

## **Executive Summary: AAC Alternative Plan Recommendations (post August 2017)**

The Attendance Area Committee (AAC) was reconvened by the Superintendent to consider recent changes to the long term HCPSS Capital Improvement Plan. Specifically, the AAC was to consider the recent approval of funding for high school # 13 with an accelerated completion date of 2022 and the possibility that high school # 13 would be located on the Landing Road site.

First, the AAC consensus is that comprehensive redistricting should occur starting in 2018 at all levels and the final AAC plan dated 8/22/2017 is the best plan to accomplish this comprehensive redistricting. However, given an approved completion date of 2022 for the new high school at either the Mission Road or Landing Road site, the AAC has identified alternatives from the 8/22/2017 plan that could be considered.

### Recap of 8/22/2017 Final AAC Plan

Our proposed plan results in moving 6,446 students in an effort to improve school seat utilization, improve FARM distribution and increase diversity across schools to be more in-line with the overall county distribution. We are tremendously proud of our final proposed plan and the results it drives. We recognize that it is not perfect, but in doing so we also recognize there is no perfect plan to be designed. We also realize that certain communities will be less than happy with the results driven by what impact it has to their immediate household. As parents and residents we respect that concern but also felt the need to face the reality that in total there are enough permanent seats for all students but without impacting some students seat utilization will remain unacceptably high in some of the schools and equally unacceptably low at others. We are confident our plan proposes an equitable and achievable change that advances progress against the policy 6010 objectives. Furthermore, it does so at an improved level compared to the Feasibility Study.

As stated above, our plan requires moving 6,446 students or 11% of all students. However, that level of movement is 2,350 or 27% less than proposed in the Feasibility Study. Furthermore, the number of moves at each level is significantly reduced with a 29% reduction at the ES level, 10% at the MS level and 29% at the HS level. Despite fewer moves, our plan drives an increase from an average of 4.5 years of target utilization to 7.5 years – a 67% increase. Compared to the feasibility study, our plan improves the years that schools within target utilization by 4% (7.5 v 7.2 years). In fact, compared to the current state, our plan generates increases of 71% at the ES level, 45% at the MS level and 90% at the HS level. We also outpace the Feasibility Study at the ES & MS level while are flat to the study at the HS level.

Additionally, we improve the years in compliance at 42 schools with a decrease in only 12. We also only move students at 45 schools. Finally, we maintain considerably more school community continuity. For instance, our plan moves fewer students at 32 schools and more from only 18 compared to the Feasibility Study. The Feasibility Study results in 14 schools

maintaining less than 70% of their current student community compared to 5 in our plan. As an example, at the HS level the Feasibility Study maintains only 38% of the current school population at Atholton HS while our lowest continuity is 69% at Long Reach HS. We felt strongly that maintaining school communities was an important need.

Our plan does result in two additional small feeds than the feasibility study (19 v 17) but still represents a decrease from the current state (22). Furthermore, our plan results in only 5 very small feeds compared to 9 in the Feasibility Study and 14 currently. While we aimed to reduce small feeds, in the end we felt moving far fewer students while improving the number of small and very small feeds represents a very desirable outcome even if there are remaining small feeds.

In terms of FARM distribution, our plan reduces the standard deviation across schools by 35 BPs from 19.2% TO 18.8%. In reviewing the policy target of driving a 25% reduction in deviation we feel that is not a feasibly achievable target. In fact, to achieve that target would require large scale cross-county busing. However, we are encouraged by the improvement achieved in our plan with minimal student moves compared to other current options. In terms of demographic distribution, our plan reduces the variation across groups at all three levels and across all demographic groups. The result is a more diverse student base distribution.

In conclusion, we proudly present our plan which results in the following significant improvements that we'd like to bring to your attention:

- Moves far fewer students than the Feasibility Study;
- Improves school utilization, which is increased by an average of 3 years – better than the Feasibility Study;
- Maintains current school communities at a much higher level than the Feasibility Study;
- Improves FARM and demographic distribution of students resulting in a more diverse student base aligned with overall county levels; and
- Improves small & very small feeds compared to the existing attendance areas

### Recommended changes to the 8/22 Final AAC Plan

Although the AAC consensus that the 8/22 plan is still the best plan for comprehensive redistricting, the AAC identified possible reversion to the 8/22 plan based on a 2022 new high school opening date at either the Mission Road or Landing Road site.

To consider possible alternatives, the AAC first identified likely attendance areas at the time of high school # 13 opening in 2022. For the Mission Road site, the new high school attendance area would likely include the attendance areas aligning with Elkridge ES, Ducketts Lane ES and New ES # 42. For the Landing Road site, the new high school attendance area would likely include the attendance areas aligning with Elkridge Landing MS and Thomas Viaduct MS east of MD 100. In both scenarios, Howard High School and Long Reach High School would see relief by sending the southern end of their attendance areas, south of I-95, to the new high

school. In the Landing Road case, Howard High School would also be relieved north of I-95 by capturing the entire Rockburn ES attendance area. In the Mission Road case, Long Reach High School is relieved enough to possibly capture the Rockburn ES attendance area from Howard High School. In either case, Howard High School may be offloaded exactly the same (i.e. Rockburn ES and all attendance areas south).

