

The following is the WES PTA summary of what was discussed at the community meeting at Catonsville High School on 10/28. The meeting was led primarily by Micheal Sines, Chief Operating Officer for BCPS.

The meeting was called to discuss the 10 year plan for the SW area and to discuss the short term solutions to the overcrowding issues in our area.

Regarding the 10 year plan:

1. The plan involves three phases.
2. Phase I (completed) set objectives, established vision and collected preliminary data
3. Phase II (in process) Completed evaluation of all sites. Right now, projects are being prioritized based on various criteria including overcrowding and infrastructure. Will determine plans and share them with community by January 2014.
4. Phase III - This occurs after community input is received. Plans will be revised as needed based on input.

Regarding the short term solution for SW Area Overcrowding:

1. This was pulled out and fast tracked from 10 year plan.
2. BCPS evaluated all sites suggested for new schools. A breakdown of sites and why they were considered was discussed.
 - a. Senior Center, Spring Grove and Park and Recs areas were not considered because there was not enough space
 - b. Children's Home and part of the area behind Dimitris restaurant were not considered based on third party ownership
 - c. Additional areas behind Dimitris were not considered because they were out of our districting area.
 - d. Banneker recreation site was viable and may be considered at a later date for other projects
 - e. Catonsville Elementary site was not feasible because of site configuration
3. The plan is very aggressive. The plan will include three new schools and an addition to WES. It will result in about 1000 new seats for SW instead of the originally proposed 500 new seat school. The plan is detailed on this web site: <http://deliberateexcellence.wordpress.com/2013/09/>. (The WES PTA response to this plan was posted some time ago and for your information is posted at the end of this note. Please note that the new Catonsville Elementary School is now proposed to occur on the Bloomsbury site and not the current Catonsville Elem. School site.)
4. The plan is aggressive and expensive. If the SW area community supports this proposal, then the community must advocate securing the funding, as this project will be competing for funds with the needs of other counties. Parents need to show support at all input meetings. There will be several opportunities for this and WES PTA will keep you informed of these meetings.
5. The time line for this fast tracked SW Area Overcrowding Solution Plan is as follows:
 - a. NOV 2013 – Superintendent makes recommendation of the overcrowding plan to Board of Education
 - b. DEC 2013 – Superintendent presents plan to the Intra Agency Committee
 - c. JAN 2014- Superintendent presents plan to the County Planning Board
 - d. JAN 2014- Superintendent presents plan to the Board of Public Works
 - e. APRIL 2014- Secure approval from County Council
 - f. APRIL 2014- County Executive presents proposed budget for plan to County Council
 - g. MAY 2014 – Board of Public Works approves Intra Agency Committee recommendations
 - h. JULY 2014 – Construction begins
 - i. AUGUST 2016 – project completed

6. The last part of the meeting was a discussion of the boundary change process, which must occur due to the plan. This process starts one year in advance of the change. A Boundary Study Committee is created from parents and faculty. This committee develops and presents scenarios to the public and then takes a survey to gather response to those scenarios. The committee then reviews the response and makes recommendations to the Superintendent. The Board of Education holds an open public hearing at least 10 days prior to making its decision. Please see Redistricting: Policy #1280 for more information: http://www.bcps.org/system/policies_rules/policies/1000Series/POL1280.pdf
7. The following BCPS website should have all the meeting information and PowerPoint slides posted. Continue to check this page often: <https://www.bcps.org/construction/southwest/>

Please note that community support is needed to achieve this costly and aggressive project that will net 1000 new seats in our community including three new state-of-the-art schools (Westowne, Relay & Catonsville) and Westchester addition. The community can show their support by contacting various representatives as well as attending all community meetings and/or board of education meetings to publically voice support.

Below is a list of representatives to contact in support of the SW Area Overcrowding Solution proposed by BCPS. Funding for this plan is crucial - so a show of support is vital. Please take the time to write a note of support for funding of the BCPS SW Area Overcrowding Proposal to any or all of the following: Again the plan/proposal is at this website: <http://deliberateexcellence.wordpress.com/2013/09/>

BCPS Board of Education. It is now possible to email the Board of Education directly, and our Representative, **Michael Bowler** by visiting the Board's page at <http://www.bcps.org/board/> and hitting "contact us"

Councilman Tom Quirk council1@baltimorecountymd.gov

County Executive Kevin Kamenetz kevin@baltimorecountymd.gov

Maryland State Senator Edward Kasemeyer, Chair of Budget and Taxation
edward.kasemeyer@senate.state.md.us

State Delegate James Malone delegate.j.malone@house.state.md.us

State Senator Norman Conway, Chair of Appropriations norman.conway@house.state.md.us

Delegate James Proctor, Vice Chair of Appropriations james.proctor@house.state.md.us

BCPS Superintendent, Dr. Dallas Dance ddance@bcps.org

Beverly Coleman, BCPS SW Area Advisory Council Chairperson coleman.beverly@gmail.com

Governor Martin O'Malley <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/mail/>

WES PTA will keep you posted on community meetings regarding the SW Area 10 year plan. Check out our website at <http://westchesterpta.weebly.com/> and look under BCPS news often. Also like and check out our Facebook site, <https://www.facebook.com/westchesterpta>. Information will also be provided in our PTA newsletter. Parents can also write, email and visit local politicians, the Board of Education, etc. Also, at the WES PTA December meeting, Beverly Coleman, SW Area Advisory Council Chairperson will speak and give us information about how the BCPS works and insight on how to advocate our position. (This meeting is Monday December 3rd at 7:00 p.m.

WES PTA Response to BCPS SW Area Overcrowding Solution:

The Westchester Elementary School PTA supports the proposed four-part solution presented by BCPS in the 10-year plan.

- The proposal gives the community three new schools as opposed to one
- Building three new larger schools at existing school sites helps minimize redistricting
- The proposal aims to solve both the aging infrastructure and the overcrowding issues
- Building new schools on existing school areas minimizes the environmental impact and leaves parkland and open spaces available for the community to enjoy
- The proposal is set to be completed in a timely manner, with all four projects to be completed within the same time frame. Because the proposal uses existing school sites, there is no need to acquire land, which is costly and requires more time.
- We ask that as redistricting occurs, the Board takes into account existing neighborhoods so that kids from the same neighborhoods can go to school together.