

# **APS Turnaround Strategy**

## Board of Education Meeting

March 7, 2016

# Agenda

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## Update on community engagement process

Final recommendations for turnaround partnerships

Final recommendations for other school operating model changes

Next steps

# The last 5 weeks provided multiple opportunities for the community to provide feedback

## Community Meetings

- 3 cluster meetings (Washington, Douglass, & Carver clusters)
- 4 public hearings (Washington & Douglass clusters)
- 4 partner meetings with parents & community (Carver cluster)

## Open Houses

- Purpose Built Schools & Kindezi Schools provided parents with several opportunities to visit existing schools
- Special staff visits were also planned with both partners

## Staff Meetings

- Senior officers and the superintendent attended multiple staff meetings to answer questions and address concerns of staff

## Individual Conversations

- Board members and district leaders had countless individual phone conversations, meetings, and email exchanges to answer questions
- Door-to-door engagement & phone bank allowed for input from Carver cluster families

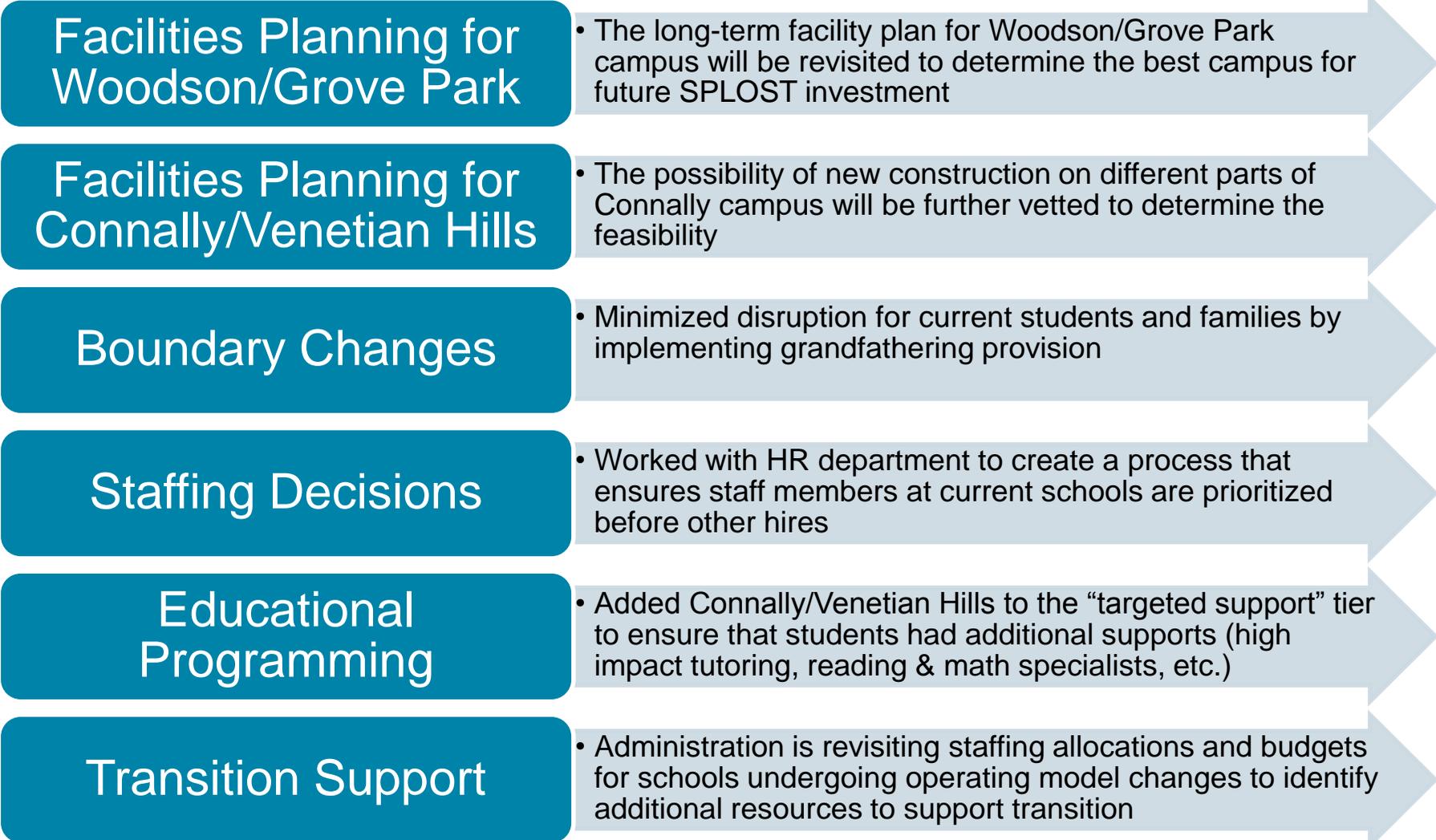
## Survey

- Stakeholders had the opportunity to provide feedback via a survey

# Feedback from community revealed many concerns while also underscoring the need for change

Cluster	Summary
1 Carver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Many stakeholders did not seem to understand how a partnership would work (some suggested this was “privatization” or “charter” take-over)</li><li>- Parents asked for the data to support the need for change and why it was so urgent (Thomasville ES parents did not seem aware that school is lowest performing ES in state)</li><li>- General concerns about the impact this would have on staff; many parents expressed support for their teachers and principals who “go above and beyond” for them</li><li>- Questions about why APS could not use partnership strategies and “do it ourselves”</li><li>- Parents who participated in community meeting at Thomasville, STEAM night, and open houses were overwhelmingly positive; door-to-door campaign and phone bank also surfaced strong support among parents.</li></ul>
