



The Academic Outcomes of Students Affected by School Closures

Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management

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Key Findings

- Overall, 93.9% of students that attended a closing school re-enrolled in SCS the following year, while 45.3% enrolled in their assigned school.
 - 35.3% of Graves Elementary students enrolled in Ford Road Elementary,
 - 66.7% of Vance Middle students enrolled in B.T. Washington High, and
 - 43.1% of Northside High students enrolled in Manassas High School.
- Both Graves and Ford Road Elementary students showed improvement in Reading/Language Arts (R/LA).
 - The percentage of proficient Graves Elementary students **increased** by **19.3%** in R/LA and by **15.4%** in **math** when they enrolled in Ford Road Elementary.
 - The percentage of proficient returning Ford Road Elementary students **increased** by **4.1%** in R/LA and **decreased** by **4.1%** in **math** during the same period.
- Vance Middle students that enrolled in B.T. Washington School performed better in R/LA, but worse in math.
 - The percentage of proficient Vance Middle students **increased** by **4.4%** in R/LA but **decreased** by **4.5%** in **math** when they enrolled in B.T. Washington School.
- Both Northside and Manassas High students showed improvement in R/LA.
 - The percentage of proficient Northside High students **increased** by **4.7%** in R/LA but showed **no change** in **math** when students enrolled in Manassas High.
 - The percentage of proficient returning Manassas High students **increased** by **1.6%** in R/LA but **declined** by **4.2%** in **math** during the same period.

Overview

The Superintendent and the School Board make the decision to close schools for a number of reasons, including declining enrollment, deteriorating facilities, and/or low academic achievement. Leadership also take proximity to other schools into account to help right-size the District. This brief focuses on Graves Elementary and Vance Middle schools' closings in 2013–14 because TCAP results are available for comparison for both the year the school closed as well as the year the students transferred to a new school. Similarly, we focus on Northside High School's closing in 2015–16 because TNReady scores are available for comparison. Consequently, we are able to assess the academic outcomes of students affected by school closures – both those who attended closing schools, as well as those who accepted students from those closing schools.

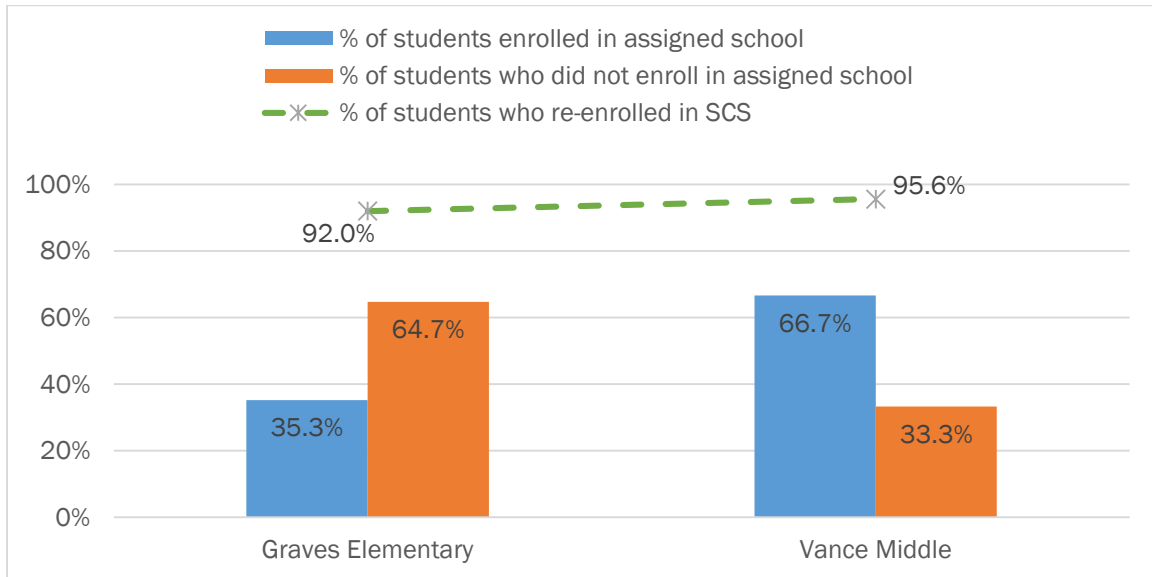
2013–14 School Closures and 2014–15 Enrollment

Graves Elementary and Vance Middle schools closed at the end of the 2013–14 school year. Of the 249 Graves students, 92.0% (229) remained enrolled in SCS in 2014–15. Of the 190 rising first through fifth-grade students, 35.3% (67) enrolled in Ford Road Elementary in 2014–15 as assigned while 64.7% (123) enrolled in other elementary schools.

