

REPORT OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Tuesday, November 12, 2002

The work session was called to order by President Donald L. Arnold at 7:03 p.m. In addition to President Arnold, the following Board members were present: Ms. Sarah D. Bormel, Ms. Phyllis E. Ettinger, Mr. Thomas G. Grzymiski, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, Ms. Janese Murray, Mr. James R. Sasiadek, and Mr. James E. Walker. Also present were members of staff and the media.

Mr. Arnold welcomed everyone and thanked Ms. Rita Fromm, Executive Director of Planning and Support Operations, Mr. Daniel Scroggs, Administrative Support-Technology, and Mr. Greg Barlow, Executive Director of Technology, for their hard work in preparing for tonight's video presentation. Mr. Arnold introduced Ms. Fromm.

Mr. Teplitzky and Mr. Hayden entered the room at 7:05 p.m.

Ms. Fromm introduced Ms. Carolyn Staskiewicz, Project Manager with DeJong and Associates, and Mr. Matthew Cropper, GIS Analyst with DeJong and Associates. Ms. Staskiewicz and Mr. Cropper made a video presentation that supplied information about the DeJong firm, the timeline, and the process used in the study.

It was noted that the student population in the Northwest Area is expected to increase by about 1,300 by 2010. There are 7,098 single-family detached homes planned for development in this area. That could generate up to 4,258 students. Ms. Staskiewicz stated there were 394 births in 2001 within the New Town Elementary School boundary, which would mean there would be twice as many kindergarteners in 2006 as there are currently.

In looking at boundary adjustments, the one where students were moved the least and caused minimum amount of change resulted in no less than eight (8) elementary schools being affected and 500 students that would be moved. DeJong recommended the Board consider building an elementary school, perhaps on the Woodholme site.

Short-term options (1-2 years) to relieve New Town's overcrowding include:

- Annexing approximately 150 New Town Elementary students to Franklin and Glyndon Elementary Schools,
- Use of portable classrooms,
- Double shifts/split sessions,
- Year round school, and
- The use of alternative spaces i.e., classes at community centers.

It was noted that the above are options, but they are not being recommended.

Long-term recommendations include:

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- Construction of a new elementary school and consideration of building a second elementary school,
- Conducting a district-wide boundary analysis, and
- Developing a district-wide facility plan.

Mr. Cropper reviewed two possible boundary adjustment options. The first involved three pockets of students. Some students from New Town would be shifted to Winand, which would place Winand over capacity, therefore, creating a domino effect. Some students would be sent from Winand to Church Lane, and some students from Church Lane would be transferred to Randallstown. A second pocket of youngsters would be transferred to Fort Garrison and a few Fort Garrison students would be transferred to Pinewood. The third pocket of students would be transferred to Owings Mills.

The second option would involve shifting boundaries at all 18 Northwest Area schools.

With regard to Special Transfer students and option #2, Ms. Staskiewicz noted that there are still not enough seats if everyone went to their home school.

Mr. Grzynski asked Ms. Staskiewicz if any consideration was given to students in housing units in areas that may be prone to high turnover, such as starter homes or apartments. Ms. Staskiewicz stated that information was not considered in this evening's presentation, but that it did figure into the enrollment projections done by the school system. Ms. Carter, Specialist in Boundaries/Enrollment, noted that the Office of Strategic Planning has mapped all apartment complexes in the Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast Areas. She also stated that there is sizable housing planned in the Reisterstown Road corridor, the Liberty Road corridor, and the New Town area that has not been mapped because permits have not been issued.

Ms. Ettinger inquired as to how many students over the state rated capacity are in the Northwest Area. Ms. Staskiewicz stated that based on Baltimore County Public Schools' projections, the school system is not yet over capacity, but will be over capacity within the next year. She also stated there are only two Northwest schools that are not over capacity, which provides room for about 150 students. Through 2010, there are projected to be 11,320 students in Northwest Area elementary schools.

Mr. Teplitzky stated this information needs to be presented to the State and County funding authorities, since they must approve new construction. He noted that construction of a new building, from planning and design to occupancy, can take 5-6 years.

Mr. Hayden expressed the need to educate parents of the possible moves and of the necessity to address this before the next school year.

Mr. Arnold stated that when you include the ramifications of the *No Child Left Behind Act* and housing, it becomes more important to speak with elected officials to address this problem.

Mr. Teplitzky shared his anticipation of questions from State and County officials regarding district-wide issues and stated we have to be able to show that this is not just a Northwest Area issue. He suggested expanding the study to other areas of Baltimore County.

Mr. Walker shared his concern of the out of control overcrowding problem and noted that the construction of a new school on the Woodholme site would not alleviate the problem. Mr. Walker also noted that modulars might be an immediate solution. Ms. Fromm agreed that more seats are needed in the Northwest Area and stated the school system does not have a large site bank.

Mr. Teplitzky agreed that modular additions might be a more desirable option. These buildings have their own facilities and have a covered or closed-in walkway to the existing building. Also the cost is considerably less than new construction. Mr. Teplitzky stated that if there is a short-term solution that involves the least disruption of moving students from one school to another, it should be considered.

Ms. Ettinger cautioned against creating oversized elementary schools. She reminded her colleagues that when large numbers of relocatables and modulars are placed on school sites, there is no increase in the size of the library, cafeteria, and other support service areas.

Mr. Grzymiski inquired about other available building sites in the Northwest Area. Ms. Carter noted the Randall Ridge site in Randallstown, but explained the site is not viable for construction. Mr. Brocato, Data Analyst in the Office of Strategic Planning, stated that most of our site bank properties were purchased in the 40's, 50's, and 60's, when educational requirements for building schools were different. Many of the sites no longer meet today's requirements, and many are in protected wetland areas, where it is not feasible to build.

Mr. Arnold asked Board members and the public to contact Ms. Fromm with any questions about the information presented tonight.

The work session was concluded at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Hairston
Secretary-Treasurer