2 Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Feedback about Bethune ES plan was mostly positive from several individual conversations; support for repurposing Kennedy facility and for the launch for a K-8 STEM Academy</li><li>- Families impacted by redistricting raised concerns about the change in zone</li><li>- Several concerns raised from Venetian community on Connally/Venetian Hills plan; primary concern was around educational impact and distance for Venetian students (this was addressed during public hearings where fewer concerns were raised)</li><li>- General concerns about asking staff to reapply for position</li></ul>
3 Douglass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Primary concern seemed to be around impact on staff</li><li>- Some concerns about culture of Grove Park ES and impact merger would have on discipline at the schools</li><li>- Support for renovation</li></ul>

# Several aspects of the overall plan were revised to reflect feedback received throughout the process



# In addition, feedback around the need to address parent engagement as part of our turnaround efforts led us to amend our strategy

## 1 Academics

- Provide all APS students with access to consistent, high-quality instruction delivered by teachers with knowledge of both the content and the standards
- Supplement instruction with intensive direct-to-student support targeted at expediting progress in literacy and math

## 2 School leadership

- Increase coaching and support to school leaders to develop their skills as turnaround leaders
- Recruit and place strong, turnaround-experienced leaders

## 3 Teachers

- Attract, develop, support, and retain high quality teachers across the district
- Differentially staff high-quality teachers in high-need schools

## 4 Students engaged and ready to learn

- Deliver targeted support to address non-academic needs (e.g. social/emotional, health, nutrition) enabling children to be more ready to learn

