Greetings,

I am writing to echo J. Weaver's comments from 11/11/2019. I do not believe any of the proposed options solve the needs of students at Pleasant Plains. We need additional seats via a new school building, not by moving a few students around. I have copied J. Weaver's concerns below because they are my own as well:

"I have concerns with all three of the options based on my questions about the following: 1. If the boundaries are changed and PPES drops below 115% capacity, will it be ineligible to receive any capital funding for renovations or expansions? The core spaces of the school are way too small for even 100% capacity. In addition, there have been no significant renovations outside of air conditioning and the kindergarten wing since the school was built. It needs an update with more bathrooms, a bigger cafeteria, and a bigger front office among other things.

2. If the PPES enrollment drops below 700, then will we lose the additional staffing that we fought so hard for? We are a high needs Title 1 school and our staffing shouldn’t be based on the same formula as less needy schools. And when I say the additional staffing is needed, I’m talking about positions that Title 1 funds can’t necessarily pay for like Social Workers, Administrators, clerical, etc.

3. The boundary study is flawed to begin with because the numbers being used aren’t reality! Although the state requires you to use the Sept 30 enrollment numbers, you have access to more current data. Why can’t you use that? Everything from the enrollment last spring to the current October enrollment would be a better snapshot with which to make decisions. Couple that with the fact that the enrollment capacity on these charts is based on a 2019 state rated capacity study but the enrollment numbers are 2018 and the whole thing is disingenuous. 4. Doing a boundary change now would limit potential future changes. With the residential growth and revitalization of the Towson area, enrollment in many of our surrounding schools is going to increase past their current over-capacity numbers. If a goal is to ensure that no student is impacted by a boundary change more than once in their schooling, how is BCPS going to address the inevitable overcrowding in the next few years? Changing a boundary now will make it harder to move students around in the near future."

Thank you.

Date: 11/12/2019, 1402 hrs

M. Chehade

Good Afternoon,

I think several things need to also be brought up and taken into consideration as to the impact to HES

• The community already suffers from a lack of parking during social events and sporting events at the school. Often times driveways are blocked and traffic parking laws are ignored by those "visiting" the school.

• There isn't room for more parking at the school unless they place a lot down on Valley Ct where lots of trees were removed, but I'm sure residents won't approve of more blacktop and noise, many are already fed up with the constant horn honks from car doors being locked.

• Speeding and Traffic on Charmuth is already at capacity, adding more buses and carpoolers will cause even more issues.

• Charmuth Rd is in deplorable condition, it MUST be redone, potholes everywhere and the road is literally crumbling.

• Classroom Trailers are not wanted at HES, putting it close to 100 percent capacity will mean that trailers will be adding sooner than later...what is the long term plan here? I that the possibility of taking away even more green space from the community is going to raise some angry voices

The capacity relief is going to spread out the small human numbers but no one is considering the impact it will have to the communities around the school. The capacity for HES was created to consider growth the neighborhoods within the current boundaries, it doesn't take into account the additional traffic that will be added with expanded boundaries

Concerned Community Member

Would appreciate the committee consider the impact to neighborhoods next to the schools

Date: 11/13/2019, 1519 hrs

M. Ganter

Dear Ms. Causey and members of the Pleasant Plains Boundary Study Committee,

Because there was not sufficient space provided in the study to leave comments, I am writing this email and trust that you will get it in the hands of decision makers. As a Hampton Elementary parent for the next dozen years, I am very invested in finding an appropriate solution to the problem of overcrowding at Pleasant Plains Elementary that does not overwhelm Hampton or any other schools. Unfortunately, I do not believe any of the options presented in this boundary study fit the bill.

First, despite beginning in mid-September 2019, the boundary study uses enrollment numbers from the 2018-2019 school year. Currently, Hampton enrollment is around 605 students in this 2019-20 school year. Given this, any of the proposed options would put Hampton itself over the state-rated capacity for the 2020-21 school year. Let's not alleviate an overcrowding problem at one school by creating one at another.

Second, it doesn't make sense to dramatically enlarge the area zoned for Hampton as proposed in any of the study's 3 options for several reasons.

1. Doing so does not take into account new housing currently under construction in Towson, which includes hundreds of units and is already zoned for Hampton. Upon completion of this new housing, enrollment will already be increased, further pushing Hampton Elementary towards - or over - capacity.

2. Several schools are closer to the current Pleasant Plains zone: Oakleigh, Stoneleigh, Rodgers Forge, Harford Hills, Villa Cresta, Pine Grove and Cromwell Valley Elementary school are all at least as close (or closer!) and should also be considered to provide relief to Pleasant Plains. Hampton Elementary and Halstead alone should not be expected to alleviate the overcrowding.

3. Families formerly zoned for Pleasant Plains or Halstead may have difficulty accessing Hampton. Even on regular school days when busing is provided, students would face a longer bus ride and journey past several closer schools on the way to Hampton. Events at other times (ex: evening PTA/school events like back to school night, teacher conferences, and school weather or emergency closures) could prove hard or impossible to get to for families without reliable transportation. Hampton is further than their formerly zoned

Date: 11/12/2019, 1245 hrs

K. Williams

Pleasant Plains ES Capacity Relief Boundary Study Public Email Log: 11/12/19 to 11/17/19

Source: Boundary Study Inbox (boundarystudy@bcps.org) unless otherwise noted
Prepared by the Baltimore County Public Schools
Office of Strategic Planning, November, 2019
I am a proud graduate of this system – Hampton ES, Ridgely MS and Towson HS – and would like to see it continue to thrive. I will continue to NOT remain one of the most highly sought-after public school systems in the region, or even the country. Instead, it will implode.

