

Superintendent's Recommendation for the Unity Area Boundary Study

February 15, 2017

Executive Summary

Members of the Laytonsville Elementary School community who live in the Unity area, located in the northeast portion of the school service area, requested that the Board of Education consider a cluster reassignment from the Gaithersburg Cluster to the Sherwood Cluster. On November 16, 2015, the Board of Education authorized a boundary study to review the school assignments for the Unity area. Based on the Board of Education action, a Boundary Advisory Committee (Committee) convened to solicit input on the possible reassignment of the Unity area from the Gaithersburg Cluster to the Sherwood Cluster. The Committee met on December 22, 2016, and January 11, 2017. On February 8, 2017, the Committee submitted its report, which contained committee member evaluations of the possible reassignment, as well as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) representative position papers from the six schools included in the boundary study process.

After careful consideration of the community input, as well as an evaluation of all of the enrollment and demographic information, I recommend that the Unity area assigned to Laytonsville Elementary School remain in the Gaithersburg Cluster. While I certainly understand the community's interest to be reassigned to the Sherwood Cluster to reduce travel time at the high school level, I believe it is important to consider all four factors included in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Regulation FAA-RA *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*: facility utilization, demographic characteristics of student population, geographic proximity of communities to schools, and stability of school assignments over time. After a review of each of these factors with respect to the proposed reassignment, it became clear that of the four factors, only one—geographic proximity of communities to schools—could justify the reassignment. Although proximity is an important factor that should be considered during a boundary study process, I believe it cannot be the only factor that determines a reassignment.

Background

On November 16, 2015, the Board of Education authorized a boundary study to review the school assignments for the Unity area and consider a cluster reassignment from the Gaithersburg Cluster to the Sherwood Cluster. The boundary study would evaluate the reassignment of the Unity area students from Laytonsville Elementary School to Greenwood Elementary School; from Gaithersburg Middle School to Rosa M. Parks Middle School; and from Gaithersburg High School to Sherwood High School. The superintendent of schools formed a Boundary Advisory Committee to solicit stakeholder input on the possible reassignment of the Unity area.

The scope of the boundary study included areas east of, but not including, Howard Chapel Road from the Montgomery County border in the north to Hawlings River Regional Park (also known as Rachel Carson Conservation Park) in the south, and east to the boundary line between the Gaithersburg and Sherwood clusters. This approved scope represented the geographic area requested by the community.

The Committee consisted of two parent representatives from each of the affected elementary, middle, and high schools from both the Gaithersburg and Sherwood clusters. A total of 12 representatives served on the Committee. Committee members developed criteria that were used to evaluate boundary options and served as liaisons to the communities they represented. Committee members obtained feedback on the boundary options and shared this information with the Committee.

The Committee met on December 22, 2016, and January 11, 2017, and held a public information meeting on January 18, 2017, for the community at large. Committee meetings were held in the media center at Rosa M. Parks Middle School. All committee meetings were open to the public and time was allotted to address questions and comments from observers who attended the meetings. MCPS staff presented the two boundary options and explained the Committee's process. Attendees of the public information meetings were invited to complete input forms stating their views on the boundary options. Representatives of the Committee gathered input from their respective PTAs.

Review of the Issues

The boundary study convened as a result of a request from the Unity area. As part of the committee work, Board of Education Policy FAA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, and MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, were reviewed to develop criteria to evaluate the option. MCPS Regulation FAA-RA specifies the following four factors to be considered in developing school boundaries:

- Facility Utilization
- Demographic Characteristics of Student Population
- Geographic Proximity of Communities to Schools
- Stability of School Assignments over Time

While all of the four factors are considered in my analysis and recommendation, the predominant reason for the community's request to study the proposed boundary change was the geographic proximity of the Unity area to the Gaithersburg Cluster schools, particularly at the secondary level. As a result, the majority of the criteria developed by the Committee related to the geographic proximity of communities to schools. These criteria include:

- Promote community identification and involvement
- Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools and parent involvement
- Reduce commute time on bus
- Promote greater access to after-school activities

Questions were raised about whether this proposal would set a precedent and if additional changes would follow. Therefore, the following criterion also was included for review:

- Consider whether the action would be precedent-setting

The proposed reassignment of students includes a very small area and, therefore, the percentage change of either facility utilization or demographics also is very small. Nonetheless, the Committee wanted to ensure the promotion of diversity and address socioeconomic composition through the following criteria:

- Promote diversity with respect to racial and ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations
- Address socioeconomic composition and variance

Committee members were highly concerned about how distance played a role in the promotion of interpersonal relationships among students and therefore included the following criterion to evaluate the option:

- Promote interpersonal relationships and friendships for students

Committee members also sought to consider efficient planning and use of facilities through these criteria:

- Ensure desired levels of school utilization
- Maintain stability of school assignment over time
- Maintain class size ratios

Superintendent's Recommendation

I commend the work of the Unity Area Boundary Advisory Committee. I have carefully considered all of the input received, including the Boundary Advisory Committee report, the Committee member evaluations, the position papers, and the community feedback. I also considered the guidance provided by Board of Education Policy FAA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, and MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, to develop my recommendation.

Based on this review, I recommend no change to the school assignments for the Unity area. MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning* includes four factors to consider when evaluating changes to school boundaries: facility utilization, demographic characteristics of student population, geographic proximity of communities to schools, and stability of school assignments over time.

After a review of each of these factors with respect to the proposed reassignment, it became clear that only geographic proximity of communities to schools was positively affected by the boundary change. Because of the small number of students included in the scope of the study, the enrollment,

utilization, and student body composition factors are not appreciably affected by the proposed change. In fact, stability of school assignment would be disrupted by a proposed boundary change. I recognize the community’s concerns regarding the distance to the assigned schools, especially at the high school level. However, I believe geographic proximity cannot be the only factor that determines a reassignment. Consistent with MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, our school and cluster boundaries are determined based on consideration of features of all four factors. Prioritizing geographic proximity above and independent of the other factors in changing an existing boundary would complicate future boundary decisions and disregards the important balance that the four factors together deliver to our school communities. Absent other factors, the geographic proximity factor could be applied to any number of school clusters and communities across Montgomery County, and it would be very difficult to determine when to reassign students and when not to reassign students if this is the only factor used as reassignment justification.

Facility Utilization

MCPS Regulation FAA-RA establishes preferred ranges of enrollment at each school level and states that school boundary assignments should result in facility utilization rates in the 80 to 100 percent efficient range whenever possible. The facility information provided in the following tables illustrates a very small effect on the enrollments and utilizations of the schools affected by this proposed reassignment. Therefore, there is no clear benefit for this reassignment based on utilization.