## 5 Urgency of the situation

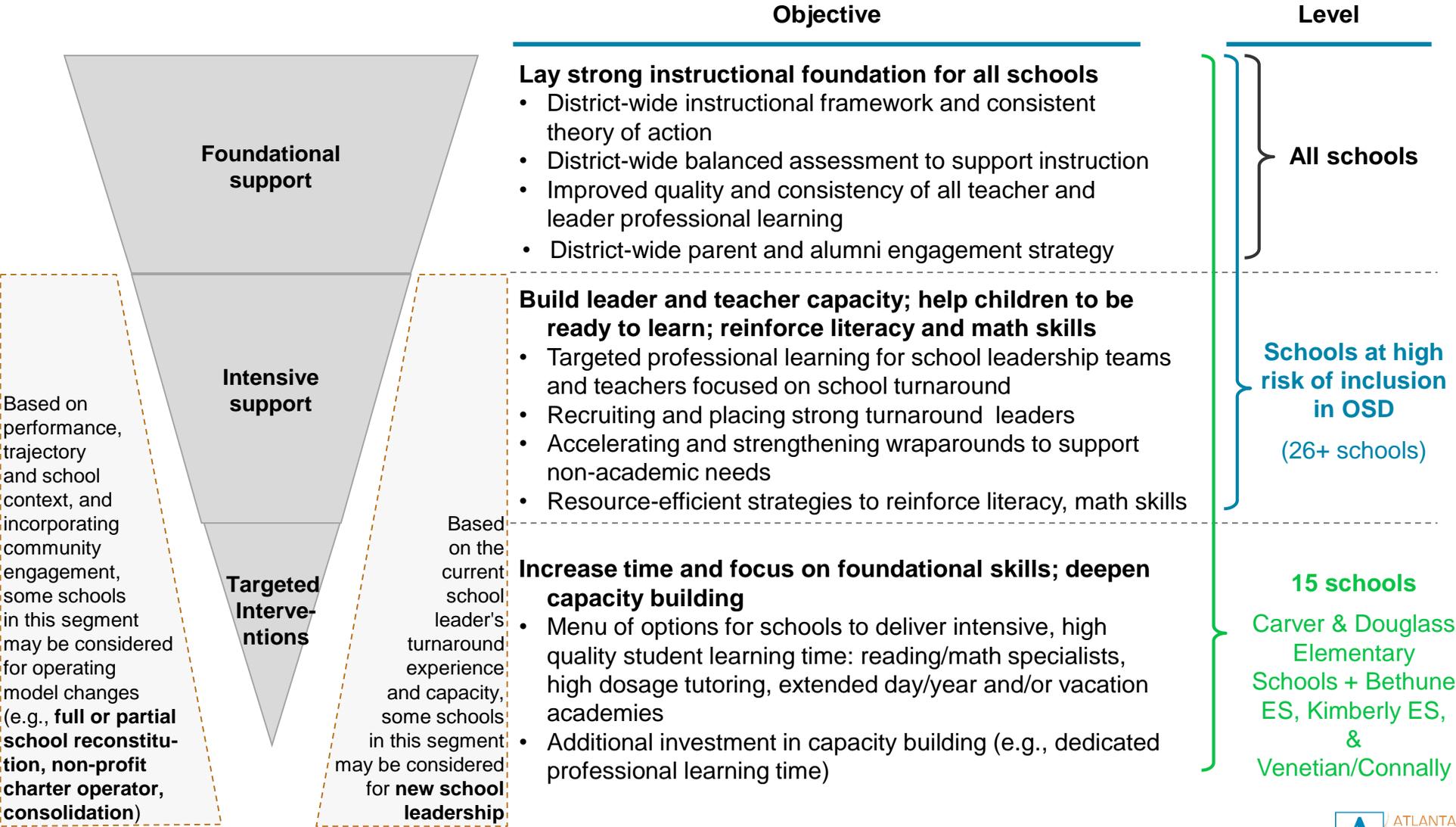
- In collaboration with communities, pursue operating model changes where turnaround requires more significant change than the district can address using programmatic approaches (e.g., consolidation, partnership with non-profit charters to operate schools, school reset)

## 6 Parents & alumni as partners

- Empower and equip parents/caregivers and alumni to become informed advocates for children through: involvement with GO Teams and cluster teams, the establishment of an APS Alumni Council, and the provision of programs such as PLUS (Parents United for Students), Parent University, etc.



# District-wide parent engagement/empowerment strategy will be included in foundational support tier



Based on performance, trajectory and school context, and incorporating community engagement, some schools in this segment may be considered for operating model changes (e.g., **full or partial school reconstitution, non-profit charter operator, consolidation**)

Based on the current school leader's turnaround experience and capacity, some schools in this segment may be considered for **new school leadership**

Note: D.H. Stanton ES has also been invited to participate in some targeted interventions, including high-dosage tutoring

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# Request For Qualifications (RFQ) process was designed to invite potential partners to submit ideas for supporting turnaround efforts

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this RFQ is to identify and select qualified partners for the APS Turnaround Initiative. Partners will provide turnaround services, interventions, and supports to one or more existing APS school identified as consistently low performing under the terms of a contract with the Atlanta Board of Education.

