



Dori Leyko, Superintendent  
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Dear East Lansing Public Schools elementary families and staff,

Thank you all for your flexibility and patience as we maneuver through a busy yet exciting time of new construction and renovation of our elementary buildings. It's been enjoyable and insightful to see and hear from our students, staff and families who have moved into their new buildings and from those who are preparing for a move. The purpose of this communication is two-fold: (1) to communicate the swing-school location for Marble during the 2020-21 school year and (2) to share the plans for Red Cedar School beginning in fall 2020.

- For the 2020-21 school year, the Marble Elementary students and staff will be housed at the old Donley Elementary School. There are many factors that informed this decision – the primary factor being that we will not have enough elementary classrooms in the district to house our current classes if we demolish and complete Phase 2 at Donley this summer and Marble is housed at Red Cedar. Nearly all of our new buildings contain fewer classrooms than the buildings that have been demolished and cannot accommodate all of the programming that is planned to be housed at Red Cedar long term. With only five buildings (four new and Red Cedar) online next school year, the district would be at least 3-4 elementary classrooms short, which includes using all four STEAM/Flex classrooms in the new buildings for elementary classrooms.
- Red Cedar School will open in fall 2020, and the Board-approved Red Cedar School boundary ([https://elps.us/downloads/district\\_-\\_bond\\_information/final.boundary.proposal.approved.12.10.18.pdf.pdf](https://elps.us/downloads/district_-_bond_information/final.boundary.proposal.approved.12.10.18.pdf.pdf)) will go into effect beginning fall 2020. Red Cedar School will house the following: two Great Start Readiness (GSRP) classes, two Young 5s classrooms, Early Childhood Special Education and potentially additional preschool and/or Special Education programming. Red Cedar will also have K – 3 classrooms in the fall 2020, with the addition of a 4<sup>th</sup>-grade classroom in fall 2021 and a 5<sup>th</sup>-grade classroom in fall 2022 – this configuration is based on the number of current students at each grade level in the Red Cedar boundary. Students who will be in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades next fall will finish their elementary years at Glencairn. The possibility of alternative programming and/or an alternative calendar may still be explored in the future with the future Red Cedar administration, staff and families.

District administration will begin planning for Red Cedar staffing with a survey of current staff. We will work to ensure that all of our faculty and staff at Red Cedar are experienced with and/or participate in training in working with the population of students occupying Red Cedar.

The Permeable Boundary (PB) process will still be available for all families in the district who wish to attend a school outside of their neighborhood boundary, and we will continue to prioritize family requests as we balance those requests with the desire for equitable class sizes across the district.

District administrators will also work with administrators and staff at Donley, Whitehills and Marble as we continue to evaluate and respond to some of the limitations that have resulted from having two school populations on one site. We've received both positive and constructive feedback from staff and families and will continue to respond to concerns.

While I recognize and appreciate that this construction process has resulted in many changes for our students, staff and families, I do want to thank all of you for being adaptive during this time. I know that this hasn't been easy for everyone and that no decision on this topic is going to please everyone – I've reviewed many options and believe that this decision is the least negatively impactful on our district elementary student population as a whole.

We are about halfway through the full construction project, scheduled to be completed in summer 2021 – Whitehills and Pinecrest are making great progress, and the design and building layout for Marble have been completed! Summer 2020 will be another busy one with multiple moves as Whitehills and Pinecrest are completed, Marble is started and Phase 2 of Red Cedar is completed. Our district is in the middle of an unprecedented project that will provide safe, efficient, flexible learning spaces for both the current and future students of ELPS, and I'd like to again thank the East Lansing voters for making this vision a reality for our community.

If you'd like to view Bond Updates that are shared at each bi-weekly Board meeting, please use this link: <https://elps.us/our-district/bond-updates/>

Thank you,

Dori Leyko, Superintendent