The following tables reflect the enrollment and utilization of the affected schools with no change and with the proposed boundary change. MCPS Regulation FAA-RA states a desired range of enrollment of 450 to 750 for elementary schools, 750 to 1,200 for middle schools, and 1,600 to 2,400 for high schools.

Laytonsville ES	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
No Change						
Number of Students	370	376	313	382	374	390
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	82%	84%	70%	85%	83%	87%
Available Seats	79	73	136	67	75	59
With Change						
Number of Students	360	366	303	372	364	380
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	80%	82%	67%	83%	81%	85%
Available Seats	89	83	146	77	85	69

Greenwood ES	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
No Change						
Number of Students	462	450	443	450	447	432
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	79%	77%	76%	77%	77%	74%
Available Seats	122	134	141	134	137	152

Greenwood ES	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
With Change						
Number of Students	472	460	453	460	457	442
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	81%	79%	79%	79%	78%	76%
Available Seats	112	124	131	124	127	142

While both schools are less than or close to the low end of both the preferred enrollment and utilization ranges, implementing the boundary change does not significantly affect these factors at the elementary level.

Gaithersburg MS	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
No Change						
Number of Students	816	857	865	901	959	957
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	85%	89%	90%	94%	100%	99%
Available Seats	146	105	97	61	3	5
With Change						
Number of Students	806	847	855	891	949	947
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	84%	88%	89%	93%	99%	98%
Available Seats	156	115	107	71	13	15

Rosa M. Parks MS	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
No Change						
Number of Students	862	836	851	830	824	812
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	88%	85%	87%	85%	84%	83%
Available Seats	116	142	127	148	154	166
With Change						
Number of Students	872	846	861	840	834	822
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	89%	87%	88%	86%	85%	84%
Available Seats	106	132	117	138	144	156

Both middle schools are closer to capacity utilization and within range for middle school enrollment. Again, implementing the boundary change does not significantly affect these factors at the middle school level.

Gaithersburg HS	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
No Change						
Number of Students	2480	2496	2524	2539	2590	2736
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	<i>103%</i>	<i>104%</i>	<i>105%</i>	<i>105%</i>	<i>108%</i>	<i>114%</i>
Available Seats	-73	-89	-117	-132	-183	-329
With Change						
Number of Students	2475	2491	2519	2534	2585	2731
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	<i>103%</i>	<i>103%</i>	<i>105%</i>	<i>105%</i>	<i>107%</i>	<i>113%</i>
Available Seats	-68	-84	-112	-127	-178	-324

Sherwood HS	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
No Change						
Number of Students	1933	1989	1981	2012	1984	1959
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>90%</i>
Available Seats	250	194	202	171	199	224
With Change						
Number of Students	1938	1994	1986	2017	1989	1964
<i>% of Building Occupied</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>90%</i>
Available Seats	245	189	197	166	194	219

Gaithersburg High School exceeds capacity and is higher than the preferred enrollment range for a high school. However, implementing the boundary change does not significantly affect these factors.

Of the three school levels, the affected elementary schools are relatively small and Gaithersburg High School is large and exceeds capacity. The other schools are within the preferred utilization and enrollment ranges. Given that the proposed boundary change has no significant effect to ameliorate the size and utilization where it might be beneficial, this factor does not support implementing the proposed boundary change.

Demographic Characteristics of Student Population

MCPS Regulation FAA-RA states that where reasonable, school boundaries should promote the creation of a diverse student body in each of the affected schools. The following tables compare the demographic characteristics of the schools included in the proposed reassignment without a change to the current boundary assignment and with the proposed boundary change. Data reflects the current 2016–2017 school year.

School	% Afr. Amer.	% Asian	% Hispanic	% White	% 2 or More	% FARMS	% ESOL
No Change							
Laytonsville ES	15.7%	7.1%	20.9%	47.9%	8.4%	15.2%	5.2%
With Change							
Laytonsville ES	16.0%	7.2%	21.1%	47.5%	8.3%	15.5%	5.3%

No Change							
Greenwood ES	10.4%	7.8%	7.8%	66.7%	7.4%	9.0%	<5.0%
With Change							
Greenwood ES	10.3%	7.7%	7.9%	66.7%	7.5%	8.9%	<5.0%

School	% Afr. Amer.	% Asian	% Hispanic	% White	% 2 or More	% FARMS	% ESOL
No Change							
Gaithersburg MS	21.3%	7.5%	46.3%	21.0%	<5%	46.8%	13.0%
With Change							
Gaithersburg MS	21.5%	7.6%	46.6%	20.4%	<5%	47.3%	13.1%
No Change							
Rosa Parks MS	12.0%	10.2%	11.5%	61.7%	<5%	10.1%	<5.0%
With Change							
Rosa Parks MS	11.8%	10.1%	11.6%	61.8%	<5%	10.0%	<5.0%

School	% Afr. Amer.	% Asian	% Hispanic	% White	% 2 or More	% FARMS	% ESOL
No Change							
Gaithersburg HS	24.8%	7.6%	49.1%	15.4%	<5.0%	42.1%	19.9%
With Change							
Gaithersburg HS	24.8%	7.6%	49.1%	15.2%	<5.0%	42.2%	19.9%
No Change							
Sherwood HS	17.1%	11.5%	18.2%	49.2%	<5.0%	17.2%	<5.0%
With Change							
Sherwood HS	17.1%	11.5%	18.1%	49.3%	<5.0%	17.2%	<5.0%

In reviewing the demographics of the two clusters, I compared the changes in the racial and ethnic percentages for both schools as well as the Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) percentages for the two schools. The proposed boundary change would have little impact on any of the demographic characteristics at any of the schools included in the proposed reassignment. Therefore, there is no clear benefit for this reassignment based on demographic characteristics of student population.

Geographic Proximity

MCPS Regulation FAA-RA states that “boundary plans should give consideration to the creation of service areas that are, as much as practical, made up of contiguous communities surrounding the school. Walking access to the school be maximized and transportation distances minimized when other factors do not require otherwise.”

Clearly the travel distance to Sherwood High School is less than the distance to Gaithersburg High School from this area. However, this area is contiguous with the rest of the cluster and would not gain walking access to the school by the proposed boundary change. The area is not uniquely more distant than similarly situated neighborhoods adjacent to the area of this boundary review that are not included in the scope of this analysis. Furthermore, there are similarly situated neighborhoods distant from their high school in other clusters in the school system. Redrawing boundaries based solely on distance to secondary school is not consistent with the four factor analysis established in MCPS Regulation FAA-RA.

Stability of School Assignments Over Time

MCPS regulation FAA-RA states that “boundaries and student choice assignment plans should result in stable assignments for as long a period as possible.” Research of previous boundary studies did not yield any changes to the area of this study. However, a boundary study for this area would cause an unnecessary disruption in student assignment rather than preserving continuity of assignment.

