

6TH GRADE PLACEMENT FACT SHEET



Born July 1, 2022

Alleghany County Public Schools, Covington City Public Schools, and Jackson River Technical Center merged on July 1, 2022, and create Alleghany Highlands Public Schools. The school division is jointly funded by Alleghany County and the City of Covington, which operates as an independent city within the county.

In September 2020, the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors and Covington City Council adopted resolutions endorsing the merger. The Virginia Board of Education approved the merger in January 2021.

Alleghany County and Covington students will be merged into a single student body of approximately 2,700 students at the beginning of the 2023-2024 academic year. The four existing county and city elementary schools will remain open, but the consolidated division will have a single middle school (housed in the current Covington High School building) and a single high school (housed in the current Alleghany High School building).

Coming in Fall 2023

As part of the plan to fully consolidate Alleghany Highlands Public Schools in fall 2023, all students in grades 6-8 will attend classes at Covington Middle School (currently Covington High School).

- Current models in the Commonwealth of Virginia and across the nation support our plan to grades 6-8 in the middle school and grades K-5 in elementary schools.
- More than 90 percent of school divisions in VDOE Regions VI and VII in Virginia use the 6-8 middle school model.

Background Information

The 6th-8th model was recommended by the instructional committee reporting to the Joint School Services Committee (JSSC). The JSSC developed the AHPS consolidation plan.

- This recommendation was based on meeting student developmental needs, managing teacher licensure concerns, and providing more electives and/or extra-curricular opportunities in the arts and athletics to middle school students.
- We understand many people in our community remember multiple different grade configurations within the historic AHPS, ACPS, and CCPS school divisions. While these arrangements were historically successful, placing sixth grade in elementary schools in the current context would reduce Title I resources, crowd certain buses, and strain student schedules for classes like art, music, PE, and library.
- AHPS leadership has been fully preparing for implementation of the 6-8 middle school model for the 2023-2024 school year. Staffing recommendations for 23-24 are based on K-5 in elementary schools and 6-8 in the middle school, and 9-12 in the high school.

Historical Context

Moving all sixth grade classes to Covington Middle School is part of the consolidation plan adopted in September 2020 by the four local governing bodies, and approved by the Virginia Board of Education in 2021.

- The school board reaffirmed its commitment to that plan in October 2022.
- Currently, Jeter-Watson is the only elementary school that houses grades 6-7. CHS houses grades 8-12.