

APS High School Boundaries Q&A Notes October 19, 2016 (Wakefield High School)

How likely will your recommendations be implemented and passed by the board?

- The board wants to hear what the community has to say. They will review the feedback provided in developing their decision. The board feels that it is important to go through this process to get community input.

Will you consider socio-economic and racial disparity between schools?

- Socio-economic status is something that we will be looking at and presenting to the board in each scenario.

Is APS considering moving the IB program from Washington & Lee?

It is a more complicated issue than simply moving the program and there are no current plans to undertake this at this point.

Are class sizes the same at all high schools?

While exact class sizes may vary slightly within a school and across schools for different courses, there is a general high school planning factor of 25 students with some classes above that number and some below it.

This past year my daughter's counselors at W&L said they were seeing more kids than ever – probably due to overcrowding.

- Overcrowding is why we are here. We want to make sure the crowding is balanced and that schools are not over capacity. We added 300 seats at W& L this past summer. We are about to add 300 seats to Wakefield, and then 300 seats at Yorktown in the summer of 2018.

There is a brand new school being built in Rosslyn - why can't it be used to serve the overcrowding?

- That school is being built to move a choice program out of the Stratford building to address crowding at the middle school level.

Where are the new seats for 2022 coming from?

- That has not yet been decided. It takes 3-4 years to build a school. That decision will be made between now and 2018. After the high school redesign process is completed and boundaries for the new middle school and new elementary school are determined, there will be a process to determine where the 1300 new high school seats will be located and what that school or program will look like.

Are these boundaries permanent? Will changes that you make this process change in 2020?

- APS will be making additional decisions regarding high school enrollment including possible new boundaries 2 years prior to

opening a new school. So any changes we make now would be in place at least until that time.

Can you talk to the plan to add 1300 seats?

- [See response above]

Are students not currently enrolled at APS considered in this process?

- Yes. We take into account enrollment changes from year to year. One of the reasons for this change is new students enrolling in APS. We do capture that pattern of students entering the system as part of the enrollment projection process.

Where can we find a map where the boundaries are outlined for current districts, planning units, and street names?

- It is available on our website. Click about us -> departments -> facility planning. Once you click facility planning, there is a host of information regarding the maps.

For what reason were these planning units added and which ones are they?

- On September 22nd, the planning units to be “active” were reviewed by the Board. Recommendations from the FAC were made last spring to include ones along the W-L attendance zone boundaries.

Diversity is important. Does boundary tool account for demographics?

- There is a link for demographic information. It is part of the criteria establishing in the school board policy.

Will schools receiving additional students receive additional resources? Faculty etc.

- Yes that is in the plan.

How do you see this addressing transportation, security and walkability?

- The decisions we are making are for the students. The scenarios that come out will have consequences with everything, but we are keeping the students first. We want to make sure we are thinking about what makes sense for students when they come to school. Are they being challenged? Do they love it, and are they thriving?

Why is this process compressed? Arlington has been overcrowded and known it for years.

- Buildings don't go up overnight. There is a process. There aren't many places to build schools. As APS is growing, we are also facing these challenges at the middle school and elementary school levels.

Open Mic

What's the high school capacity for H-B Woodlawn?

- The total capacity is 775 seats from 6th grade to 12th grade.

Why is the new school in the most densely packed area for APS?

- Community feedback indicated this was a site they would support. The process is challenging because you have to address elementary, middle and high schools all at once.

Why is the new school (H-B Woodlawn) a lottery school? Shouldn't it be a "normal" school instead of forcing students to cross the whole county to attend?

- HB is a secondary choice school that helps to provide additional middle and high school opportunities for students and helps reduce enrollment at the comprehensive schools. The new location of the school was decided after a community process.

Will the transfer ability to and from specific schools still be an option after the rezoning?

- Yes, students can still apply for transfer between schools.

Wouldn't that mean that the school is overcrowded?

- The transfer waiver identifies limiting transfers so schools are maintained below 120% capacity.

Why is this transition really happening?

- Crowding conditions are the only reasons for the refinements.

Is the academic rigor the same at Wakefield?

- Yes, all 3 comprehensive high schools are equally competitive.

What's the APS Board rationale for having all these different schools/ programs at each level? Doesn't that add some of the issues that we're trying to deal with?

- Most of the different choice schools are because of previous board and community decisions. Choice programs were added to provide a range of opportunities for students and also serve to help manage enrollment at the comprehensive schools.

How do parents who want their kids to go to W&L deal with the boundary refinement?

- Students can apply for transfer through the established procedures, but all 3 schools are high performing.

Does APS allow for students to come check out the school before enrolling to see what it feels like?

- Students cannot currently “shadow” another APS student during the day due to the disruptions that could cause, but there are many events, tours, etc. that prospective students can attend. Students and families can also take advantage of after school activities such as sporting events.

Is there any timeframe for when the increase of students will slow?

- This year’s projections will be released in mid-November, but the student increase should plateau around 2025 (birth: kindergarten ratio is dropping).