



Reconstituting Canton Elementary School and Reopening for SY2028-29 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

On December 14, 2017, the School Board approved the temporary relocation of students at Canton Elementary School (ES) to Knox ES and R.M. Moore ES, along with plans to renovate Canton ES to transition to Cherokee HS North and serve Cherokee HS students, to relieve overcrowding. With the scheduled opening of the new Cherokee HS replacement school in August 2026 and a review of current and future district needs, on March 19, 2026, the Cherokee County School Board authorized returning Cherokee HS North to Canton ES, fulfilling its 2017 commitment to the community and preparing for future student enrollment growth in the Canton area. Canton ES is now scheduled to reopen its doors to serve as an elementary school in August 2028.

Please note: This FAQ is intended to provide general public information about the District's current planning process. Dates, timelines, attendance-area recommendations, construction schedules, staffing plans, and other details may change based on funding, procurement, construction, enrollment projections, Board action, and other applicable requirements.

What is the timeline for reopening Canton ES?

Answer: The Canton ES current proposed timeline and Scope of Work are as follows:

- March 19, 2026 – School Board authorized a resolution to reconstitute Canton ES with a projected opening of August 2028
- April – June 2026 – Verifying property lines and completing site work analysis
- April 2026 – Design of Canton ES at the CHS North location begins
- November 2026 – Education-SPLOST (Ed-SPLOST) referendum expected on county-wide ballot to include authorizing costs necessary to renovate Canton ES.
- December 2026 – Following Procurement Protocol ([School Board Policy FGCB—Facilities Bid Advertisements and Solicitations](#)), the School Board will authorize a general contractor, as required by State and local regulations, along with the notice to proceed ([School Board Policy FEAB – Architects Involved in Long-Range Planning](#)).
- January 2027 – Construction of Canton ES facility and campus begins while Surplus of Assets and Property of CHS Main is facilitated.
- September 2027 – Scheduled Town Halls for community input regarding Attendance Area for Canton ES.
- November 2027 – The School District will appoint a Principal following the standard practice for leadership appointment.
- December 2027 – After determining enrollment projections ([School Board Policy FDBD – Enrollment Projections](#)) and following the Attendance Area Focus Group process, the Superintendent will make a recommendation to the School Board to establish the new attendance zone ([School Board Policy AD- School Attendance Areas](#)).
- January 2028 – Allotments for teachers and support staff confirmed and employee transfer process opens for all positions.

- March 2028 – Construction complete; Certificate of Occupancy in progress
- April 2028 – Ribbon Cutting and Community Open House
- June 2028—Projected completion of Canton ES punch list
- July 2028 – Staff occupancy of Canton ES
- August 2028—Scheduled re-opening of Canton ES

The timeline above reflects the District’s current proposed planning schedule and may change. Any updates will be shared through the District’s regular communication channels.

Why is the district reopening Canton Elementary School?

Answer: The district is reopening Canton Elementary School for the 2028-2029 school year in response to community priorities and as part of its long-range planning efforts. This decision has included reviewing current and projected student enrollment, facility utilization, and concentrated areas of growth across the county. The goal is to ensure we are using our facilities efficiently while continuing to provide high-quality learning environments for all students.

Why is the school not opening until the 2028-29 School Year?

There are many factors to consider in the re-opening of Canton ES, including community input, long-range planning and financial responsibility, including:

- Attendance Zone – The process to determine the Attendance Zones is outlined in School Board Policy AD- School Attendance Areas and School Board Policy FDBD – Enrollment Projections, which includes coordinating Town Hall meetings for community input, projected growth within our county and evaluating surrounding schools’ capacity. We will evaluate the needs and growth of our county and the School District throughout the 2026-27 School year and bring our findings to the community in September 2027, finalizing the changes that need to be made by December 2027, ensuring a smooth and thoughtfully considered transition.
- Building Modifications – It will take a considerable amount of time to make the necessary structural changes and additional renovation of space specific to our growing district needs based on long-range planning. Structural modifications will include roofing, HVAC, flooring, bathroom modifications and room conversions (for example, the media center was used as a band room for the high school and will need to be converted back to a media center).
- Entry Point Modifications – Once the “terms of sale” for the sale/surplus of the current high school main campus are finalized, we will be able to determine main entrance access to Canton ES, which could involve a redesign, in order to create a main entry point into Canton ES.
- State Funding – Due to the age of the Canton ES building, the district will be eligible for state funded financial reimbursements, intended to support the construction beginning in 2028.

