

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

November 17, 2005

The Board of Education of Howard County held a public work session on the proposed attendance area adjustments on Thursday, November 17, 2005, at 6:30 p.m., in the Board Room of the Department of Education, located at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, Maryland. The following were present:

Courtney Watson, Chairman
Patricia S. Gordon, Vice Chairman
Joshua Kaufman
Diane Mikulis
Mary Kay Sigaty
Jeff Lasser, Student Member

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Chief Academic and Administrative Officer
Raymond Brown, Chief Operating Officer
Patti Caplan, Director, Public Relations
Florence Jackson, Recording Secretary

Chairman Courtney Watson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and Mr. Lasser led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Patapsco MS

Mr. Kaufman said he preferred the alternate plan because it moved fewer students and does not create a permanent feed under 10%. The negative side is associated redistricting at other levels beyond middle school.

Mr. David Drown, Manager, School Planning said the downside of the recommended plan versus the alternate plan is that it will be over the standard beyond 2010 so there may be more redistricting in 2012.

Board members were in agreement on the alternate plan for Patapsco.

Option D Polygon 126 from Fulton to Pointers Run

Mr. Drown said the strength of this option is that the 15% feed is eliminated in 2006. The weakness is in the capacity utilization rates which fall outside the standards between Fulton ES and Pointers Run ES.

Mr. Drown suggested taking this off the table.

Board members were in agreement to take this option off the table.

Option E - Fulton Redistricting from the West

Mr. Drown said Option E redistricts Fulton from the west. It takes Polygons 119, 114, and 194 for a total of 151 students. Students come out of Fulton and go into the new school. Polygons 193, 197, and 198 stay in Clarksville. This is how it differs from the recommendation. In 2008 Pointers Run will be at 89.9% which is slightly under the capacity utilization rate.

Under the recommendation Clarksville is underutilized. Mr. Drown said there is no benefit for this option. It does eliminate the feed from Pointers Run to Lime Kiln, but it substitutes that for Clarksville and it becomes 10.6%.

Mr. Kaufman asked what this option would look like if the students did not remain in Clarksville. Mr. Drown said, if the recommendation was left as is, the problem is with capacity utilization.

Ms. Gordon said she is concerned about the utilization of Clarksville. Clarksville would be at greater utilization than any of the other schools. It is the oldest and smallest school, and the least able to take more students.

Mrs. Watson suggested this option be taken off the table. Ms. Gordon, Mr. Kaufman, and Ms. Sigaty requested it be left for now pending further discussion.

Option E - Fulton Polygon 194

Mr. Drown said Polygon 194 is the same as the recommendation except that Polygon 194 comes out of Fulton and goes to the new Western ES. This was suggested because of the geographical fit. If not quite as many students from this area are redistricted to Pointers Run, the 12.5% feed is further eroded. Another downside is that in 2010 the new school would be up to 112.9% which is over the target of 110%. For those reasons the recommendation is not to consider this option.

Mrs. Watson asked how this impacts the standards set for capacity utilization. Mr. Drown said the standards of between 90% - 110% are not met in 2006 or 2007 at Fulton. In 2010 the new school would be above that standard at 112.9%.

Mrs. Watson summarized by saying it does not meet the standards for capacity utilization, but it does put children closer to their school. However, it also moves more children.

Board members were in agreement to take this option off the table.

Option E – Polygons 114, 119, and 194

Mrs. Watson noted that this option has capacity utilization problems, longer bus rides, and transportation expenses.

Mr. Drown said with Polygons 114, 119, 194 going to the new Western, it corrects the feed of less than 15% at Pointers Run into Lime Kiln but sets up another bad feed at 10.9% from Clarksville into Lime Kiln. In terms of capacity utilization it uses Clarksville at the target of 90%-110% but underutilizes Pointers Run.

Mr. Kaufman said that with Option E at Clarksville through 2011, the highest capacity is 101.5%. Mrs. Watson said it is longer bus rides and more transportation expense. Mr. Drown said the geographical fit is not as good.

Board members were in agreement to take this option off the table.

Mrs. Watson brought up the option of delaying the redistricting for a year. Mr. Drown summarized staff's position in that Fulton is projected to increase by 283 students between now and 2010. In the recommendation 138 students are being moved into Pointers Run. The redistricting in Fulton is in two phases. Phase 1 in 2006 and Phase 2 in 2010. If you take the 138 students out of Fulton now, that school will be under capacity by 2010. With a new school coming on line in 2006, this is the time to make the changes. That is why staff feels the redistricting of Fulton should take place in 2006.

Mrs. Mikulis said the hope from the community would be that a year from now there would be a better prediction of what is actually coming in terms of children in the known number of houses. Mrs. Watson said only 30% of the projection comes from Maple Lawn Farms. Ms. Sigaty noted that in this discussion single family attached homes have not been factored.

