

SCHOOL CLOSURE RECOMMENDATION TECHNICAL GUIDE: RICHMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

466 Richmond Avenue SE, Salem, OR 97301

INFORMATION ¹	DETAILS
2026 - 2027 ENROLLMENT	247 STUDENTS
BUILDING CAPACITY	570 STUDENTS
SITE ACREAGE	2.38 ACRES
ENROLLMENT TREND	DECLINING
YEAR OF ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION	1911



Why is Richmond being recommended for closure?

Within the South feeder, elementary enrollment is low enough that the district should close at least two elementary schools. At 115 years old, Richmond is one of the oldest elementary schools in the district on one of the smallest sites. The building’s design has inherent educational adequacy and accessibility deficiencies that renovations cannot fix, raising equity concerns compared to other district elementary schools. Richmond is under-enrolled and is located in close proximity to other elementary schools with extra capacity, presenting an opportunity to consolidate resources, improve operational efficiencies, and invest more strategically in educational programs and student supports across fewer sites.

Capital Investment Needs

The cost of replacing all assets and/or systems nearing the end of their useful life at this school (with escalation) is approximately \$1.5 M within the next five (5) years.

Cost estimates reflect like-for-like replacement of existing systems only. They exclude necessary educational adequacy improvements, seismic upgrades, most ADA improvements, interior finishes, and the addition of new systems to bring the building to modern standards.

Upcoming capital needs include:

- Many HVAC units are past their expected service life and due for replacement.
- The fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems are due for replacement.

- Exterior concrete and asphalt are cracked and damaged in areas requiring repair or replacement.
- The covered play area’s metal siding is actively rusting; old fluorescent lighting remains throughout and requires replacement with LED fixtures.
- Single-pane windows are present throughout the building resulting in reduced thermal insulation and lower energy efficiency.
- Playground equipment replacement and surfacing replacement with new rubber play tile is needed.

School Site Limitations

Richmond has one of the smallest elementary school sites in the district at less than 3 acres, resulting in more limited space for outdoor activities for students. The school has parking constraints. Persistent “pooling” at the playground and near one of the backstops limits use of these areas at times.



Street where buses queue due to lack of drop-off lane

¹ Enrollment and capacity figures reflect the most current data available and may differ from figures included in the 2025-26 Long-Range Facilities Plan. Enrollment changes over time, and capacity figures may be updated as facility use, programs and other factors change.



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Transportation and Access

The school lacks a dedicated parking lot or accessible parking spaces. Surrounding streets are narrow and when cars are parked on both sides, only one lane of traffic can pass causing significant congestion. There are on-street loading zone hazards such as telephone poles placed directly against the curb. As parent traffic is routed to the front of the building, there is less bus / personal vehicle interaction than at other schools with on-street loading. However, there is no grass or buffer between the curb and the sidewalk, which can create hazards for pedestrians.

Educational Adequacy

- The age and layout of Richmond's building present significant challenges in meeting current and future student educational needs. It is a three-story building with no elevator. Upper-level classrooms can only be assigned to older grades by code, which creates challenges with room assignments, limits staff interaction, and restricts flexible use of the upper floor.
- The main entry was relocated to provide a secure entry vestibule; however, the prominent historical entry confuses visitors on where to enter the building.
- Most classrooms lack cooling, leading to uncomfortable thermal conditions on warm days.
- The building's design and layout do not include open pods or extended learning areas by design, limiting the ability for students to collaborate or engage in small group work outside of general classrooms.
- The library, gym, and music room are located outside of the main building.
- The library does not have restroom access; students must use the gym restrooms which are in poor condition. This also requires badge access, presenting supervision challenges.
- Acoustics are a daily challenge with students moving up and down the stairs, contributing to elevated noise levels.
- The library has fixed mid-floor bookcases that limit the flexibility of the space.