Will attendance zones change?

Answer: Attendance line decisions have not been developed at this time. Town Halls for community input on attendance lines will be scheduled for September 2027. Following that period of community input, an attendance zone will be designed for Canton Elementary School by December 2027, at which time the School Board will consider the attendance zone

recommendation as presented. The previous attendance zone for Canton ES (est. 1974) will be reviewed along with current and future growth projections for our county. Attendance boundary determinations will follow a formal process guided by School Board Policy FDBD – Enrollment Projections and would include careful analysis and opportunities for community input.

How does the district decide when and how to change attendance zones?

Answer: Attendance zone adjustments are governed by School Board Policy FDBD – Enrollment Projections and are based on multiple factors, including:

- Current and projected student enrollment
- Population growth and housing development trends
- School capacity and utilization rates
- Areas experiencing overcrowding or underutilization
- Transportation efficiency and travel times

The goal is to create balanced, sustainable school communities while minimizing disruption to families whenever possible.

Which schools could be affected?

Answer: No specific attendance zone changes have been determined at this time. Schools in proximity to the current Cherokee High School campus and surrounding areas may be part of the study, but no final determinations have been made.

When would any attendance zone changes take effect?

Answer: School Board Policy AD – School Attendance Areas guides the timeline for developing and finalizing attendance zones. With an August 2028 opening projected, attendance lines would be developed through community input during the fall of 2027. When approved, attendance zone changes would take effect with the school's anticipated opening, which is projected for August 2028.

Will current students be required to move schools?

Answer: The district understands that school transitions can be challenging for families. Once attendance zone changes are approved, families who would like to stay at their current school can apply to do so through the reassignment process. If the reassignment is approved, families will be required to provide transportation as described in the reassignment guidelines ([CCSD Administrative Guidelines Regarding Student Reassignment](#)). Students who will be moving to the fifth grade for SY2028-29 will qualify for reassignment under the Hardship category if other provisions for reassignment are met (i.e., grades, conduct, attendance).

How will families be involved in the process?

Answer: School Board Policies AD – School Attendance Areas and FDBD – Enrollment Projections guide the process to new attendance areas. The district is committed to community engagement during the drawing of attendance lines. In the Fall of 2027, families will have opportunities to:

- Attend community meetings – which will be scheduled for September 2027
- Review proposed maps and scenarios

- Provide feedback before the School Board makes any final decisions – which will be scheduled for December 2027.

How can I apply to teach or work at Canton ES?

All available positions for Canton ES will be posted through the district's website portal. The Principal will be named in November 2027 and positions for faculty and staff will be posted by January 2028. The transfer process will also be in January 2028 with a goal for Canton ES to be fully staffed by June 2028 for the 2028-29 School Year.

How will this impact transportation?

Answer: Transportation is an important factor in attendance zone planning. Any proposed changes will be reviewed to ensure reasonable bus-ride times and efficient routes. Adjustments will be made as needed to maintain safe and effective transportation services.

Will this help with overcrowding in current schools?

Answer: One of the key reasons for evaluating attendance zones is to address current and projected enrollment, to balance enrollment across schools, and reduce the need for mobile units as classrooms on school campus. Reopening Canton Elementary School will provide additional capacity and relieve pressure in high-growth areas.

Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

Answer: For additional questions, families can contact Director, Planning/Facilities/Compliance Mitch Hamilton at 770-721-8429 (Mitch.Hamilton@cherokeek12.net).