Summary

My recommendation is to maintain the Unity area as currently assigned—Laytonsville Elementary School, Gaithersburg Middle School, and Gaithersburg High School. This recommendation is consistent with analysis of the impact of all four factors outlined in MCPS Regulation FAA-RA *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*. First, due to the small number of students included in the scope of the study, the proposed boundary reassignment does not significantly impact the factors of enrollment, utilization, and demographic characteristics at the schools included in this boundary study. Thus, analysis of these factors does not support the proposed boundary change. Second, as the existing boundary is contiguous and a proposed change would not result in walking access to the schools, the current conditions meet some of the features of the geographic proximity factor. Third, stability of school assignment would be disrupted by the proposed change. Distance to secondary school is the sole aspect of all of the factors that is affected positively, and it is an aspect that is shared by many areas and neighborhoods in the school district. Barring unique or isolating circumstances, and in the absence of benefits gained from the other factors, that single feature alone should not lead to a boundary reassignment. The following pages display a map of my recommendation for no change as well as the proposal with tables that illustrate the effect of making no change versus the proposed reassignment.

Unity Area Current Service Areas

Superintendent's Recommendation

-  Elementary School Boundary
-  Middle School Boundary
-  High School Boundary
-  Unity Area



**Laytonville ES
Baker MS
Damascus HS**





**Laytonville ES
Gaithersburg MS
Gaithersburg HS**

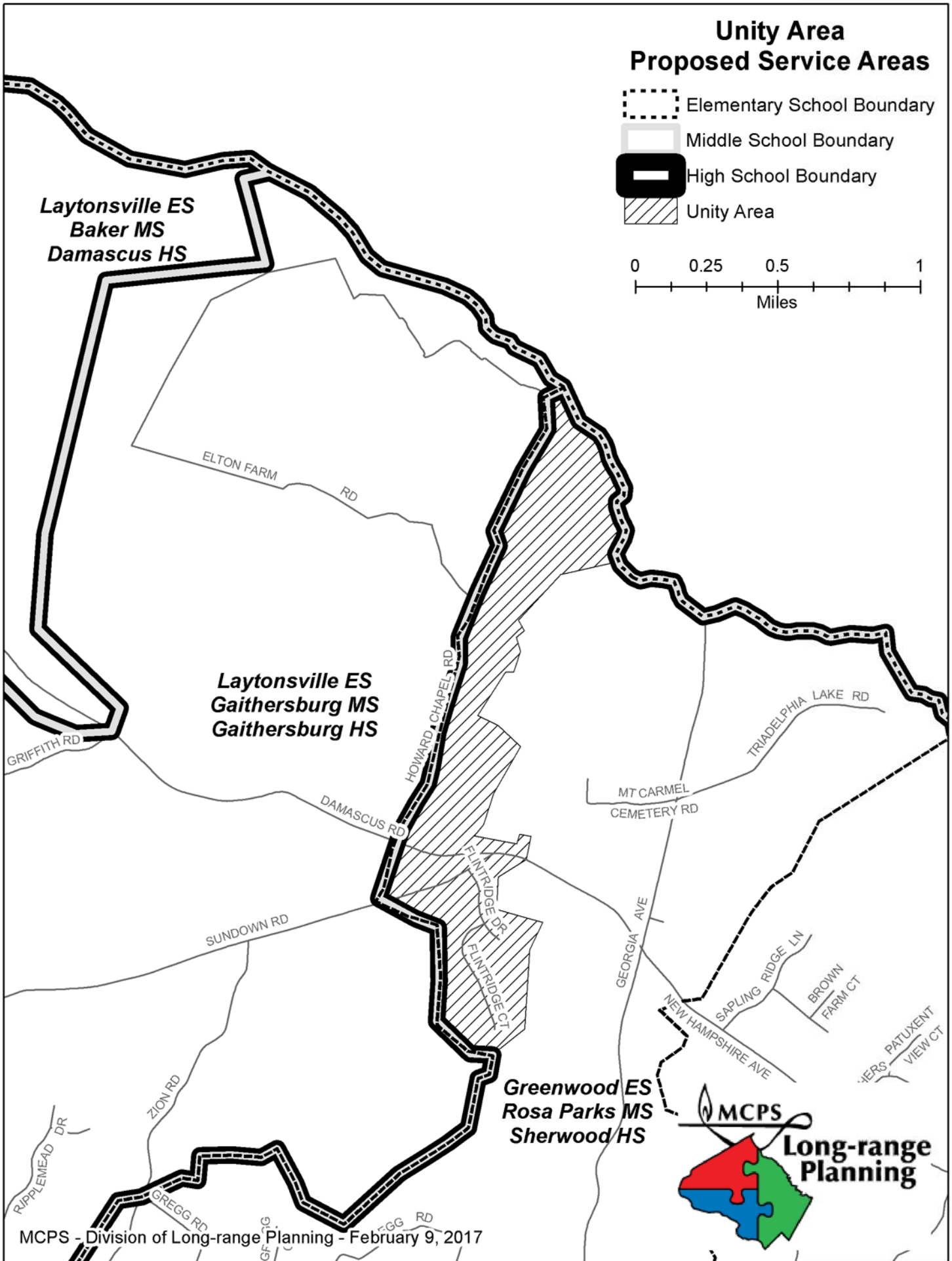
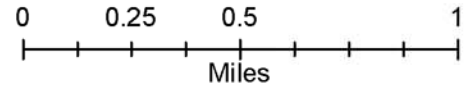
**Greenwood ES
Rosa Parks MS
Sherwood HS**

**Sherwood ES
Farquhar MS
Sherwood HS**



Unity Area Proposed Service Areas

-  Elementary School Boundary
-  Middle School Boundary
-  High School Boundary
-  Unity Area



Unity Area Boundary Advisory Committee Report

February 8, 2017

Background

On November 21, 2016, the Board of Education authorized a boundary study to review the school assignments for the Unity area and consider a cluster reassignment from the Gaithersburg Cluster to the Sherwood Cluster. This cluster reassignment would necessitate changes at primary and secondary levels to avoid split articulation. The superintendent of schools formed a Boundary Advisory Committee to solicit stakeholder input on the possible reassignment.

Scope of the Boundary Study

The specific school service area evaluated includes areas east of, but not including, Howard Chapel Road from the county border in the north to Hawlings River Regional Park (also known as Rachel Carson Conservation Park) in the south, and east to the boundary line between the Gaithersburg and Sherwood clusters.

Boundary Advisory Committee Representatives

The Boundary Advisory Committee consists of two parent representatives from each of the affected elementary, middle, and high schools from both the Gaithersburg and Sherwood clusters. A total of 12 representatives served on the committee. Committee members developed criteria that were used to evaluate boundary options and served as liaisons to the communities they represented, obtaining feedback on the boundary options and sharing this feedback with the committee. Appendix A presents the names of representatives and Appendix B presents the superintendent of school's charge of the committee.

