

**Arlington Public Schools**  
**October 12 Community Meeting Q&A**

1. Has the building of a new high school been discussed? If so, where and what's the timeframe?
  - Plans for a new high school have not been finalized; the anticipated new high school seats will not address overcrowding within the required timeframe.
  
2. How will APS avoid repeating the disruption of this process if they have to repeat the redistricting procedure in 4 years?
  - Arlington's growing population means that boundary changes and adjustments are expected to occur again in the future. Some disruption is unfortunately inevitable, however, the processes are designed so that students will not be relocated more than once for each school level.
  
3. What is the student density in each planning unit?
  - Specific planning unit data is available from a link on the APS boundary tool website.
  
4. Will APS move planning units in their entirety or just partially?
  - If a planning unit is moved to another attendance zone, the entire student population in that planning unit will be relocated; units will not be split.
  
5. Why have the light pink units been excluded from the rezoning process?
  - The light pink units are not adjacent to the Washington-Lee boundary and were, therefore not included in the pool of units for consideration in this boundary refinement process.
  
6. How transparent will the data be from the APS tool?
  - APS is working with the FAC to determine how to effectively organize and disseminate the aggregated data collected during this process. Feedback data will be posted online once all responses are collected, and will also be discussed more fully at the "What We Have Heard" community meeting on October 27.
  
7. Why isn't academic excellence a factor in the rezoning process?

- All of the APS high schools are staffed and resourced to provide a high quality education to all students regardless of which of the three high schools an individual student attends.
8. Will the IB program remain at Washington-Lee?
- Yes, the IB program will remain at Washington-Lee.
9. Does the boundary tool allow community members to recommend moving planning units that are not “active”?
- Community members can add any suggestions in the “comments” section included at the end of the boundary tool exercise, but the tool itself will only allow the relocation of planning units that have been identified as “active”.
10. Why does the community only have two weeks to comment? It seems like APS has already made a decision and is just pretending to gather feedback.
- Although the decision to change high school boundaries was included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) adopted in the summer, the shortened timeframe was to allow the dialogue about these changes and community engagement to begin after the start of the school year to ensure more active family involvement and participation but still allowing time to complete the process so that the results available will be available in time for high school information night.
  - In almost every type of community engagement initiative, people always worry about that the decision is pre-determined. In this case, however, the community input is truly paramount for the success of the boundary refinement process.
11. How will the boundary refinement process be affected by the APS bus shortage?
- APS does not have a shortage of buses, but there is a regional challenge to acquire qualified bus drivers in a reasonable time frame. When APS hires drivers, most of the new hires must complete the CDL coursework and training to receive the appropriate CDL license and that takes weeks or months before they are ready for the road
12. What does APS say to homeowners who bought a house specifically to be within the Washington-Lee attendance zone.
- The growing population of Arlington County and the need to balance enrollment means that attendance zones for schools are likely to change over time.

Fortunately, the quality of all APS schools is excellent so such changes will not adversely impact the educational experience of our students.

13. Why doesn't APS make the choice to relocate to another school voluntary?

- Voluntary transfers are possible now; however, the number of students requesting to be transferred represents far fewer students than what is required to balance the student population at each high school.

14. Why can't APS make Wakefield more competitive before forcing students to relocate there?

- All three APS high schools are equally competitive, ranking among the top public school systems in the region for the past 15 years.

15. How will APS handle multiple inputs for the online tool from the same individual/family?

- Multiple responses are encouraged if community members have several boundary refinement suggestions.

16. Why is APS changing boundaries before the negotiations for the Educational Center are complete? Wouldn't that space be able to house any additional students?

- As of now, the Educational Center's plans are not firm. While the final decisions for that facility will be completed in the next 2-3 years, the need to balance high school enrollment cannot wait that long. Additionally, future use of the Education Center facility is not necessarily exclusively for Washington-Lee.

17. Why does APS need to make these changes so soon (fall of 2017)?

- With each passing year, the growing student population continues to make the need to rebalance high school enrollment more important. The boundary refinement is necessary now to ensure that Washington-Lee isn't operating over capacity while other high schools have available seats.

18. Will APS consider denying transfers from other schools to Washington-Lee's IB program to decrease the need to rezone the planning units?

- APS plans on continuing to allow students from the entire county to access the IB program at Washington-Lee.

19. How does APS plan to deal with Yorktown and Wakefield's over-crowding issues in the future?

- APS is already looking to add additional high school seats in the future in order to deal with the future projected high school population. For right now, the priority is making sure that Washington-Lee does not exceed its capacity by 400 students. In the future, as conditions change over time and long-range projections and population growth patterns become more certain, similar initiatives will occur to deal with over-crowding at the other APS schools.

20. Does it actually matter what the community says and how it participates?

- Yes, the community's feedback is critical to this boundary refinement process.

21. What will the school population look like in 2017 after the boundary changes are made?

- Information about the student population is available on the boundary process website.

22. Aside from relocating planning units, what other options has APS thought of to deal with Washington-Lee's overcrowding?

- APS has considered a range of other options. Internal building modifications have been made to add 300 additional seats to Washington-Lee. The option of a "Zero period" has also been tried to allow students to start earlier and end the day earlier, thus accommodating more students. In addition, relocatable classrooms have been added to address overcrowding in the short-term until more permanent solutions can be found. ~~but has opted not to "do nothing" about the overcrowding projections and allow Washington-Lee to operate significantly above capacity (which would require a substantial number of relocatable classrooms while other high schools would have excess capacity).~~ Increased class sizes is another alternative, but APS has not pursued that path.

23. How will APS gather input from community members without internet access?

- APS is reaching out to various community centers across the county to further engage with all demographics within the community. There is a paper version of the online tool (map, comments, etc.) that will be distributed county-wide.

## Open questions

24. How many students are currently enrolled in the IB program?

Year	# of On-Time Grads Earning IB Diploma	# that were transfers from Wakefield	# that were transfers from Yorktown
2016-17	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>
2015-16	78	7	20
2014-15	61	10	14
2013-14	69	11	26
2012-13	50	12	14
2011-12	59	10	15

25. Why has it taken APS so long to address the overcrowding issue since the data has been available for several years?

- APS and the CIP release student growth projections every two years. While the data was released two years ago, APS has been working diligently to address enrollment growth issues at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

26. Is APS trying to make Wakefield and Yorktown more diverse by relocating certain planning units?

- Diversity is an important consideration, however the primary goal of the boundary refinement process is to balance the enrollment among the three comprehensive high schools.

27. Has APS considered alternative programming for experiential learning opportunities throughout Arlington County?

- Yes, both the APS School Board and Virginia Board of Education have been focused on developing programs to increase the experiential learning opportunities for APS high school students.

28. Has APS considered the potential influx of IB transfer applications? How will it handle qualified students who would've been automatically eligible but are now relocated from the Washington-Lee attendance zone?

- APS will maintain its current policy which allows a new IB transfer student in for every transfer student that graduates the previous year.

29. Can APS help to give some context for what the six requirements for the boundary refinement process *really* means?

- All of the terms are clearly defined on the online tool. In addition, the [School Board Policy on Boundaries](#) clearly outlines the criteria.

30. How accurate are the student growth projects?

- The projections for the 2016-2017 school year were 99.5% accurate.

31. What will the output be for the data collected by the online tool?

- APS and outside consultants will analyze the data and work with members of the FAC to determine the most effective way to disseminate the information to the community.