

RECOMMENDATION: CLOSE DISSTON ACADEMY AND SELL/LEASE THE PROPERTY

This recommendation **closes Disston Academy at the end of the 2025-26 school year**. Disston Academy is an Educational Alternative Services (EAS) program that currently serves 52 students on the campus in grades 6-12. The program provides students an accelerated pathway to get back on track to acquire required credits for high school graduation. The site also houses the district's Teleschool program, a virtual program serving approximately 200 middle and high school students who have been administratively placed due to significant infractions of the Code of Student Conduct at their assigned schools. **Teleschool will relocate to Bayside HS at the end of the 2025-26 school year**. Upon closure, the recommendation includes **selling or leasing the property** following the established district procedures.

COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY: RECEIVED AS OF 1/16/26

PLANNING FOR PROGRESS MEETINGS: COMMON THEMES

- **Additional K-8 schools.** Call for continuity and smoother transition for students in a K-8 model.
- **Intentional program offerings** that provide more STEM, IT, and career learning in K-12 program offerings.
- Maintain positive school cultures and **retain strong teachers and support staff**.
- Use buildings for added **infant through age 3 child care** with a community partner and/or for employee childcare.
- Repurpose buildings/convert surplus **space for community use** for day care, elder care, etc.
- **Lease buildings to child care and/or community partners** that will provide school and community impact.
- **Combine facilities** to increase usage in buildings.
- If **selling land or repurposing facilities**, prioritize beneficial community use, including green space, recreation centers, and affordable housing opportunities.

PRINCIPAL/DISTRICT STAFF SESSIONS: COMMON THEMES

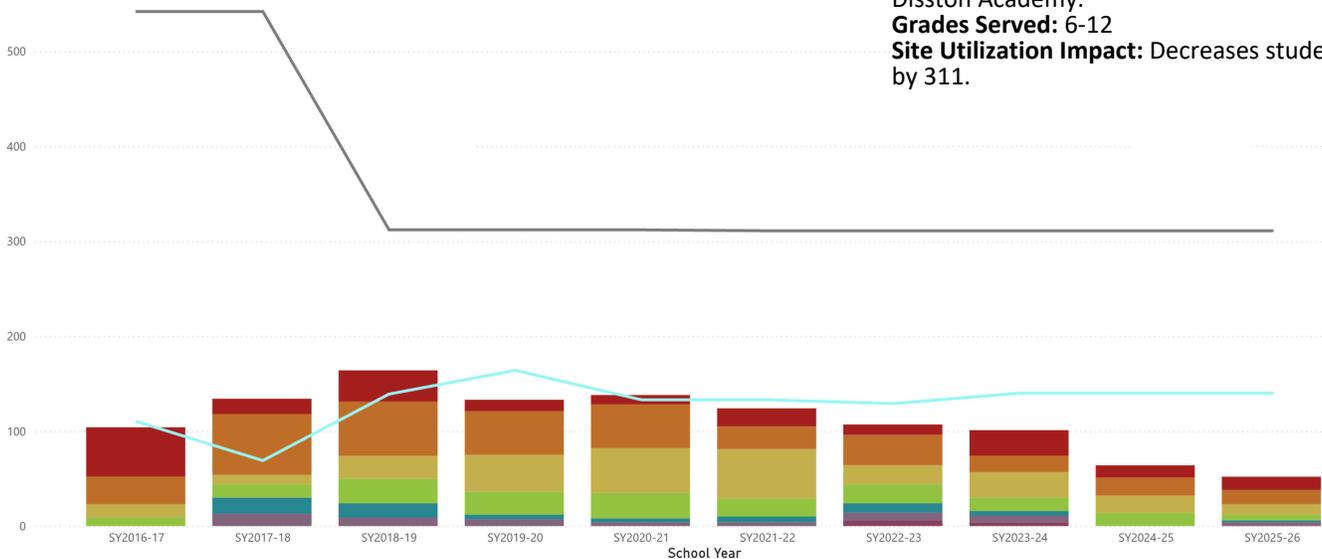
- **Additional K-8 schools.** Intentional program offerings to **provide electives in K-8 model**.
- Intentional program offerings to better **align elementary schools to MS/HS programs**.
- **Retain teachers and support staff to create/sustain a positive culture**.
- **Expand hands-on career learning** to provide increased opportunity to earn industry certifications.
- Combine offerings to **maximize space while maintaining personalized culture**.
- Use buildings for added **infant through age 3 child care** with community partner and/or for employee childcare.
- **Lease to other childcare and/or after-care partner**.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND HISTORY