Of the 181 Vance students enrolled at the end of 2013–14, 95.6% (173) remained enrolled in the District the following year. Among the 108 rising seventh and eighth-grade students, 66.7% (72) enrolled in their assigned school of B.T. Washington in 2014–15 and 33.3% (36) enrolled elsewhere.



Figure 1. Percentage of Graves Elementary and Vance Middle School Students That Re-Enrolled in SCS and Enrolled in Assigned Schools between 1314 and 1415



Academic Outcomes

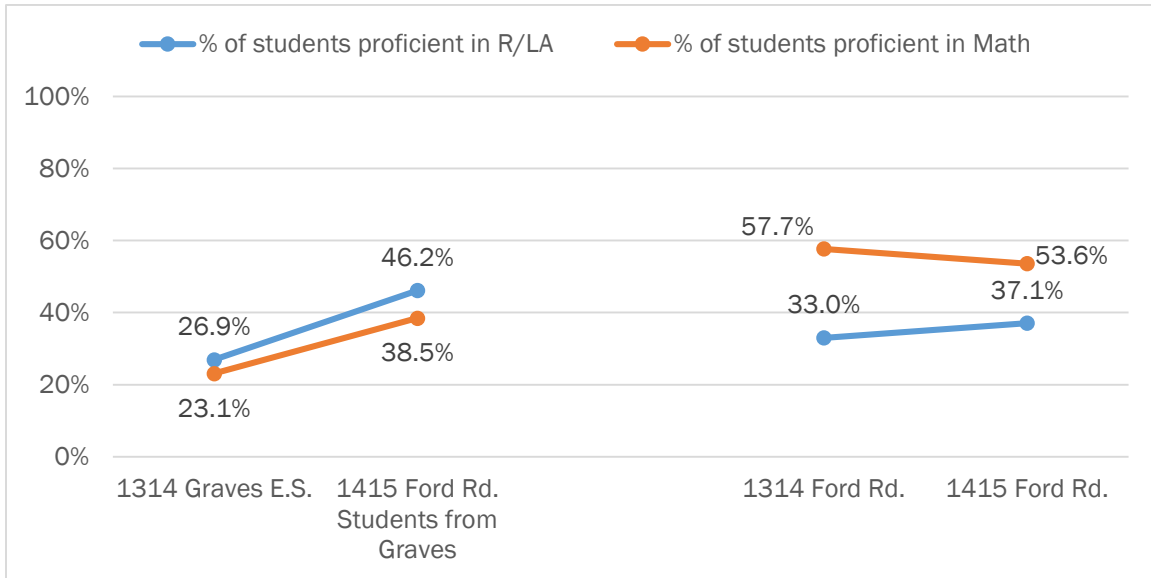
Approximately 27% of the 2013–14 Graves Elementary students who enrolled in Ford Road Elementary in 2014–15 were proficient in Reading/Language Arts (R/LA) while 23.1% were proficient in math. When these students enrolled in Ford Road Elementary in 2014–15, the percentage of proficient students increased substantially in both subjects.

The percentage of Ford Road Elementary students proficient in R/LA who remained enrolled between 2013–14 and 2014–15 declined by 4.1% (57.7% vs. 53.6%, respectively). The percentage of proficient math students improved by 4.1% between 2013–14 (33.0%) and 2014–15 (37.1%).