Meetings

Meetings of the committee were co-facilitated by Mr. Joel Gallihue, director, Division of Long-range Planning (DLRP), Department of Facilities Management (DFM), and Ms. Julie Morris, DLRP facilities planner.

The Boundary Advisory Committee met on the following dates: December 22, 2016, January 11, 2017, and a communitywide meeting was held on January 18, 2017. Committee meetings were held in the media center at Rosa M. Parks Middle School. All committee meetings were open to the public and time was set aside to address questions and comments from observers attending the meetings.

The committee gathered input from their respective Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs).

All boundary options and related materials were posted on the MCPS website at the link below:

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/planning/unityarea.aspx

Committee Criteria

At the first meeting of the committee on December 22, 2016, committee members developed a list of criteria that they believed were important in the development and evaluation of boundary options. The committee was apprised of guidelines presented in Board of Education Policy FAA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, and MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*. MCPS Regulation FAA-RA specifies the following four factors to be considered in developing school boundaries:

- Facility Utilization
- Demographic Characteristics of Student Population
- Geographic Proximity of Communities to Schools
- Stability of School Assignments over Time

Committee members supported the four factors in MCPS Regulation FAA-RA and developed their criteria with these factors in mind. The criteria were not developed in any type of priority order, and the listing below should not be interpreted as expressing a priority order.

Boundary Advisory Committee Criteria

- Promote community identification and involvement
- Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools and parent involvement
- Reduce commute time on bus
- Promote greater access to after school activities
- Consider whether the action would be precedent-setting
- Promote diversity with respect to racial and ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations
- Address socioeconomic composition and variance
- Ensure desired levels of school utilization
- Promote interpersonal relationships and friendships for students
- Maintain stability of school assignment over time
- Maintain class size ratios

Boundary Options Reviewed

Mr. Joel A. Gallihue, director, DLRP, DFM, and Mrs. Julie A. Morris, facilities planner, DLRP, DFM, facilitated the Boundary Advisory Committee meetings. Staff prepared two options for the Boundary Advisory Committee to review. The options were consistent with the scope approved by the Board of Education.

Option #1 maintained the current elementary, middle, and high school assignments of Unity area students in the Gaithersburg Cluster.

Option #2 reassigned the Unity area that currently attends Laytonsville Elementary School, Gaithersburg Middle School, and Gaithersburg High School. In the 2017–2018 school year, Grades K–5 students would be reassigned from Laytonsville Elementary School to Greenwood Elementary School. Grades 6–8 students would be reassigned from Gaithersburg Middle School to Rosa M. Parks Middle School. Grades 9–12 students would be reassigned from Gaithersburg High School to Sherwood High School. In the 2018–2019 school year, all students in the Unity area would attend schools in the Gaithersburg Cluster.

See Appendix C for maps and data for the two boundary options.

Boundary Advisory Committee Option Evaluations

The Boundary Advisory Committee members reviewed a draft of this report at the January 23, 2017, meeting and submitted evaluations of the two school assignment options. Appendix D presents the committee member option evaluations. (Not all committee members submitted option evaluation forms.)

Appendices

Appendix A	Committee Roster
Appendix B	Committee Charge
Appendix C	Option
Appendix D	Evaluation Forms
Appendix E	Position Papers

Appendix A

Committee Roster

Unity Area Boundary Advisory Committee Roster

Carrie Bohrer	Gaithersburg High School
Kim Braun	Gaithersburg Middle School
Cindy Cacace	Sherwood High School
Ben Corb	Greenwood Elementary School
Carrie Hulburt	Laytonsville Elementary School
Amy King	Laytonsville Elementary School
Randall MacGill	Sherwood High School
April Major	Rosa Parks Middle School
Carol Malinowski	Gaithersburg Middle School
Bobby Smith	Greenwood Elementary School
Patti Twemlow	Gaithersburg High School
Gina Woodward	Rosa Parks Middle School

Appendix B

Committee Charge

Unity Area Boundary Advisory Committee Charge

12/22/2016

Boundary Advisory Committee

The Boundary Advisory Committee is an advisory body to the superintendent of schools and is not a decision making body.

Boundary Advisory Committee Responsibilities

Consistent with Montgomery County Public Schools Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning* the superintendent of schools has formed a boundary advisory committee to solicit community input to obtain viewpoints of affected stakeholders regarding the possibility to reassign the area of Unity that is currently assigned to the Gaithersburg Cluster schools to the Sherwood Cluster. The scope of the area includes the neighborhood bounded by areas east of, but not including, Howard Chapel Road from the Howard county border to the north to Hawlings River Regional Park (also known as Rachel Carson Conservation Park) to the south, and east to the boundary line between the Gaithersburg and Sherwood clusters. The scope of the process is limited to boundary options for this geographic area.

Boundary Advisory Committee members will develop criteria that will be used by committee members to evaluate this option. Committee members will serve as liaisons to the communities they represent. During the process committee members will meet with their communities to share options under review and to obtain feedback on these options. Committee members will share community feedback during committee meetings.

At the conclusion of the process, a Boundary Advisory Committee report will be sent to the superintendent of schools and Board of Education. The report will provide a summary of the process, the committee criteria, any implementation issues, the boundary options that were developed, and committee member evaluations of the options. In addition, position papers from organizations that are represented on the committee may be submitted for inclusion in the report, if desired.

Facilitation of the Boundary Advisory Committee Process

Staff from the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Division of Long-range Planning will facilitate the process over a period of two meetings from December 2016 through January 2017. Staff will provide information requested by the Boundary Advisory Committee, and, as necessary, invite other MCPS staff to meetings to address questions. All Boundary Advisory Committee materials will be posted on the Division of Long-range Planning web site at:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/planning/unityarea.aspx>

Appendix C

Option

Unity Elementary School Area Boundary Advisory Committee

February 15, 2017

Evaluating a move of elementary school students who live in the Unity Area from Laytonsville Elementary School to Greenwood Elementary School.