## **Program Goals**

- To dramatically improve student achievement for both short-term and long-term success;
- To increase operational efficiency of the partner school(s);
- To manage and support all or part of the partner school's operations;
- To abide by the terms of the APS charter system contract and guidelines;
- To collaborate with the established governance team for the partner school(s);
- To provide a high quality educational environment to APS students within the partner school(s);
- To meet objectives, goals, and deliverables for the partner school(s) as established by the partnership;
- To abide by applicable local, state, and federal spending guidelines, practices, and laws for use of public funds.

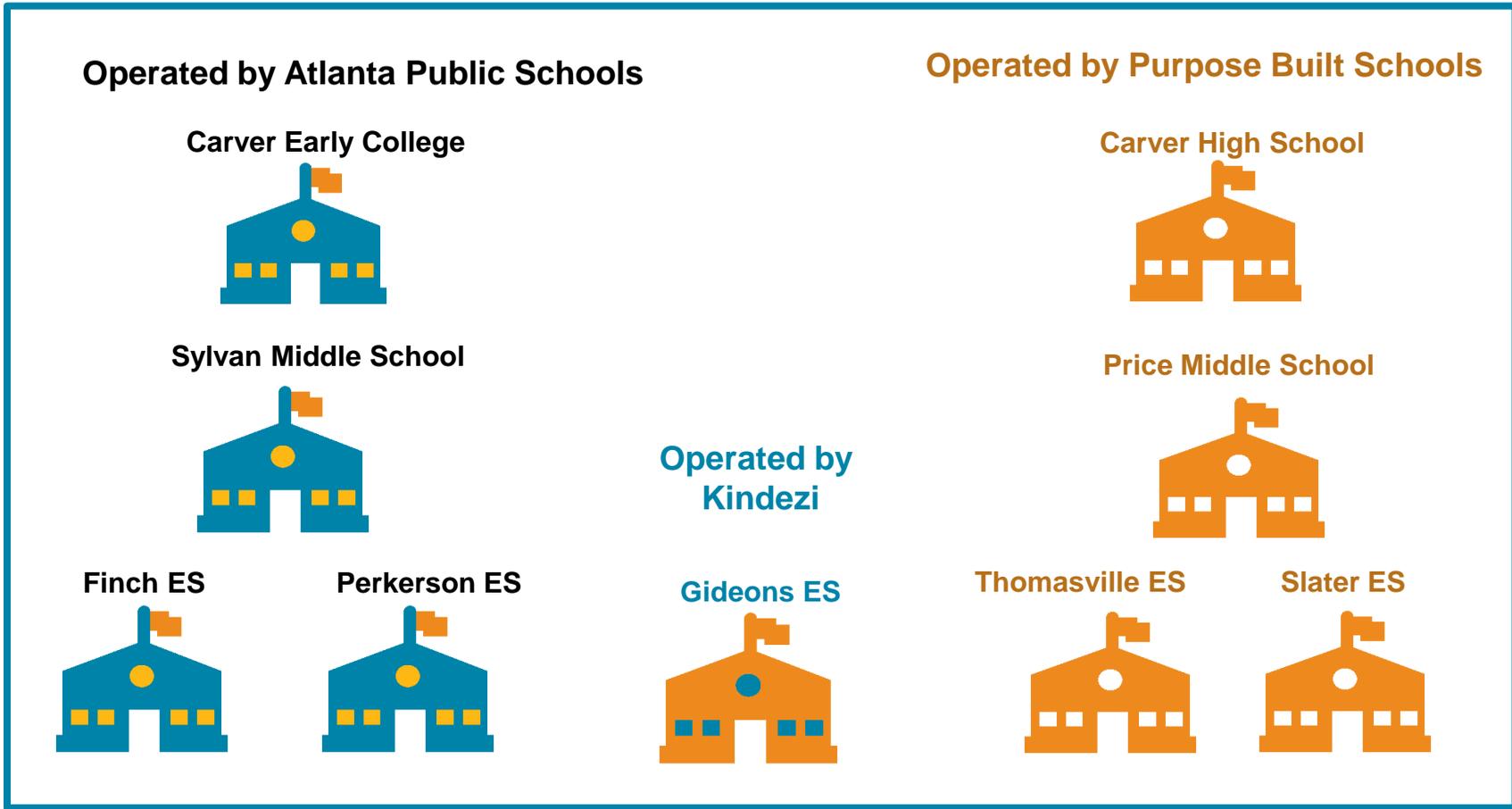
## **Eligible Applicants**

Entities with demonstrable success in improving student outcomes, academic performance, and operational efficiency for demographically similar students and schools.