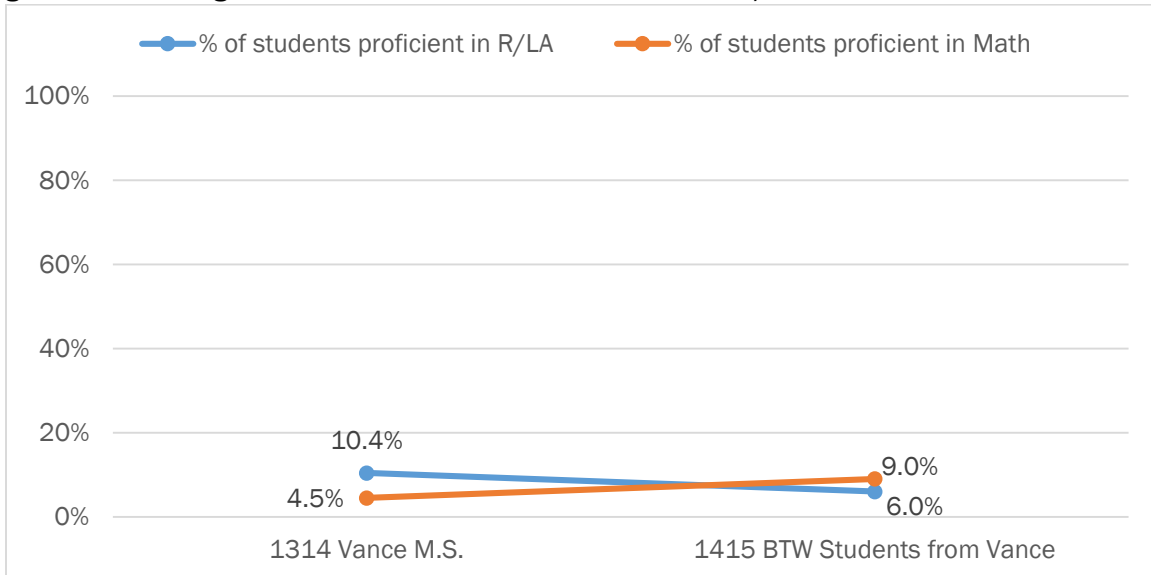
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Figure 2. Percentage of Graves and Ford Road Elementary School Students Proficient in R/LA and Math from 1314 to 1415



Of the 2013–14 Vance Middle School students who enrolled in B.T. Washington in 2014–15, 10.4% were proficient in R/LA and 4.5% were proficient in math. When these students enrolled in B.T. Washington in 2014–15, the percentage of proficient R/LA students decreased to 6.0%; however, the percentage of proficient math students increased to 9.0%. Because 2014–15 was the first year B.T. Washington school admitted middle school students, we have no group to which we can compare academic performance.

Figure 3. Percentage of Vance Middle Students Proficient in R/LA and Math from 1314 to 1415



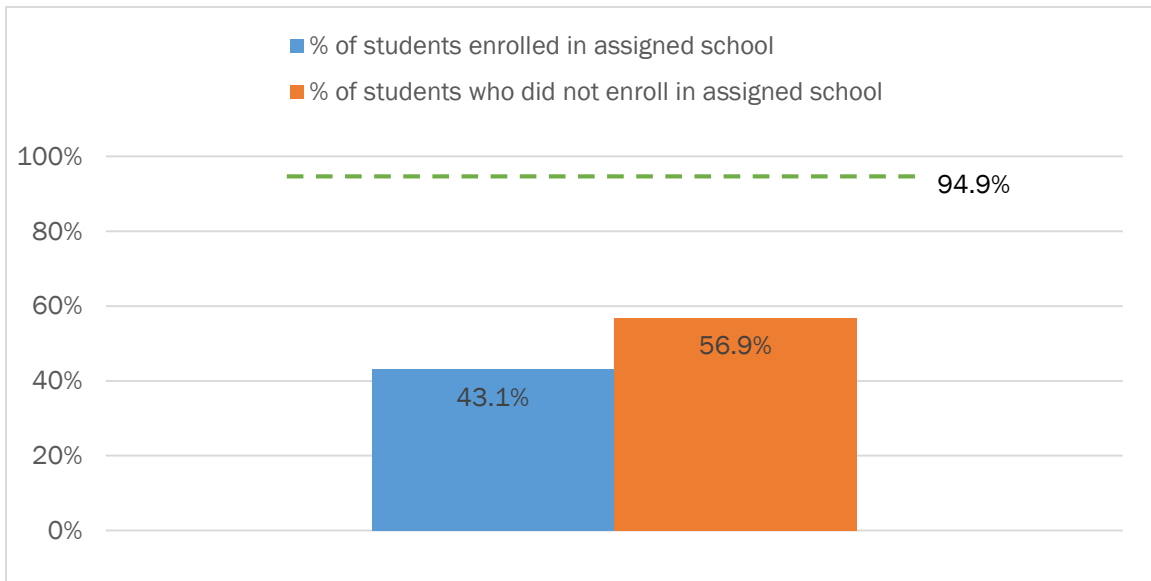


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2015–16 School Closure and 2016–17 Enrollment

Northside High School closed at the end of the 2015–16 school year. Of the 198 non-graduating students, approximately 95% (188) remained enrolled in SCS the following year. Among these, 43.1% (81) enrolled in Manassas High School as assigned in 2016–17 while 56.9% (107) enrolled in various other high schools.