School	Projected Number of Students						2016-2017 Race/Ethnic Composition						
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	% Afr. Amer.	% Asian	% Hispanic	% White	% 2 or More	% FARMS	% ESOL
	Laytonsville Elementary												
Maximum Number of Seats = 449													
<u>No Change:</u>													
Number of Students	370	376	313	382	374	390							
Percent of Building Occupied	82%	84%	70%	85%	83%	87%	15.7%	7.1%	20.9%	47.9%	8.4%	15.2%	5.2%
Available Seats	79	73	136	67	75	59							
<u>With Change:</u>													
Number of Students	360	366	303	372	364	380							
Percent of Building Occupied	80%	82%	67%	83%	81%	85%	16.0%	7.2%	21.1%	47.5%	8.3%	15.5%	5.3%
Available Seats	89	83	146	77	85	69							
Greenwood Elementary													
Maximum Number of Seats= 584													
<u>No Change:</u>													
Number of Students	462	450	443	450	447	432							
Percent of Building Occupied	79%	77%	76%	77%	77%	74%	10.4%	7.8%	7.8%	66.7%	7.4%	9.0%	>5.0%
Available Seats	122	134	141	134	137	152							
<u>With Change:</u>													
Number of Students	472	460	453	460	457	442							
Percent of Building Occupied	81%	79%	78%	79%	78%	76%	10.3%	7.7%	7.9%	66.7%	7.5%	8.9%	<5.0%
Available Seats	112	124	131	124	127	142							

Unity Middle School Area Boundary Advisory Committee

February 15, 2017

Evaluating a move of middle school students who live in the Unity Area from Gaithersburg Middle School to Rosa Parks Middle School.

School	Projected Number of Students						2016-2017 Race/Ethnic Composition						
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	% Afr. Amer.	% Asian	% Hispanic	% White	% 2 or More	% FARMS	% ESOL
	Gaithersburg Middle												
Maximum Number of Seats = 962													
<u>No Change:</u>													
Number of Students	816	857	865	901	959	957							
Percent of Building Occupied	85%	89%	90%	94%	100%	99%	21.3%	7.5%	46.3%	21.0%	<5.0%	46.8%	13.0%
Available Seats	146	105	97	61	3	5							
<u>With Change:</u>													
Number of Students	806	847	855	891	949	947							
Percent of Building Occupied	84%	88%	89%	93%	99%	98%	21.5%	7.6%	46.6%	20.4%	<5.0%	47.3%	13.1%
Available Seats	156	115	107	71	13	15							
Rosa Parks Middle													
Maximum Number of Seats= 978													
<u>No Change:</u>													
Number of Students	862	836	851	830	824	812							
Percent of Building Occupied	88%	85%	87%	85%	884%	83%	12.0%	10.2%	11.5%	61.7%	<5.0%	10.1%	<5.0%
Available Seats	116	142	127	148	154	166							
<u>With Change:</u>													
Number of Students	872	846	861	840	834	822							
Percent of Building Occupied	89%	87%	88%	86%	85%	84%	11.8%	10.1%	11.6%	61.8%	<5.0%	10.0%	<5.0%
Available Seats	106	132	117	138	144	156							

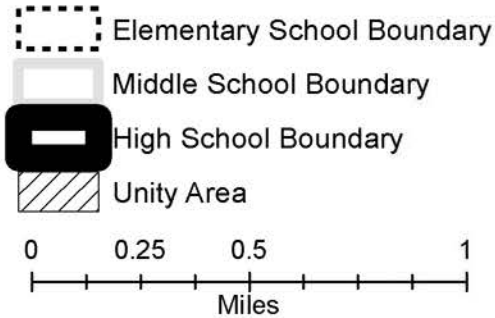
Unity High School Area Boundary Advisory Committee

February 15, 2017

Evaluating a move of high school students who live in the Unity Area from Gaithersburg High School to Sherwood High School.

School	Projected Number of Students						2016-2017 Race/Ethnic Composition						
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	% Afr. Amer.	% Asian	% Hispanic	% White	% 2 or More	% FARMS	% ESOL
	Gaithersburg High												
Maximum Number of Seats = 2407													
<u>No Change:</u>													
Number of Students	2480	2496	2524	2539	2590	2736							
Percent of Building Occupied	103%	104%	105%	105%	108%	114%	24.8%	7.6%	49.1%	15.4%	<5.0%	42.1%	19.9%
Available Seats	-73	-89	-117	-132	-183	-329							
<u>With Change:</u>													
Number of Students	2475	2491	2519	2534	2585	2731							
Percent of Building Occupied	103%	103%	105%	105%	107%	113%	24.8%	7.6%	49.1%	15.2%	<5.0%	42.2%	19.9%
Available Seats	-68	-84	-112	-127	-178	-324							
Sherwood High													
Maximum Number of Seats= 2183													
<u>No Change:</u>													
Number of Students	1933	1989	1981	2012	1984	1959							
Percent of Building Occupied	89%	91%	91%	92%	91%	90%	17.1%	11.5%	18.2%	49.2%	<5.0%	17.2%	<5.0%
Available Seats	250	194	202	171	199	224							
<u>With Change:</u>													
Number of Students	1938	1994	1986	2017	1989	1964							
Percent of Building Occupied	89%	91%	91%	92%	91%	90%	17.1%	11.5%	18.1%	49.3%	<5%	17.2%	<5%
Available Seats	245	189	197	166	194	219							