# The administration is recommending approval of 3 partnerships

Potential Partner	Terms of Partnership
<b>Rensselaerville Institute's School Turnaround Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner will provide intensive professional development and support for school leaders and teachers focused on standards-based instruction and establishing a culture of high expectations.</li> <li>Would serve up to 10 schools with authorization for one (1) year with a one-year available option to be exercised at the discretion of the supt.</li> </ul>
<b>Kindezi Schools</b> partnership with Gideons ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual contract with renewal options for 6 years (to provide time for Kinder class to matriculate to MS) with rigorous performance goals</li> <li>Kindezi would maintain hiring rights</li> <li>Building remains property of APS, but maintained by Kindezi</li> <li>Funding on a per-pupil basis that is comparable to funding currently allocated to Gideons, including investment consistent with that of other targeted support schools.</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose Built Schools</b> partnership with Thomasville Heights ES, Slater ES, Price MS, and Carver HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual contract with renewal options for 14 years (to provide time for Kindergarten class to matriculate through HS)</li> <li>PBS would maintain hiring rights</li> <li>Buildings remain property of APS, but maintained by PBS</li> <li>Funding on a per-pupil basis that is comparable to funding currently allocated to schools, including investment consistent with that of other targeted support schools.</li> </ul>

# Kindezi and Purpose Built Schools would ultimately operate and support 5 schools in the Carver cluster



Operated by Atlanta Public Schools.

Operated by Purpose Built Schools. Schools remain APS but are operated by Purpose Built Schools.

Operated by Kindezi. Schools remain APS but are operated by Kindezi is a network of public elementary through middle charter schools that offer small class sizes in two schools in Atlanta.

# The partnerships would be phased in over the next three years



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# Reminder: when we started our strategy work, we aligned on a set of guiding principles for decisions around turnaround

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**We agreed that the strategy we choose must . . .**

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**Improve, through direct and/or indirect means:**

- **The quality of instruction provided to students**
- **Students' experience in school, increasing their engagement and hope**

**Help low-performing schools to make significant progress in both the short term (next 18 months) and long term**

**Demonstrate to the state APS's commitment and ability to improve the quality of students' outcomes and educational experience, thereby reducing the likelihood of OSD takeover**

**Increase equity in the system**

**Include families, communities, and staff as partners**

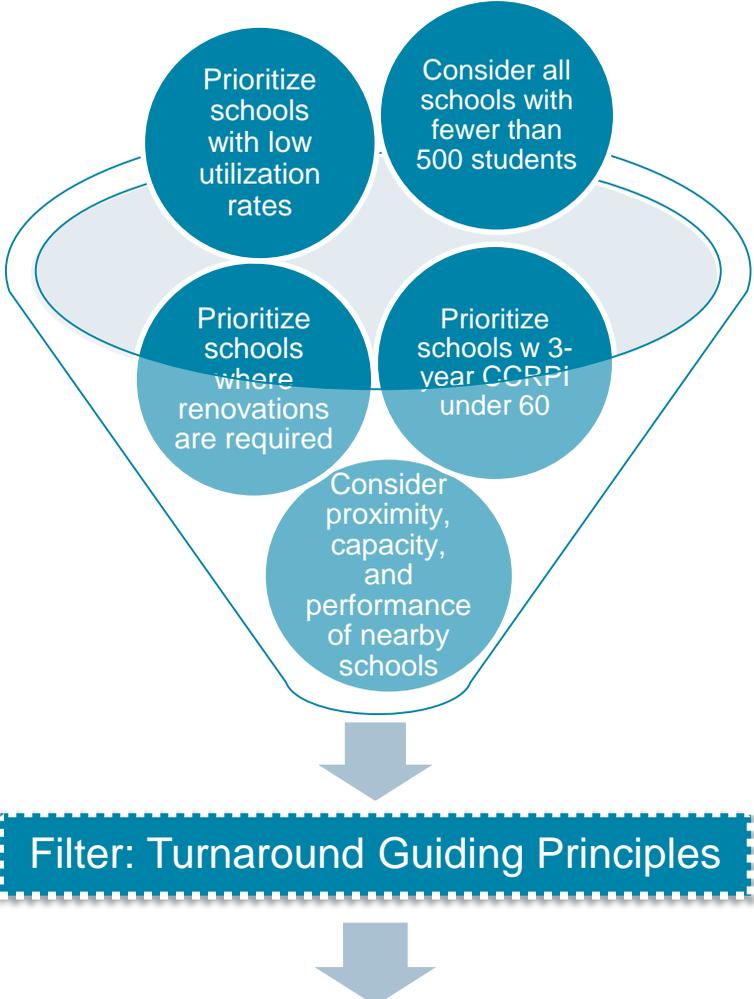
**Be sensitive to differences in communities' and schools' assets, needs, and current situation**