- The student health room is undersized, consisting of a cot behind a screen, resulting in limited visibility from the main office.
- The three-story configuration makes student transitions and supervision challenging.
- No conference room is available for community partners or outside agencies – either the principal or counselor must vacate their office for this purpose.

Equity and Demographics

School Demographics

Student demographic factors at Richmond relative to district-wide averages for elementary schools are listed below:

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	RICHMOND ELEMENTARY	DISTRICT AVE - ELEM SCHOOLS
STUDENTS OF COLOR	63%	65%
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	29%	20%
ENGLISH LEARNERS	28%	28%
EXPERIENCING POVERTY	77%	60%

Barriers to Access and Inclusion

- Richmond's three-story building without an elevator presents an inaccessible environment for students, parents, staff, and visitors with physical disabilities. It also restricts placement options for K-2 classes and students with disabilities, significantly limiting overall flexibility in assigning classrooms.
- The Emotional Growth Center (EGC) classroom for grades 3-5 lacks direct access to a dedicated ADA restroom for EGC students.
- There are elopement supervision challenges associated with the multiple stairwell access points.

Enrollment and Utilization

Richmond is significantly under-enrolled, with a current utilization rate of 43%. Enrollment is projected to continue to decline through 2032.



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A 3rd floor classroom (can only be used by older grades)

Program Relocations

If closed, it is tentatively planned that Richmond's Developmental Learning Center (DLC) special education class for K-2 students would relocate to Morningside and its Emotional Growth Center (EGC) special education class for students in grades 3-5 would move to Four Corners. This change would result in a continuum of care for the feeder area.

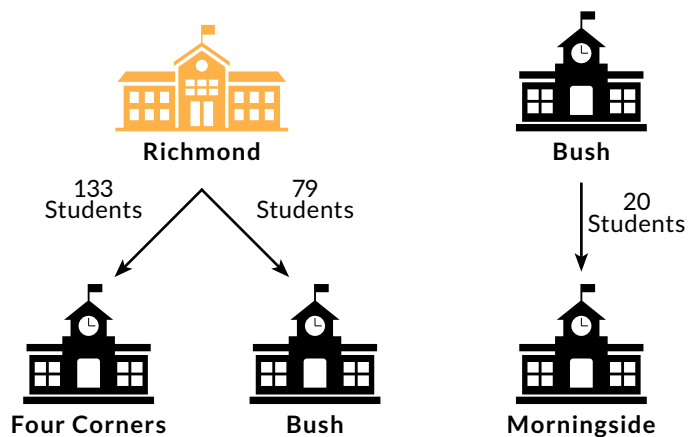
Operational Efficiency and Financial Stability

Richmond has higher than average operating costs per student, compared to other district elementary schools. However, as a Title I school, Richmond receives additional federal funding for specific uses such as instructional supports; this increases the school's total available resources compared to non-Title I schools.

School Boundary Adjustment Considerations

As a starting point for the public process, an initial boundary adjustment concept has been developed. In this concept, the boundary for Richmond would be divided geographically between Four Corners and Bush. The boundary adjustments would also realign a portion of Bush to Morningside. Middle school boundaries will not change; however, this will create a split for students from Four Corners between Houck and Leslie. High school boundaries are not affected by this change. This boundary concept better aligns the geographic proximity of students to their school and balances enrollment in this area. A map illustrating this concept may be viewed at <https://salkeiz.k12.or.us/schools/closure-consolidation>; more information will be provided in the boundary process.

The school boundary adjustment process will include multiple listening and learning sessions with affected families and the community. A stakeholder-based committee will provide school boundary recommendations designed to keep receiving schools appropriately utilized while maintaining flexibility for future enrollment fluctuations, minimizing the need for blended classrooms.



Per the School Board's direction, boundary adjustments will prioritize equitable proximity to schools across the district, avoiding excessive travel distances for students. Effective transition planning will help ensure the school community's culture carries over into students' newly assigned elementary schools.



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