Unity Area Current Service Areas

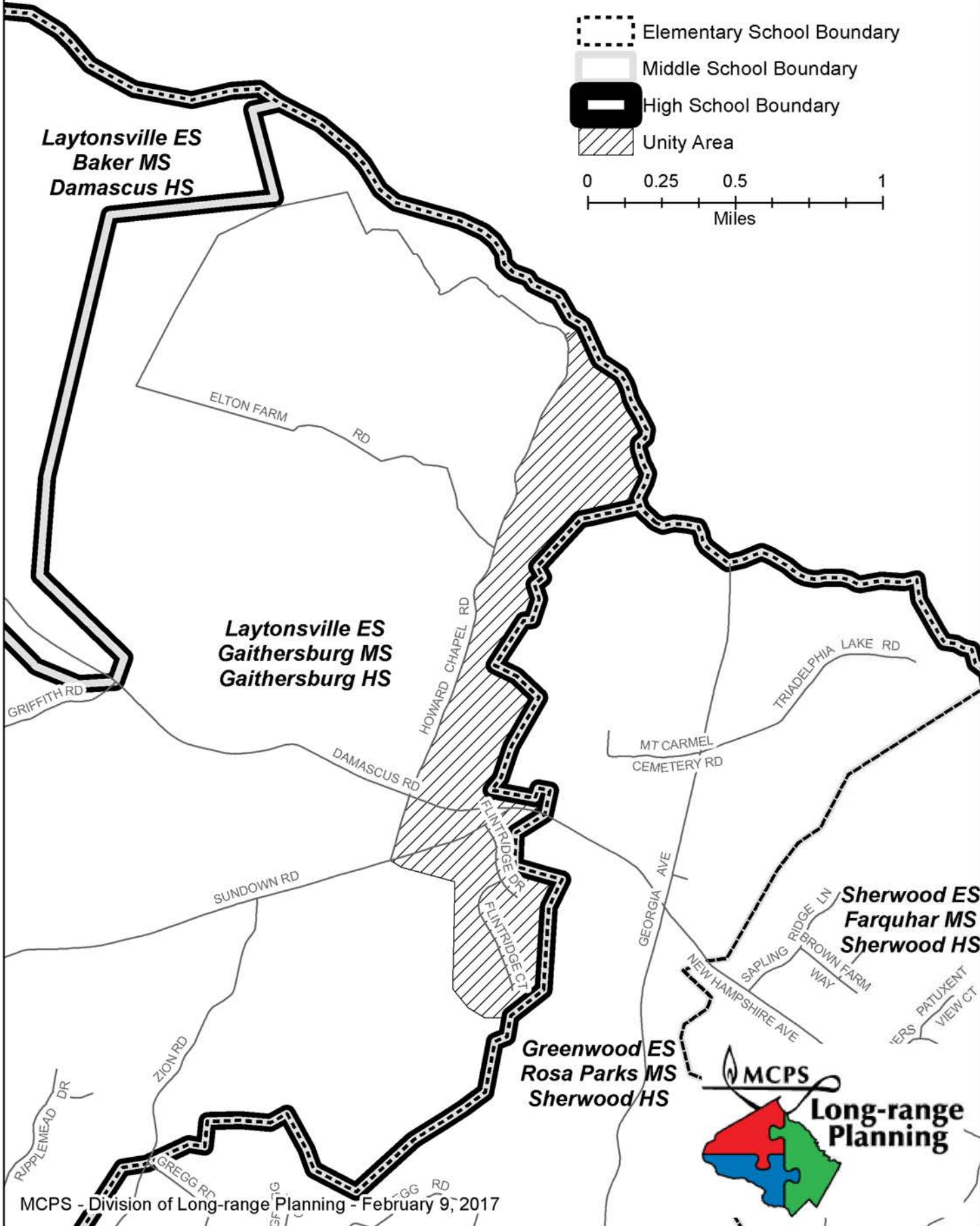


**Laytonville ES
Baker MS
Damascus HS**





**Laytonville ES
Gaithersburg MS
Gaithersburg HS**

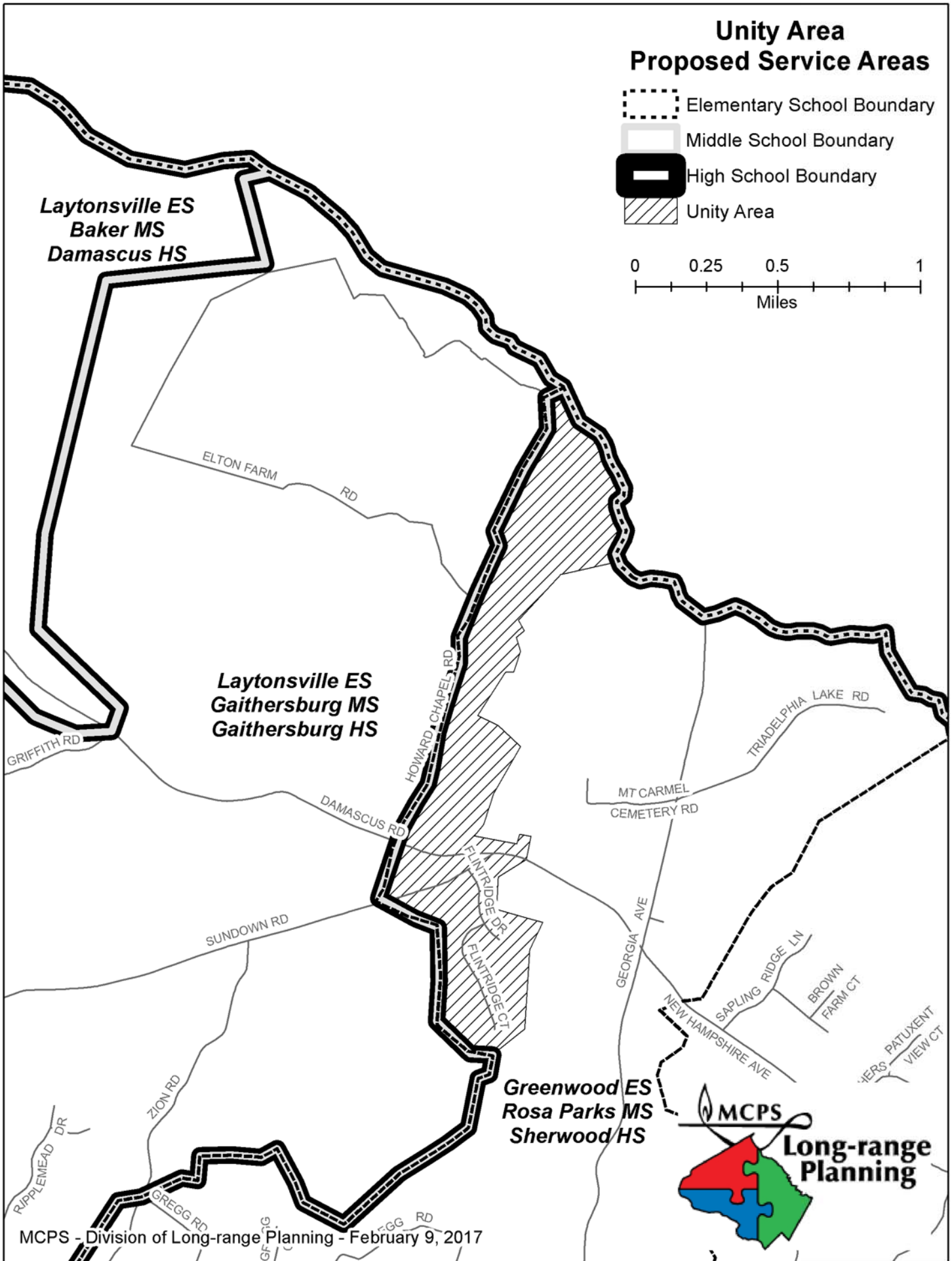
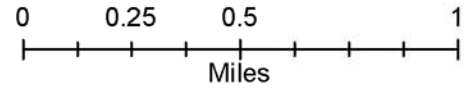
**Greenwood ES
Rosa Parks MS
Sherwood HS**

**Sherwood ES
Farquhar MS
Sherwood HS**



Unity Area Proposed Service Areas

-  Elementary School Boundary
-  Middle School Boundary
-  High School Boundary
-  Unity Area



