

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

S. Dallas Dance, Ph.D., Superintendent

6901 Charles Street Towson, MD • 21204-3711

July 11, 2015

Dear Westchester Elementary School Families:

In a letter dated May 21, 2015, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) shared an update on the construction projects and boundary change process with all potentially impacted Southwest Area BCPS families. Both the new construction and the boundary change are designed to bring facility improvements and much-needed relief from overcrowding to our communities. The letter, along with additional information about construction and the boundary process, can be found on the BCPS Web site at <http://www.bcps.org/construction/southwest/>. This link will be updated throughout the boundary change process with new information, so please bookmark this page and refer to it often.

As noted in the May 21 letter, the boundary study phase of the overall boundary change process will begin in the fall; however, we do begin planning over the summer so that the boundary study can be as successful as possible. Below is a brief selection regarding community engagement from the FAQ that is available via the link above:

- **How can I get involved in the boundary study process?**

BCPS offers many ways to get information and engage in the process:

- Let your principal know that you are interested in serving on the committee. Participation is limited to a teacher and two representatives from each school, so schools may not be able to accommodate all requests. Volunteers should be confident in their commitment to the time required and to serving the interests of all involved students and schools.
- Visit the BCPS Web site regularly to view all information that is provided to the committee and other updates regarding the process.
- Watch boundary study committee meetings online – live as they happen and recorded for later viewing.
- Attend and observe boundary study committee meetings – meetings are open to the public; however, participation is limited to committee members.
- Attend the public information session (typically in November) to review in detail the committee's draft recommendations and engage in conversation with staff and committee members about boundary change considerations.
- Participate in the online survey to provide input and comments on the committee's draft recommendations (typically the end of November).
- Attend Board meetings and participate in general public comment and/or write to the Board.
- Attend the Board's public hearing specific to the boundary change decision under consideration (typically in February).

- **Who serves on the boundary study committee and what is their role?**

The boundary study committee is appointed by the superintendent with input and recommendations from assistant superintendents and school principals. The committee is limited in size to include equal representation from all involved schools. Participants may include parents, teachers, and other representatives from schools and communities. Principals serve as nonvoting members and provide information to support the process. Committee members are asked to be as open as possible and to resist representing their personal interests and instead focus on the interests of all children that will be affected by the boundary process. Members commit to attend typically between five and seven

meetings and spend time both in and outside of meetings carefully considering information and providing relevant insight into neighborhood considerations. They also attend the community public information session to help explain the committee's work and engage in conversations about boundary change considerations.

Parents or teachers interested in participating on the committee should: have an interest in reviewing highly-detailed information, be certain of their ability to commit to all meetings, and most importantly demonstrate their care for our students across the region – and not simply advocate for their own community or family. If you would like additional information about the committee, please contact your principal no later than August 1, 2015. And please remember, BCPS provides many ways to stay informed and to advocate for specific concerns as part of the overall process.

Thank you so much for sharing the school year with us. Have a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Ms. Heidi Miller
Assistant Superintendent Zone 4
SW Boundary Co-Chair

Dr. Monique Wheatley-Phillip
Assistant Superintendent Zone 2
SW Boundary Co-Chair

af/kc

Copies to:

Ms. Verletta White, Chief Academic Officer
Jill Carter, Principal, Halethorpe Elementary School
Lisa Dingle, Principal, Relay Elementary School
Bre-Anne Fortcamp, Principal, Johnnycake Elementary School
Brent Grabill, Principal, Arbutus Elementary School
Julie McDivitt, Assistant Principal, Edmondson Heights Elementary School
Terry McVey, Principal, Hillcrest Elementary School
Kristen Merashoff, Assistant Principal, Westchester Elementary School
Linda Miller, Principal, Catonsville Elementary School
Shandra Patrick, Principal, Westowne Elementary School
Lori Phelps, Principal, Woodbridge Elementary School
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