

NE Elementary Community Boundary Study Public Email Log: 11/08/17 to 11/13/17

Date: 11/08/2017, 2255 hrs

Name: Kat Saur

Good Evening, Thank you for all of your hard work through this process. I live in the Fieldcrest community off of Allender Road with my husband and 2 children. We are currently zoned for Vincent Farm Elementary. Even though I love the school, I believe it would be best if we were moved to Chapel Hill Elementary due to the concerns below.

- Safety with so many students at VFES
- availability of resources & space due to number of students at VFES
- proximity to 2 other neighborhoods (we should stay together- New Forge & Allender neighborhoods)
- possibility of the VFES being redistricted for a 3rd time in the future
- for a stronger possibility of our children going to Perry Hall Middle and High which are good schools we were told we would go to when we moved here. Thank you for your time and consideration! Katy

Date: 11/09/2017, 0957 hrs

Name: Linda Orzolek

Comments: I strongly support options B & C for the proposed redistricting for both personal and practical reasons. Personally, option A changes our school. I have spoken to my 2nd grader about the possibility of her having to switch schools and she is heartbroken over the thought. She loves her school and the friends she has made there. Practically, option A breaks up our neighborhood, which is already pretty convoluted. Driving down Rt. 1, you would pass a Joppa View district, then enter a Perry Hall district, then go back to Joppa View. You can go down the same street and switch districts. Considering how many parents rely on neighbors and friends to help get their children to and from bus stops, this could cause great hardships on a lot of families. Options B & C set the boundaries along main roads which is far more logical and what people are used to. Option A also impacts the most students but has the same results. We should aim to impact as few of these children as possible.

Date: 11/09/2017, 1108 hrs

Name: Jonathan Haag

Committee Members,

There appears to be a large volume of emails discussing the overcrowding of all the elementary schools except for the Northeast Elementary School. Everyone seems very willing to overcrowd the Northeast Elementary School to lessen their burden. However, this is simply trading one problem for another. It should be noted, that unlike the other schools such as Chapel Hill and Vincent Farm, Northeast does not have the ability to utilize mobile units. Placing this school at or over capacity on day one is a recipe for disaster.

As mentioned during the meetings, these projections on the maps can be wrong. If that is the case, Northeast Elementary will be set up for failure on day one. While it is not ideal, both Vincent Farm and Chapel Hill have the ability and now a proven track record of success running over capacity. While this is certainly not desired, there are solutions which can alleviate some of the overcrowding at Chapel Hill and Vincent Farm, without placing Northeast Elementary in danger of having overcrowded classrooms.

I fully support providing relief to the other schools. However, the amount of relief that has been discussed is quite large. Some of this is based off of projections of future development. However, we will be redoing this in 2 years when the school at Ridge Rd is completed too. Should we not err on the side of caution for the new school? If the projections are off just a bit, then we are not talking about an overcrowded school that needs to utilize mobile units, but will be discussing overcrowded and overflowing classrooms, which is a completely different problem.

If PB 30 is simply placed back into the Chapel Hill School District it will have a minimal impact on any of the options outlined but the committee. Chapel Hill will still receive some relief from its current enrollment, and this will have no impact of the options for Vincent Farm. This will then utilize Honeygo Blvd as a major infrastructure barrier for a geographic boundary, rather than gerrymandering around such. PB 30 has legitimate safety concerns associated with pulling onto Honeygo Blvd and then needing to cross two lanes to make a left onto Joppa Rd. There have been suggestions to re-route the buses to within 0.1 miles of Chapel Hill to alleviate such concerns. This just all seems a bit too much. We are willing to re-route children either miles out of their way, reroute them essentially in front of Chapel Hill, or place them at increased risk of harm to keep them from attending a school that some of the children will be able to see out of their front doors. This type of exclusion appears motivated by other factors, rather than simply alleviating concerns of overcrowding in their respective school zones.

PB 30 brings a wealth of diversity to Chapel Hill, far exceeding its current percentage of minority enrollment. We believe that our diversity has enriched and will continue to enrich the public education that has been provided to the children of Chapel Hill.

I am also concerned by the public emails that have singled out committee members for presenting new options. This is their duty. They were all tasked with taking the feedback presented at the public meeting and utilizing it to revise/refine the three options. This meeting was not simply pick the best of the three shown. I believe the personal attacks that have been levied by some on this email forum are unwarranted, uncalled for, and call for a public apology by the sender. These types of personal attacks, which border on the level of cyber bullying, only serve to dissuade committee members from freely expressing thoughts and opinions in the future, which would be a disservice to their post. I feel these emails should be removed from the public email logs. Thank you, Jonathan Haag

Date: 11/09/2017, 1357 hrs

Name: Edward Dorsch

Comments: I vote for plan "B"

Date: 11/09/2017, 2016 hrs

Name: Jennifer Johnson

Comments: I do not see how option A will lower Gunpowder Elementary's population. I think option B is best for all schools. It seems to lower all populations fairly. It also populates the 700 seat new school which has much more room than the other schools in Northeast.