Appendix D

Evaluation Forms

Boundary Advisory Committee

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee

Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: <i>Carrie Bohrer</i>	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: <i>Gaithersburg High School</i>
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number 1	Option Number 2	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Promote community identification and involvement	Can't Answer	Can't Answer	Subjective due to how much the family participates in school activities and functions.
Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools, and parent involvement	Does NOT meet	Meets	
Reduce commute time on bus	Does NOT meet	Meets	
Promote greater access to after school activities	Meets	Does NOT meet	
Consider whether the action would be precedent-setting	Does NOT meet	Meets	Would open up a whole "can of worms" for other communities who claim distance as a hardship to ask for a boundary study.
Promote diversity with respect to racial and ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations	Meets	Does NOT meet	Gaithersburg is more diverse than Sherwood. Students who go to Sherwood would not see the diversity they see in the Gaithersburg Cluster. With the small number of families this impacts, there is no change between the diversity rates.
Address socioeconomic composition and variance	Meets	Does NOT meet	Definitely does not change the socioeconomic composition of Sherwood high school. The housing in the Unity Area is of a higher socioeconomic status.
Ensure desired levels of school utilization	Can't Answer	Can't Answer	The number of families that this current study includes would have minimal impact on the overcrowding of Gaithersburg Cluster schools.
Promote interpersonal relationships and friendships for students	Can't Answer	Can't Answer	
Maintain stability of school assignment over time	Meets	Does NOT meet	
Maintain class size ratios	Can't Answer	Can't Answer	
Other Comments: I'm not quite sure this study was handled in the best way possible. I've heard many comments from the Gaithersburg Cluster and the Sherwood Cluster about the process being rushed as well as inopportune timing of scheduling meetings. I was extremely disappointed at the timing of all the requests of the meetings which came out at 2 pm the Wednesday before Thanksgiving when schools were on a half day schedule. The schedule of meetings did NOT allow for ample time to request feedback from the community, leaving the schools feeling as though they had to rush and find "any means possible" to collect feedback. I hope MCPS and the Board of Education remembers that the Hampshire Greens community was denied a Boundary study because of the idea that MCPS was NOT going to change the boundary due to hardship of distance, as well as keeping in mind that the Board was weary of setting a precedent. I'll refer you to the Board of Education of MC regular session meeting on Tuesday, July 17, 2007 minutes.			

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: Carrie Hurlburt	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: Laytonsville Elementary School
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number	Option Number	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Promote community identification and involvement	Option 2		The Unity area already identifies with the Olney/Brookeville community. We are residents of Brookeville (zip code 20833); our preschools, library and places of worship are in Olney; our children play sports through OBGC; we eat, shop and support the local economy of Olney/Brookeville; and lastly, we vote as part of Legislative District 14.
Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools and parent involvement	Option 2		The difference in mileage speaks for itself. Being closer will allow parents to be more involved in the PTA, attend after school games, volunteer, etc.
Reduce commute time on bus	Option 2		Utilizing current bus routes to the Unity area will greatly reduce commute times for children and cause little to no change in existing bus schedules for Sherwood cluster schools.
Promote access to after school activities	Option 2		Sherwood MS and HS activity buses serve the Unity area, whereas the Gaithersburg MS and HS activity buses do not (the information provided by the MCPS Department of Transportation is inaccurate).
Action would be precedent setting		Option 2	I do not see this small boundary change as being precedent setting. Anyone can go through the same process and appropriate channels that the Unity area has pursued.
Promote diversity with respect to racial and ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations	Option 2		Although the numbers are less than 5% in either direction, there are up and coming minority and mixed race children that will be entering the MCPS system in the next two years.
Address socioeconomic composition and variance	Option 2		According to Zillow.com, the Unity area has a wide range of home values.
Ensure desired levels of school utilization	Option 2		Shifting the boundary would help to alleviate over-capacity issues in the Gaithersburg cluster schools and would utilize under-capacity Sherwood cluster schools.
Promote interpersonal relationships and friendships for students	Option 2		Attending schools closer to home will help to foster long-term friendships that are often hard to maintain when classmates live farther away, particularly in split articulation schools where the elementary schools feed into different middle and high schools. Relationships can develop more organically through regular day to day interaction.
Maintain stability of school assignment over time	Option 2		The school boundaries in the Unity area have not been revised in at least 30 years. The Unity area has little to no opportunity for future development due to adjacent park lands and conservation area. Given this fact, if this boundary change does occur, I do not foresee it changing again anytime in the near (or distant) future.
Maintain class size ratios	Option 2		Projections show that by 2020 there will be a deficit of space at not only the Gaithersburg ES level but also at the Gaithersburg MS and HS levels. By 2030, the Sherwood cluster schools are projected to have utilization rates between 78%-88%.

Other Comments:

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee
Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: Cindy Cacace And Randall MacGill	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: Sherwood High School
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number	Option Number	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Promote community identification and involvement	The change meets the criterion.	The “No Change” option does not meet the criterion.	Families of the Unity area identify with the Sherwood cluster area of Olney. Many of the Unity families are not familiar with the Gaithersburg area. Unity families attend churches in Olney, shop in Olney and participate in Olney sports.
Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools and parent involvement	The change meets the criterion.	The “No Change” option does not meet the criterion.	Families of the Unity area have expressed being unable to participate in parent activities because of the distance to the Gaithersburg schools.
Reduce commute time on bus	The change meets the criterion.	The “No Change” option does not meet the criterion.	The bus times were presented in the committee meetings and are shorter for the Unity students to the Sherwood cluster than the Gaithersburg cluster.
Consider access to after school activities	The change meets the criterion.	The “No Change” option does not meet the criterion.	Unity students are often unable to participate in after school activities at the Gaithersburg cluster schools because of the drive time and commitments of their families in the Olney area in the evenings.
Consider whether the action would be precedent-setting	The change would not be precedent-setting.	The “No Change” option does not apply to this criterion.	There seemed to be consensus in the public community meeting that the change would not be precedent-setting. The Unity boundary request was submitted to the Board of Education, and followed an established process. These types of actions are available to anyone within MCPS.
Promote diversity with respect to racial and	The change would have next to no	The “No Change” option does not	Please note that the Unity area is diverse and the families are willing to submit their racial

ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations	impact on diversity numbers.	apply to this criterion.	and ethnic information. This diversity was apparent at the 18 Jan community comment meeting.
Address socioeconomic composition and variance	The change would have next to no impact on socioeconomic composition and variance.	The “No Change” option does not apply to this criterion.	The number of new students is so small that the change would not have an impact on socioeconomic composition and variance. The Unity boundary study contains homes of varying value.
Ensure desired levels of school utilization	The change meets the criterion.	The “No Change” option does not meet the criterion.	Moving the Unity students from Gaithersburg cluster, which is at over capacity, to Sherwood cluster, which is under capacity is a positive move.
Promote interpersonal relationships and friendships for students	The change meets the criterion.	The “No Change” option does not meet the criterion.	The Unity families have expressed that with the current school boundaries, it is difficult for their children to get together with friends from their schools and classes.
Maintain stability of school assignments over time	The change meets the criterion.	The “No Change” option does not meet the criterion.	There are no foreseeable boundary changes for the Sherwood cluster in the future that would affect the Unity students. The Gaithersburg cluster is currently over-utilized, with projections of a worsening problem.
Maintain class size ratios	N/A	N/A	The boundary committee discussed class size, and due to the small number of students potentially changing clusters, class size would not be impacted at either cluster. Only the staff numbers may be affected and would be changed accordingly.