Continue to simply react to enrollment and overcrowding issues instead of planning ahead with concrete, long-term solutions, our county will was 131.04 percent,” yet FIVE years after it was identified as a potential issue, we are finally “reacting” to this now out-of-control problem. If we “Since 2014, Pleasant Plains Elementary has experienced a steady increase in enrollment. As of September 30, 2018, the utilization of the school was at 93% capacity! From a sheer #s perspective, this does not make sense to me. (I took this info directly from their profiles on BCPS’s website.) Hampton’s was 88% as of 2018-2019; and is therefore equal to or at greater capacity than any of these three! Then there is Halstead, which was at 93% capacity! From a sheer #s perspective, this does not make sense to me.

I encourage the Baltimore County Public School Board to vote down these proposed boundary changes and instead look for another solution that takes into account all the available schools, geographic considerations, school succession plans, new housing being constructed, and population trends in this area. Perhaps that looks like a major elementary school boundary revision in the entire northwest section of Baltimore County? Even if it takes a few years, we can do better than a quick-fix like the options proposed in this boundary study that will result in another band-aid a few years down the road. BCPS would be best served by adopting a proactive stance on problem solving for this and other school capacity matters.

Thank you for your consideration,
M. Ganter, BCPS Parent

Date: 11/14/2019, 1017 hrs
L. Houliaras

Dear Boundary Study Committee,
First of all I’d like to say that a study like this brings up many complicated issues, and I realize there is no “easy” answer for any of them. I want to thank you for all you have done so far and continue to do to on behalf of our students and our public school system as a whole as you work to find the best solution.

Next, I’d like to ask a few questions that I couldn’t find addressed on the boundary study website or reports:

1) Why were only Hampton and Halstead chosen as the only options to relieve the overcrowding issue at PPES? More specifically, I could not find answers as to why Harford Hills, Oakleigh, and Cromwell were NOT considered as “finalists.” As of 2018-2019’s school year, their capacities were 78%, 85% and 88%, respectively. Hampton’s was 88% as of 2018-2019; and is therefore equal to or at greater capacity than any of these three! Then there is Halstead, which was at 93% capacity! From a sheer #s perspective, this does not make sense to me.

2) Was construction of new apartment buildings in the Towson area and how this will affect enrollment taken into consideration in this study? If so, what research was done and projections made?

I do have many concerns with this study. I think some of these are out of its specific scope and goals, but that is one of my main problems with the study: it is WAY too short-sighted and is only a “quick fix” that is not going to work long-term without a subsequent plan. We need to be considering much broader, longer-term solutions than these options allow. Here is why:

1) I would be in favor of this boundary change if it was a temporary solution with a more permanent plan to back it up. However, I understand that typically boundary changes are not easily altered (understandably so). Given the large service area that any of the options Hampton will expand to cover, it makes me worried for the future that Hampton will end up with a much larger enrollment than was ever intended, and it will in turn be overcrowded in a few years.

2) Regarding Cromwell, I believe using the school to its full capacity to alleviate overcrowding is MUCH more important than maintaining its status as a magnet school.

3) The elementary schools in this north/northeastern section of the county were mostly built in the 1950’s-1960’s. On this coverage map, there has been no new construction since the late 1960s. We are trying to work with schools that were intended for much lower capacities 50+ years ago. We need to build one (or a few!) new elementary school(s) to fill the gap between then and now and keep overcrowding from continuing to be an issue that is only temporarily fixed with a boundary change band-aid.

4) Enrollment is going to continue to grow because of the residences that are being built in our area. We need to press our county lawmakers to discourage these massive apartment complexes that continue to pop up on every available piece of land, and/or to pass a law enforcing the builders/developers to pay an infrastructure tax upon adding a new building in which residences are included. Our current county school system cannot support the potential enrollment #s these apartments/condos will equate to.

It alarms me that this study’s first background report from September 12th’s meeting states: “Since 2014, Pleasant Plains Elementary has experienced a steady increase in enrollment. As of September 30, 2018, the utilization of the school was 131.04 percent,” yet FIVE years after it was identified as a potential issue, we are finally “reacting” to this now out-of-control problem. If we continue to simply react to enrollment and overcrowding issues instead of planning ahead with concrete, long-term solutions, our county will NOT remain one of the most highly sought-after public school systems in the region, or even country. Instead, it will implode.

I am a proud graduate of this system – Hampton ES, Ridgely MS and Towson HS – and would like to see it continue to thrive. I will continue to send out these SOS messages for as often as I am able until someone hears me. I am committed to helping and looking for solutions so we can be the best we can be.

I would ask you to pass my comments onto the Board of Education and any other pertinent decision makers in this process. I can be reached via this email address or via phone at 410-736-1811 for further discussion.

Thank you,
Sincerely,
L. Houliaras