Given that Howard High School could be offloaded exactly the same in either the Mission Road or Landing Road case, there is an opportunity to implement a common approach to defining the 2022 Howard High School attendance area. In either the Landing Road or Mission Road case, Howard High School could retain the Ilchester ES and Phelps Luck ES attendance areas and push north into the Worthington ES area. By pushing north up MD 103 into the Worthington ES attendance area we can expect relief for both Mount Hebron HS and Centennial HS attendance areas in 2022. This opportunity to relieve Mount Hebron HS and Centennial HS attendance areas in 2022 opens the door to alternatives to the current AAC plan. When considering which polygons to prioritize, the AAC feels that Mount Hebron HS should be prioritized over Centennial HS. The reason for this is that Mount Hebron HS, in the Worthington ES area, has a greater distance to travel and Mount Hebron HS has limited opportunity to push west in future redistricting without impacting walk zones. In addition, reverting Mount Hebron HS and Centennial HS areas that were moved into Marriotts Ridge HS in the 8/22 plan provides the opportunity to revert Marriotts Ridge HS to Glenelg HS and River Hill HS, reducing the effect of the western shifts.

The AAC recommends the following revisions to the 8/22 Final Plan to potentially accommodate an additional northeastern high school:

- Revert all Mount Hebron HS to Marriotts Ridge HS moves;
- Revert some of the Centennial HS to Marriotts Ridge HS moves;
- Revert all Marriotts Ridge HS to Glenelg and River Hill HS moves; and
- Revert or Implement any Middle School and Elementary School moves necessary to support the high school reversions, with due consideration to establishing strong feeds.

These changes result in a total of 5,656 students moved, a reduction of 655 students from the AAC Final plan, 3140 fewer students moved than the Feasibility Study, and only 10% of all students. With the execution of this plan and the opening of HS #13, no HS student will be redistricted more than once. The exact definition of these moves are provided in the 9/20/2017 Alternative Scenario plan.

#### Considerations for BOE:

##### 1. Exemptions

The AAC strongly recommends that, rather than delaying high school redistricting until 2022, during which capacity utilizations continue to exponentially soar across all levels within the county, the scaled back AAC 9/20/2017 comprehensive plan be implemented with

exemptions. Specifically, the AAC recommends the following exemption considerations for 2018 redistricting:

- Rising 5<sup>th</sup> graders
- Rising 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- Rising 10<sup>th</sup> graders
- Rising 11<sup>th</sup> graders
- Rising 12<sup>th</sup> graders
- Trailing siblings at the high school level

## 2. Elementary School Only Plan

Although the AAC strongly recommends comprehensive redistricting at all levels, the County Executive has requested that High School redistricting be delayed until 2022. If there is a decision to not redistrict at the high school level until 2022, the AAC discussed an elementary school only plan. This idea focused solely on opening ES # 42 and relieving capacity utilizations above 120%. *However, since this was outside the scope described by the Superintendent, it was not fully tested, nor was a consensus recommendation developed.* That said, this idea represents the absolute *minimum* redistricting for 2018, and does not: (1) resolve county-wide capacity utilizations inequities, (2) improve or promote strong, consistent feeds at all school levels, and (3) balance FARMS ratios.

## 3. Program location/creation

Program relocation/creation was discussed at all schooling levels and especially in the northern region. The AAC is concerned that this type of redistricting action would not move enough students out of overcrowded schools and because of growth forecasted throughout the county many schools are at risk for capacity issues and the addition of an existing or newly created program may add to the capacity concerns at the receiving schools in the out years. Regional special programs should be expected to draw equally from other schools and, therefore, should not be viewed as an alternative to redistricting. On the contrary, balancing school populations should be done independently from and in advance of the creation of special programs in select locations.

The AAC put a considerable amount of effort at the request of the Oakland Mills community into trying to find a way to better balance the FARMS numbers between TSES and SFES. Ideally, polygon 96 should be assigned to TSES; however, this is impossible until the planned rebuild of TSES with increased capacity is completed. It was anticipated by the AAC that these students would be reassigned after the capital project was completed; however, the creation of a regional program at this location could make that impossible.

#### 4. Open Enrollment

The utilization of Open Enrollment was discussed by the AAC as an avenue for balancing utilization across the schools in the county however; the AAC does not feel that enough students would take advantage of this opportunity especially at the high school level. This assessment is based on community feedback that high school-aged students and families want to stay with their close peer groups and neighborhoods. The AAC is also concerned about the logistics of transportation at all school levels that is necessary for true Open Enrollment to be successful.

Best Regards,  
2017 Attendance Area Committee