**Offer a balance of proven strategies and innovative solutions**

**Be determined and implemented based on an open and transparent process**

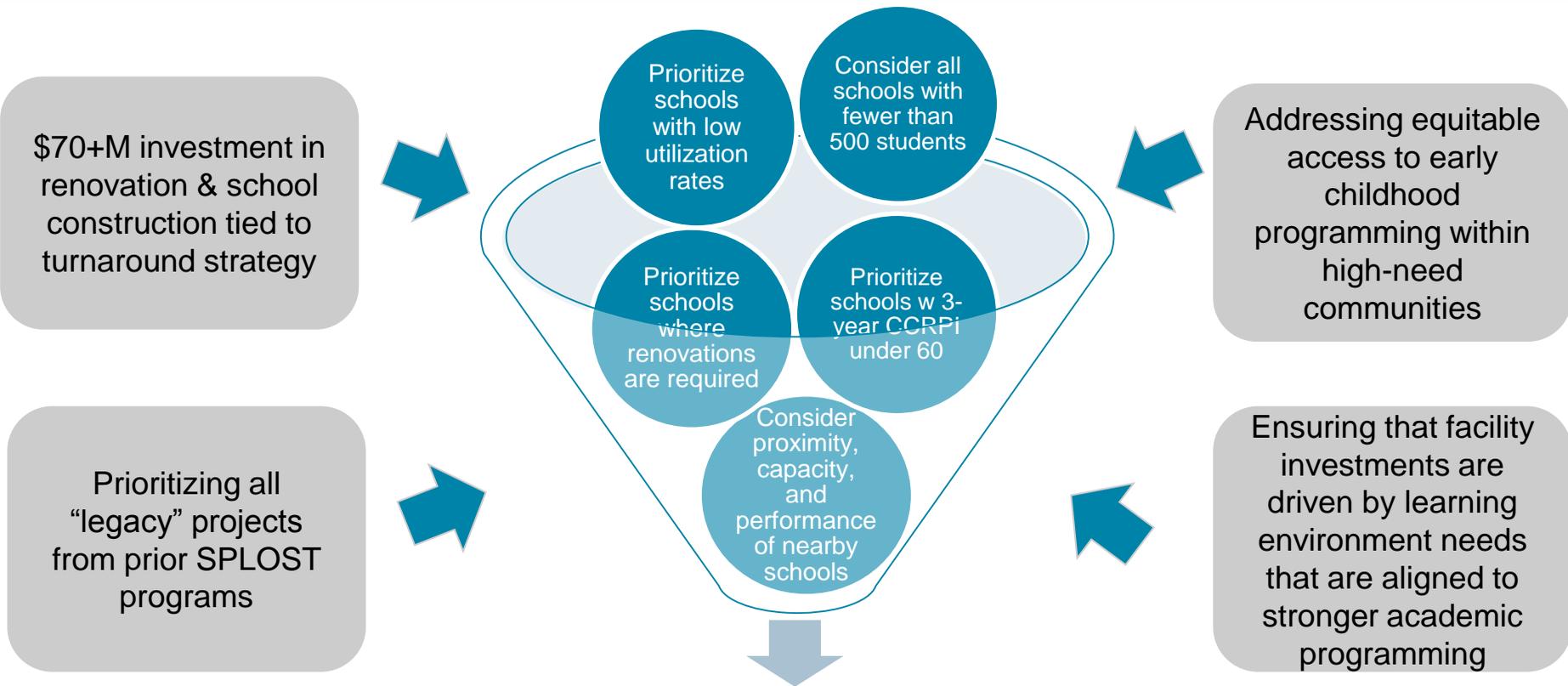
**Include a plan for implementation that is sustained, sufficiently resourced, and high-quality**