Figure 4. Percentage of Northside High Students That Re-Enrolled in SCS and Enrolled in Assigned School from 1516 to 1617

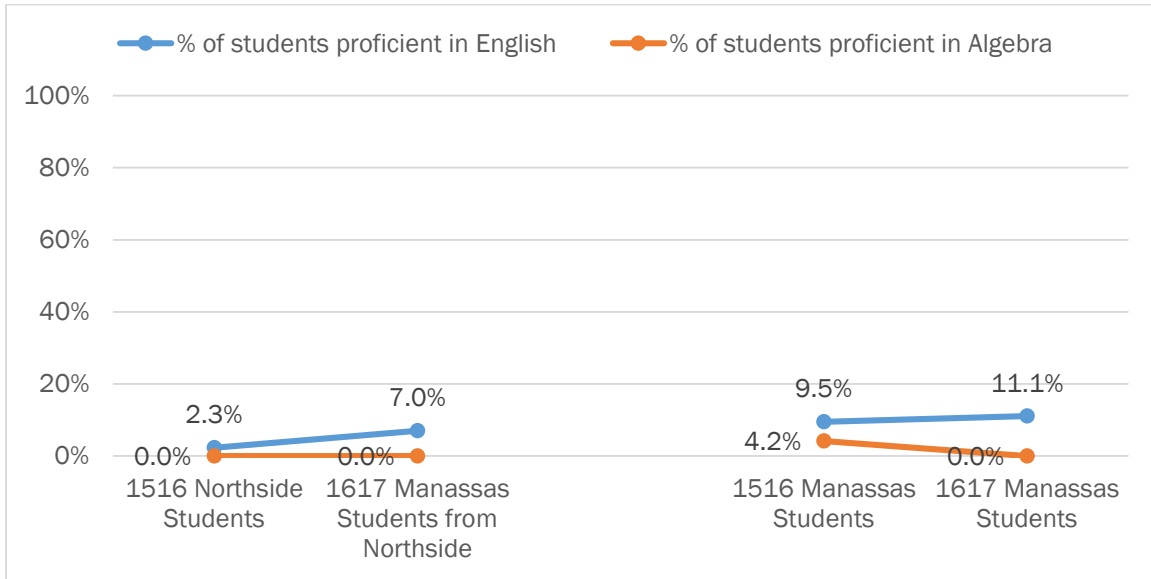


In 2016–17, 7.0% of the students who transferred from Northside to Manassas High were proficient in English (I, II, or III), a 4.7% increase. Conversely, the percentage of proficient Algebra (I or II) students did not change.

Between 2015–16 and 2016–17, the percentage of proficient English Manassas students who re-enrolled increased by 1.6% (9.5% to 11.1%, respectively). However, the percentage of proficient Algebra students declined from 4.2% to 0.0%.



Figure 5. Percentage of Northside and Manassas High Students Proficient in English I, II, or III and Algebra I or II from 1516 to 1617



Summary and Recommendations

A higher percentage of Graves Elementary students were proficient in both R/LA and math when they transferred to Ford Road Elementary after Graves Elementary closed. Integrating these students into the environment did not seem to yield any substantial, adverse effects on the academic achievement of Ford Road Elementary students. Ford Road Elementary students that returned to their school when Graves Elementary students enrolled showed a slight increase in their R/LA proficiency, but a small decline in their math proficiency.

A lower percentage of former Vance Middle students were proficient in R/LA after transferring to B.T. Washington; however, a higher percentage showed proficiency in math.

Finally, a higher percentage of Northside High students showed proficiency in R/LA after transferring to Manassas upon Northside High's closing; however, these students' math proficiency remained zero. Returning Manassas students also showed an improvement in the percentage of proficient R/LA students when Northside High students enrolled. However, the percentage of proficient math students dropped to zero for this population. The negative math outcomes for both Northside and Manassas students suggest that math proficiency was likely unaffected by Northside students' enrollment in Manassas High, but by some other school-level factor.

Overall, transferring students from underperforming to more stable schools seems to improve outcomes for transferred students, and in some cases, students attending the schools accepting them. We recommend continued, concentrated academic support for students transferring from failing schools, as well as some form of sensitivity/anti-bullying education for students in the established schools to prepare them to accept their new peers.