Disston Academy has a n enrollment of 52 students in grades 6-12, with a building capacity of 311 student stations. Current building utilization is 17%. Originally, in 1926, a portion of the site was built as the home to Gulfport Junior High School. The current building, later became Hamilton Disston ESE School, which closed in 2013. In October 2024, the Disston Academy program was relocated to Lealman Innovation Academy for the remainder of the 2024-25 school year, allowing the site to be used by Gulf Beaches ES after hurricane damage to its campus. The site also includes a building known as the 'Disston Annex,' which is currently not usable. The School Board approved it to be razed in June 2025.

TABLE: DISSTON ACADEMY CAPACITY & ENROLLMENT

● KG ● 01 ● 02 ● 03 ● 04 ● 05 ● 06 ● 07 ● 08 ● 09 ● 10 ● 11 ● 12 ● Permanent Seats ● Program Capacity - GenEd



Year Opened: 1926 as Gulfport Junior High School. 1990 as Hamilton Disston ESE School. 2013-14 as Disston Academy.
Grades Served: 6-12
Site Utilization Impact: Decreases student stations by 311.

Official Count Snapshot Data (Survey 2), FISH and Program Capacity
 Tables demonstrate student enrollment in bar charts, total permanent building capacity (student stations) in the grey line graph, and staffing for the student population and programs in the teal line.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Disston Academy serves students who are off track and in need of acceleration to meet graduation requirements. The program has earned a school improvement rating of ‘maintaining’ since the 2021-22 school year. The district has the capacity to serve all students currently enrolled at Disston Academy through established EAS programs throughout the county. Transportation may be provided in accordance with School Board Policy.

**2024-25
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RATING**

**Disston Academy
Maintaining**

Alternative schools receive a school improvement rating in lieu of a school grade.

DISTRICT EAS PROGRAMS	2024-25 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RATING	LOCATION
Bayside HS	Commendable	Largo/Clearwater
Lealman Innovation	Maintaining	St. Petersburg
Pinellas High Innovation	Commendable	Clearwater

Teleschool is a virtual program for students administratively placed in the program due to significant infractions of the Code of Student Conduct at their assigned schools. Students are not physically on campus for instruction, therefore, relocating the program to Bayside HS will not impact student learning.

FISCAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

RECENT FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

PROJECT	YEAR	INVESTMENT COST
Carpet/Flooring	2024	\$417K
Roof/Covered Walkways	2021	\$322K

ESTIMATED FACILITIES INVESTMENT

This site needs significant investment to address the building envelope and the roof, with an estimated cost of \$2M to repair and/or \$500K to demolish the existing structures. In lieu of repair, the recommendation is to sell or lease the property as-is.

ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT

Total Savings: \$1.9M/year
Personnel: \$1.5M/year
Operational: \$380K/year

Capital Investment: None recommended at this time. The recommendation is to sell or lease the property as-is.

NEXT STEPS:

RECOMMENDATION COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

- **Notification:**
 - Tuesday, January 20, 2026.
 - Email and phone communication regarding the recommendation sent to families, staff members, and school-based community partners.
- **Staff Meetings**
 - Staff should refer to their PCS email for dates/times
- **Family and Community Meeting #1 - Recommendation Overview**
 - Monday, January 26, 2026 at 1:45 pm.
- **Family and Community Meeting #2 - Recommendation Follow-Up**
 - Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 3:00 pm.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Meet with faculty and staff members who may have specific questions regarding the recommendation and how it may impact them individually.
- If the recommendation is approved by the School Board, Human Resources will provide direct, individualized support to staff to identify a new assignment for the 2026-27 school year.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- If the recommendation is approved by the School Board, ongoing support to Disston Academy students and families will be provided to enroll in programs that meet each student’s individual needs.

OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

- If the recommendation is approved by the School Board, begin the process to sell or lease the property after the 2025-26 school year.

To learn more about or provide feedback on any district recommendation, visit www.pcsb.org/progress.