Paid
All Pre-K	533	0.70%	9%	27.50%	20.60%	0%	30.60%	11.60%	20.60%	79.40%	60.60%	39.40%
Eugene Field (18--22)	46	0%	6.50%	23.90%	8.70%	0%	56.50%	4.30%	8.70%	91.30%	58.70%	41.30%

Eugene Field: In addition to the students shown in this chart, Eugene Field also serves approximately 100 VTAP students whose home school is elsewhere.

Demographics - K-12

School Boundary	Race								Ethnicity		Lunch Code	
	# of K-12 students impacted	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or other	White	Two or More Races	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Free or Reduced	Paid
West of Hershey (Benjamin to Hoose)	7	0%	0%	71%	14%	0%	0%	14%	14%	86%	57%	43%
North of Empire (Benjamin to Sugar Creek)	142	1%	26%	6%	14%	0%	47%	5%	14%	86%	8%	92%
Western Portion of Cedar Ridge (Cedar to Pepper Ridge)	150	0%	1%	10%	11%	0%	68%	11%	11%	89%	35%	65%
Tracy Drive (Cedar Ridge to Pepper Ridge)	40	0%	0%	33%	13%	0%	25%	30%	13%	88%	80%	20%
Northbrook/Golfcrest (Parkside E to Glenn)	50	2%	0%	62%	10%	0%	12%	14%	10%	90%	84%	16%
Sugar Creek NE Corner (Sugar to Grove)	11	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	91%	0%	9%	91%	0%	100%
Pepper Ridge (EJHS to PJHS)	134	0%	1%	16%	14%	0%	57%	11%	14%	86%	51%	49%
HS Neighborhoods (NCHS to NCWHS)	77	0%	3%	27%	10%	0%	49%	10%	10%	90%	32%	68%
Total	611	0%	7%	19%	12%	0%	51%	11%	12%	88%	38%	62%

Implementation Timeline

2027-28

- Benjamin to Hoose
- Cedar Ridge and Tracy Drive to Pepper Ridge
- Northbrook/Golfcrest to Glenn and KJHS
- Sugar Creek to Grove
- Small Towanda addition
- NCHS boundary change to NCWHS
- SS classroom distribution

2028-29

- Pepper Ridge to PJHS
- SS classroom distribution

2029-30

- New ELC opens (Brigham sold)
- Benjamin to Sugar
- 18-22 year old program moves to new or renovated space. (Eugene Field sold)
- SS classroom distribution

Current students may remain at their current school through the highest grade level offered (5th, 8th, or 12th grade), provided they continue to reside in the same household.

Siblings: Younger siblings may enroll in the same school as an older sibling, provided there is no break in attendance for the family at that school.

School Placement and Transportation: To remain at a current school or start early at a new one, families must complete the necessary paperwork by the deadline and provide transportation until the official district implementation date (for new schools) or for the remainder of the student's enrollment (for current schools).

Options for Families Impacted - See Complete List

Area Impacted	Boundary Change	School Year Implementation	2026-2027 School Year Options	2027-2028 School Year Options	2028-2029 School Year Options	2029-2030 & Beyond School Year Options
Neighborhoods north of Empire, currently zoned to Benjamin	Reassigned to Sugar Creek	2029-2030	1. Continue at Benjamin District Transport 2. Attend Sugar Creek Family Transport	1. Continue at Benjamin District Transport 2. Attend Sugar Creek Family Transport	1. Continue at Benjamin District Transport 2. Attend Sugar Creek Family Transport	1. Continue at Benjamin Family Transport 2. Attend Sugar Creek District Transport
Area west of Hershey, currently zoned to Benjamin	Reassigned to Colene Hoose	2027-2028	1. Continue at Benjamin District Transport 2. Attend Hoose Family Transport	1. Continue at Benjamin Family Transport 2. Attend Hoose District Transport	1. Continue at Benjamin Family Transport 2. Attend Hoose District Transport	1. Continue at Benjamin Family Transport 2. Attend Hoose District Transport
Western portion of Cedar Ridge (west of Morris Ave / west of N 1375 East Rd), currently zoned to Cedar Ridge	Reassigned to Pepper Ridge	2027-2028	1. Continue at Cedar Ridge District Transport 2. Attend Pepper Ridge Family Transport	1. Continue at Cedar Ridge Family Transport 2. Attend Pepper Ridge District Transport	1. Continue at Cedar Ridge Family Transport 2. Attend Pepper Ridge District Transport	1. Continue at Cedar Ridge Family Transport 2. Attend Pepper Ridge District Transport

