



## *Haywood County Schools*

Board of Education  
1230 North Main Street  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
828 456 2400

January 12, 2016

Dear Central Elementary School Parents and Staff,

This letter is to inform you about action taken by the Board of Education that may directly impact Central Elementary School. The Board authorized a budget cut of 2.4 million dollars for next year's local school district budget. We also directed Board Attorney Pat Smathers, Superintendent Anne Garrett and Central Office Staff to study the process for closing Central Elementary school at the end of the current school year.

The entire budget reduction process has been heart wrenching. We met in Board work sessions and administrative meetings over several months discussing budget reductions. We worked very hard to produce a budget reduction plan that would not completely eliminate any instructional or extra-curricular offerings for students. That means there are significant cuts across many academic and extra-curricular areas.

In addition to the potential closing of Central Elementary, there are broad-sweeping reductions across many areas. This includes cuts to personnel, programs, supplies, materials, equipment, extra-curricular activities, staff development, professional dues, contracts, Board support and maintenance. There has been a decrease in school district enrollment of 745 students over the last ten years. During the last two years we lost 396 of those 745 students. This year we lost \$933,000 in state funds and due to charter school openings. Additionally, \$508,000 of local county tax dollars were diverted to charter schools in and outside of Haywood County.

Central Elementary School was selected for possible closure due to the size of the school, the physical size of the enrollment district, proximity to other schools, transportation of students to neighboring schools and potential cost savings. Students and staff would be primarily reassigned to Hazelwood Elementary and Junaluska Elementary. All other pupil or staff reassignment options in school board policy will be available. Future school closings may be necessary if funding and enrollment do not increase.

The Central Office staff is developing timelines for managing the budget readjustment process including the possible transition of students and staff from Central Elementary to Hazelwood Elementary and Junaluska Elementary. We will follow up with additional communication with the Central Elementary School community about the potential closure of the school and the steps that will occur. This includes a public hearing and meetings with various groups.

While this is a significant budget and facility readjustment, we are confident we can maintain our longstanding history of high academic performance for children. We want students, staff and parents to know that the decision to possibly close the school was very difficult. We appreciate your support of our efforts to operate within the budget and maintain a high performing school district.

Sincerely,

Haywood County Board of Education  
Chuck Francis, Chairman



**Board of Education**

Charles H. Francis, Chairman; Lynn Milner, Vice-Chair;  
Jim Harley Francis, Larry Henson, Steven Kirkpatrick,  
Walt Leatherwood, Bobby Rogers, Jimmy Rogers, Rhonda Schandavel