# With those guiding principles as the filter, 5 additional criteria were considered to arrive at recommended operating model changes



Recommendations address some of the lowest performing elementary schools (according to 3-year CCRPI average) and provide long-term plan for early childhood facilities

# Turnaround strategy is integrated with other key investment decisions that address longstanding community concerns



**Filter: Turnaround Guiding Principles**

**Recommendations address some of the lowest performing elementary schools (according to 3-year CCRPI average) and provide long-term plan for early childhood facilities**

# After extensive input from the community, the administration is recommending the following operating model changes\*

Cluster	Recommendation	Notes
1 Washington	<b>Close Bethune ES and open a new K-8 STEM academy at Kennedy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bethune has 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest 3-year CCRPI average in district (42.1); strong desire to leverage Kennedy facility in Washington community</li> <li>- Closure provides opportunity to reset and launch new innovative academy, providing capacity for anticipated enrollment growth connected to Westside development</li> <li>- \$2M facility improvements would be completed over summer of 2016 allowing for August 2016 start of new academy; \$10M to be included in SPLOST 2017 budget for larger scale renovations</li> </ul>
2 Washington	<b>Merge Connally ES with Venetian Hills ES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connally is tied for 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest 3-year CCRPI average in district (46.5) while Venetian's 2014 CCRPI was 76.8</li> <li>- Both schools are significantly under-enrolled and in need of renovations</li> <li>- Recommend opening merged school in Connally facility (following facility improvements over summer of 2016); \$23.5M in renovations planned for 2017 SPLOST</li> <li>- Potentially use Venetian site for early childhood center</li> </ul>
3 Douglass	<b>Merge Grove Park Intermediate with Woodson Primary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grove Park ES is tied for 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest 3-year CCRPI average in district (46.5) while Woodson's 2014 CCRPI was 83.2</li> <li>- K-2/3-5 split has no real strategy and does not support coherence</li> <li>- Both schools are significantly under-enrolled and in need of renovations</li> <li>- Immediately move students onto Grove Park campus; determine appropriate long-term facility for \$18.5 renovation; create early childhood center</li> </ul>

\*Facility-related decisions involving schools working with partners will be determined at a later time.

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**Next steps**

# Over the coming months, several key steps will be taken to ensure we are prepared for a successful implementation

## K-8 STEM Academy

- Identify project manager to support with key transition items
- Form long-term visioning and planning committee by March 15
- Engage community and make recommendation for re-naming school by May 2
- Determine anchor partners for STEM model by March 15
- Complete facility improvements before Day One

## Woodson & Grove Park

- Identify project manager to support with key transition items
- Engage community and make recommendation for re-naming school by May 2
- Hire staff by May 31
- Complete facility improvements before Day One
- Launch long-term facility planning committee by November 2016, pending outcomes of SPLOST referendum

## Connally & Venetian Hills

- Identify project manager to support with key transition items
- Engage community and make recommendation for re-naming school by May 2
- Hire staff by May 31
- Initiate key culture initiatives to support merging of two school communities
- Complete facility improvements before Day One
- Launch long-term facility planning committee by November 2017, pending outcome of SPLOST referendum

## Thomasville Heights

- Identify project manager to support with key transition items
- Execute partnership agreement with PBS
- PBS to hire principal by April 30
- Initiate key culture initiatives to support successful launch of partnership

## Other Carver Partner Schools

- Execute partnership agreement with PBS & Kindezi
- Kindezi and PBS to identify future school leaders and start training and transition
- Initiate key culture initiatives to support successful launch of partnership