Mrs. Watson asked Board members if anyone wanted to consider delaying Fulton redistricting a year. Mr. Kaufman said no. Dr. Cousin added that many permutations have been investigated. The recommendation was based on many considerations. Delaying this decision does not gain anything because the same situation will occur a year or two from now. Board members were in agreement not to delay the redistricting.

Mr. Drown wanted Board members to be aware of the Doughoregan Manor property and the earliest this would come on is 2009. He wanted Board members to be aware of this particularly as they make decisions regarding Burleigh Manor and Manor Woods.

Option B – Polygon 170 Remains at Folly Quarter MS

Mr. Drown noted the following points with Option B:

1. Leaves Polygon 170 at Folly Quarter rather than redistricted to Mount View

2. It improves the feed from Folly Quarter to Marriotts Ridge to 13.4%, but it also creates a 9.1% feed of Manor Woods into Folly Quarter. Staff suggested that this option be removed from the table because it does not bring the feed up to standard.

Board members were in agreement to take this option off the table.

Option G - Folly Quarter/Marriotts Ridge "Feeder Fix"

Mr. Drown said Polygons 178 and 179 would remain at Manor Woods instead of being redistricted to Triadelphia.

Mr. Drown said at the middle school level these two polygons would be sent to Mount View. In order to make up for what Folly Quarter lost and providing help to Glenwood, Polygons 212 and 213 would come out of Glenwood and move into Folly Quarter.

At the high school level Polygons 180 and 181 would move from Marriotts Ridge to River Hill. The strength of this option is in the feeds. It fixes all the less-than-15% feeds, and it gives relief to Glenwood in 2006 rather than waiting for the new school to open in 2011. There are weaknesses as far as capacity utilization associated with Manor Woods. This option would be done in a phasing plan. The transportation costs would be \$58,000 per year for two years. It is staff's feeling that the recommendation has fewer weaknesses than this option, and staff feels the Board should stay with the recommendation.

Mr. Kaufman stated that he was uncomfortable with moving Polygons 212 and 213 because this was not discussed until after the public hearing. Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Mikulis and Ms. Gordon agreed with Mr. Kaufman.

Ms. Sigaty disagreed because this option does address a serious problem with the 7.8% feed. She added that she did not feel that the Board was compelled to make a decision at this point.

Mr. Drown suggested the option of allowing 9th and 10th grade students to continue at Marriotts Ridge, and allow those students in the small feed to open enroll at River Hill. Students would have to provide their own transportation. This could be allowed to go on indefinitely or until the feed is fixed.

Mrs. Watson summarized by saying let the students at Marriotts Ridge be allowed to stay. In addition, keep those polygons going to Marriotts Ridge although they would have a 7.8% feed. If any of those students wish to go from Folly Quarter to River Hill, they would be allowed to open enroll until the 7.8% feed is fixed with the opening of the new middle school. Mrs. Watson noted that under this plan capacity utilization is not good, but the feed is improved.

Ms. Sigaty questioned which schools will be over capacity in 2011 and will lead to needing a new middle school. Mr. Drown said Folly Quarter, Mount View, and Glenwood.

Mrs. Watson said there are two options which have a problem in the 7.8% feed. Option G has a problem with capacity utilization at some schools. Mr. Kaufman said he was not comfortable with switching a redistricting decision which is only a year old. He also expressed concern with equity in open enrollment. There are other polygons throughout the county that have feeds under 15%. If open enrollment is offered to children that are in schools under 15%, it should be in the Policy 1675.

Mrs. Watson noted that the majority of Board members are not comfortable with Option G this year. Ms. Sigaty felt that new ideas can come forward, and the public can have an opportunity to speak to the Board about any new options. She added that she would like to postpone the decision to December. Mrs. Watson said she is not comfortable with this option coming at the end of the process.

Mrs. Watson asked Board members if they were comfortable with Option G without moving Glenwood.

Ms. Gordon said she favors the recommended option and is not in agreement with delaying in order to add a public hearing. Mrs. Watson agreed. Mr. Kaufman said he prefers not to delay the decision and says he supported the recommended option.

Ms. Sigaty said Option G looks like a better option to her. She added that she would like to hear from the community that would be impacted by this decision.

Mrs. Watson noted the following choices:

1. Recommendation without the option for open enrollment at River Hill.
2. Option G including Glenwood but allowing a public process for Glenwood.

Mrs. Watson asked staff to prepare the motions for the recommendation and then the Board will discuss it again on Tuesday. If Board members vote in favor of Option G, that portion of the redistricting will have to be on a different timeframe. Board members were in agreement 4-1 with Ms. Gordon dissenting.

Mrs. Mikulis questioned the future direction on the Greenbridge polygons relative to Glenelg HS. Mr. Kaufman said the planning assumption is that an addition will be added onto Glenelg. Dr. Cousin mentioned that there is a recommendation to do nothing this year. All Board members were in agreement with this recommendation.

Adjournment: The chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