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Estimated Construction & Renovation Costs

- New Early Learning Center: \$20 to \$30 Million
- Towanda Addition: \$4.4 Million
- Parkside Junior High Addition: \$4.4 Million
- 18-22 Program: \$3.5 to \$6.5 Million

Total Estimated Cost: \$32.3 M to \$45.3 Million

Projects will be financed by selling bonds. Bond payments will be funded with revenue from the County School Facilities Tax, resulting in no property tax increase for construction or renovation.

Additional utility costs may be associated with expansions to buildings.

Estimated Savings & Avoided Capital Costs

Annual

Brigham

- Utilities & Maintenance - \$97k

Eugene Field

- Utilities & Maintenance - \$25k

Total Annual Savings \$122k

Capital Projects (1-5 years)

Brigham - \$1.70 Million

- Roof, Fire Alarm System, Geothermal Equipment, Flooring/Carpet & Asbestos Abatement

Eugene Field - \$290k

- HVAC Equipment (Required Asbestos Abatement Cost Not Included), Flooring/Carpet

Total Savings - \$1.99 Million

* Additional costs not included: Technology Infrastructure, Replacement Kitchen Equipment, Updates

Benefits & Considerations

Benefits

- Keeps two elementary schools open
- Reduces reliance on portable classrooms
- Provides enrollment relief for buildings at/near capacity
- Creates a purpose-built Early Learning Center designed for PreK students
- Provides a fully accessible environment designed for the 18-22 year old transitional program
- Does not add any new OAAs
- Retires two aging facilities

Considerations

- Final renovation and construction costs may vary from current estimates
- Doesn't address underutilization at some schools

Next Steps

The Unit 5 Board of Education is expected to consider this recommendation at the April 15, 2026 board meeting. If approved, the district will begin the following implementation steps:

Boundary Changes

- Notify all impacted households and provide enrollment options guidance
- Partner with receiving schools and PTOs to launch “Welcome Programs” supporting student/family transitions
- Coordinate with First Student to finalize changes to bus routes for the 27-28 school year (first year of changes)

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

RFQ will solicit qualifications for:

- Small-scale addition at Towanda
- Small-scale addition at Parkside Junior High
- A new Early Learning Center
- A new or renovated 18-22 Facility

Issuing a RFQ does not commit the District to a construction contract or specific spending. It is the process of vetting firms to see who is the best qualified to help us plan.

Next Steps Continued

1

RFQ Responses Reviewed

Once responses to the RFQ are received, District Administration will return to the Board with recommendations on which firm(s) to partner with for each specific project.

Board approval required before in-depth work begins

2

Feasibility & Community Input

After firm(s) are selected and approved, in-depth work begins:

- Feasibility studies and land identification
- Input (surveys, meetings, committee work) from staff, families, and the community
- Detailed blueprints

Stakeholder Involvement

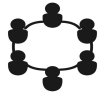
3

Board Approves Bid(s)

All construction and renovation bids will be brought to the Board for approval. Final land/building purchases, designs, and construction costs each require separate and subsequent Board approval.

No spending on construction/renovation until Board approval

Thank You & Questions



To Our Community

Thank you for participating in this process. Whether you were on the planning team, attended meetings, or shared feedback, it was all an important piece.



Ongoing Engagement

Parent and community input is a regular and important part of how we plan, communicate, and make decisions across Unit 5. Our administrative team connects with families through community groups, school events, and direct outreach, gathering feedback that helps inform our work.



Valuing Diverse Perspectives

While not every outcome will align with every perspective, that does not mean feedback wasn't heard or valued. We take in a wide range of input and work to better balance those perspectives as decisions are made.



Continuous Improvement

We will continue to provide multiple ways for families to share their perspectives, both through structured opportunities and ongoing day-to-day engagement across our schools and district.

Email questions to: district@unit5.org