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Date: 11/09/2017, 2109 hrs

Name: Jami Palmerino

As a concerned parent and active PTA member at Vincent Farm, I have watched every meeting online for the current Northeast Elementary boundary study and also the one for Victory Villa. After reading through the public emails, I am troubled by recent opinions that suggest leaving VFES at maximum capacity due to the potential for relief in a future boundary study. This has already been a stressful process for our school going through 2 separate boundary studies in less than 1 year. Currently, VFES is NOT one of the schools that is listed to be a part of the next boundary study for the new Ridge Road school, and I hope it stays that way because 3 boundary studies in 2 years for a single school is excessive in my opinion. We are doing a huge disservice to the students of the largest elementary school in the county by leaving it overcrowded for the next few years, while banking on the slim chance that a large number of students will be moved in 2020, when so far there has no indication from BCPS that it is even a possibility. Vincent Farm needs relief now, and we need to look out for the safety of the children. That is the reason that we are part of this study, so that overcrowding in our school can be addressed now. With currently 930+ registered students per the principals report at the last PTA meeting, our current enrollment is way underestimated in the data charts. Our entire 4th grade is already outside in trailers, and with the recent approved housing developments in our area those numbers are only going to skyrocket.

I am also highly upset that one or two members of the committee think they should be able to create entire maps on their own without any input from any of the other committee members. While I understand that committee feedback is crucial, that is what Mr. Cropper was brought in to do. I would hate to see what happened with the Victory Villa boundary study happen again here... where the final approved map by the BOE was a last ditch effort by a select few, without any input from the group of devoted committee members that put in countless hours of their time and effort to look out for the best interests of ALL the students. I appreciate the hard work the committee has done as a whole and I support the current proposed maps A, B, and C. Thank you, Jami Palmerino

Date: 11/10/2017, 1147 hrs

Name: Stefanie Elizabeth

Boundary Committee,

We must keep a focus on safety as we go through this process. I have heard from many parents involved in this process who seem to have a focus on the fear of change and leaving a school that has become their "home." As a parent, I completely understand. I love my children's school. Vincent Farm has state of the art facilities, exceptional teachers, and an amazing community, but my children deserve to be in a school that is not over capacity and not packed with over 900 other students. We have to remember that this process is to help keep our children safe and provide them with an education. We cannot lose sight of the big picture and focus on just a single community or person or committee member and their wants.

I have to address some of the recent suggestions of leaving Vincent Farm Elementary School over capacity or at near capacity. It is a well-known fact that all Northeast schools are overcrowded, but there is a big difference in 700 students or 800 students and 930 students. When you calculate the total number of people in Vincent Farm at any given time, it is over 1,000. This large number is another concern on top of the fact that this puts the school overcapacity. I think that it would be eye opening for many of the committee members and residents in this redistricting process to see a day in the life of a Vincent Farm student or staff member. Can you imagine the transition to special areas? During this time, there are 12-13 classes in the hallway moving to and from special. That's over 250 students in the hallways and trying to navigate the stairs. If the special area is around a lunchtime (which spans for almost 3 hours), then that could mean up to 18 classes in the halls transitioning. Think about the situation this causes with bathrooms. We have 3 sets of bathrooms for a school of 931 students. What about recess? We have 37 classes with 3 recess areas available because we had to use the 4th space as the site for the 7 portable units. What about arrival and dismissal? There are 22 buses coming and going to school each day, and that does not take into account the daycare buses/vans and parent pick-up/drop-offs that happen every day. The parking lot is closed to capacity with staff alone, so trying to facilitate parking for the families of 931 students is an impossible task. Vincent Farm has done an outstanding job of keeping our staff and students safe and maintaining an orderly environment, but if we keep the building at 90% or more of our capacity with the developments that are going to be built within the next few months or year we cannot guarantee what safety concerns that will bring about for VFES.

As a county we have to make informed decisions based on all the available information. We know that there are more housing developments not only planned for the boundary area of VFES, but we have housing developments already under construction which will bring new students to VFES as early as this spring. It is naïve of us as residents or those making decisions to pretend that planned housing developments will just vanish. The houses on Reames road are already under construction (<http://www.ryanhomes.com/file-grab/989da723-589e-48bb-ab4b-2abba5c83033> 66 homes according to the site map) – see attached picture of construction. This neighborhood is nothing compared to the neighborhood being built off of MD-43, Greenleigh at Crossroads. I cannot even begin to determine the number of townhomes and single family homes being built, but here is the site plan- <http://www.greenleighliving.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/GreenleighNVRSitePlanForWebsiteSept28.pdf>. Again, we have all been discussing about the importance of looking at the big picture and safety. The Perry Hall and White Marsh area have been very vocal over the past year discussing the situation at Perry Hall Middle School. Let's be bold with this redistricting and think about the next year or even past that and what this will mean to schools in our area. Vincent Farm Elementary School is the largest in BCPS and larger or the same size as almost all of our middle schools in BCPS. Is this what is best for children? Especially children from the ages of 4-12. I don't think any of us can honestly say this is the safest decision to leave VFES at a capacity over 90% knowing that the school will reach and exceed capacity within a year.

It has also been stated that Vincent Farm should then be considered for redistricting for the new elementary school or with southeast schools. The Northeast Boundary Study is the second redistricting that VFES is going through within a year. I ask those committee members and families involved to reflect on the emotions and feelings of this process. This is our school's second time within a year going through it. It is the second time our students have had to think about whether or not they will be at VFES next year or if their friends will be at VFES next year. It is the second time that the staff is having to think about whether or not there will be positions cut. There is an emotional impact of redistricting as I think everyone involved can say they are experiencing. The VFES community is willing to go through this process for a second time because relief is needed now, and the community knows that losing some of our students and teachers, that it will be sad, it is what is best for all students. Is it fair though to not address this issue of capacity at VFES and to put the school and community through a third process within a matter of 2-3 years? I ask the committee members, school board, and other families involved to think of the impact that will have on students, families, and staff.

It is very easy to get caught up in the wants of your family or your community, but we all need to step back and think about what is best for the children of BCPS. Will you put the students first or will you put your own wants first?

Thank you for hearing my voice and the voice of the VFES community. Stefanie Wright