Other comments: We support the school cluster change from the Gaithersburg cluster to the Sherwood cluster for the Unity area. The change makes sense for both the students in the Unity area and for the county with respect to school utilizations, environment issues (less bus time = less gas and pollution), and quality of life.

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: Benjamin Corb	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: Greenwood Elementary School
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number 1	Option Number 2	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Promote community identification and involvement	x		
Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools, and parent involvement	x		
Reduce commute time on bus	x		
Promote greater access to after school activities		x	
Consider whether the action would be precedent-setting		x	
Promote diversity with respect to racial and ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations		x	
Address socioeconomic composition and variance	x		
Ensure desired levels of school utilization			
Promote interpersonal relationships and friendships for students		x	
Maintain stability of school assignment over time		x	
Maintain class size ratios	x		

Other Comments: While we are sympathetic to the concerns raised by the families impacted by the distance and length of commutes to several of the schools within their existing school assignments, we believe that the size of the boundary area in question is so small, that it establishes a precedent that is possible to bog down the Montgomery County Public School administration with an influx of additional small in scale boundary change requests.

In a county as large as Montgomery County, with school districts and clusters so widespread parents and perspective home buyers are challenged with making a sound decision on purchasing a home, and factor in schools in the decision process. In many instances, homes in highly rated school clusters are priced at a premium rate, because parents want their children in those specific school clusters. Unfortunately for the

families in the proposed boundary change area, they made home decisions fully aware of the distances to the schools their home feeds into.

While we do not support a change to the boundary, we do support changes in MCPS change of school assignment (COSA) policies, to allow parents to apply for a COSA based on prohibitively long commutes to and from schools.

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: Kim Braun	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: Gaithersburg Middle School
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number	Option Number	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Promotes Community Identification and Involvement	2		Majority of Unity families use Olney, MD as their community for shopping, religious activities, extracurricular activities, etc.
Promote proximity to schools	2		Distance is closer from Unity to Sherwood cluster.
Reduce commute time on bus	2		Distance is closer from Unity to Sherwood cluster.
Consider access to after school activities	2		Students may be able to participate more often if schools are closer to home.
Action is precedent setting			Not sure.
Promotes diversity		2	No real change in diversity to either cluster if change is made.
Address socioeconomic composition and variance		2	No real change would be accomplished
Ensures desired levels of school utilization	2		Works
Maintain class size ratios			No real change.
Other Comments:			
Consider allowing students currently attending Gaithersburg cluster schools to stay at those schools with transportation to the schools if change is made. (Especially high school students affected)			
Consider extending boundary to include Damascus Rd homes up to Griffith Road, Elton Farm Rd and Howard Chapel Rd north of Damascus Rd.			

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: <i>CAROL MALINOWSKI</i>	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: <i>GAITHERSBURG, MIDDLE SCHOOL</i>
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number	Option Number	Narrative Evaluation Statement
PROMOTES COMMUNITY ID + INVOLVEMENT	✓		MOVE TO SHERWOOD WOULD ENHANCE + SUPPORT COMMUNITY
PROMOTE PROXIMITY TO SCHOOLS, ETC.	✓		MOVE TO CLOSEST SCHOOL/S RATHER THAN 6 TH CLOSEST SCHOOL - <u>YES</u>
REDUCE COMMUTE TIME ON BUS	✓		58 mins vs. 23 mins EACH WAY X 2 DAY - <u>YES</u>
CONSIDER ACCESS TO AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	✓		SHORTER DISTANCE FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & RIDE SHARING
PRECEDENT-SETTING	✓		DOESN'T SEEM CRITICAL. THIS SHOULD <u>NOT</u> MATTER AT ALL.
PROMOTE DIVERSITY		✓	6-8 OF 18 KIDS ARE MULTI RACIAL IN THIS GROUP BUT TOTAL IS TOO SMALL TO MAKE AN IMPACT EITHER WAY
SOCIOECONOMIC VARIANCE		✓	TOTAL GROUP TOO SMALL TO MAKE ANY IMPACT EITHER WAY
SCHOOL UTILIZATION	✓		SHERWOOD UNDERUTILIZED; GAITHERSBURG OVERUTILIZED
PROMOTE INTERPERSONAL + FRIENDSHIPS	✓		LAYTONSVILLE SPLITS IN TWO AFTER 5 TH GRADE. CHANGE WOULD ELIMINATE IMPACT GOING FORWARD FOR THIS GROUP.
Other Comments:			
STABILITY OF SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT	✓		CHANGE WOULD BENEFIT COMMUNITY OVER TIME K-12 TH SAME COMMUNITY. NOT MAJOR GROWTH IN UNITY OVER TIME
MAINTAIN CLASS SIZE	✓		NO MAJOR IMPACT - FEW STUDENTS IN UNITY

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: Patti Twemlow	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: Gaithersburg High School
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number	Option Number	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Promote community identification and involvement	Option 2 – Boundary Change	Option 1 – No Change	Residents of Unity readily identify with the Olney community and maintain a family life within Olney. Residents participate in Olney sports organizations and community events, shop and dine in Olney, and use Olney medical and dental services.
Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools and parent involvement	Option 2 – Boundary Change	Option 1 – No Change	From the center of Unity, average transit time and mileage distance is longer to Gaithersburg High School (76% longer/50% more distance) and Gaithersburg Middle School (92% longer/86% more distance) than from Sherwood High School and Rosa Parks Middle School, respectively. The transit time and mileage distance is slightly more to Greenwood Elementary than Laytonsville Elementary (20% longer/18% more distance).
.Reduce commute time on bus	Option 2- Boundary Change	Option 1- No Change	The current bus routes from center of Unity to Gaithersburg High and Gaithersburg Middle (approximately 45-50 mins each) are currently longer than to Sherwood High and Rosa Parks Middle Schools (approximately 30 mins). Existing routes for Greenwood, Rosa Parks, and Sherwood currently pass through the center of Unity. If existing Sherwood Cluster bus routes are extended to include the Howard Chapel Road portion of Unity (northernmost part of Unity boundary), then those existing Sherwood Cluster bus routes are likely to increase their commute time but by how much is unknown. Without simulating a bus route change, it is difficult to assess the impact to existing Sherwood Cluster routes.
Promotes access to after school activities	Option 2- Boundary Change	Option 1- No Change	Access to after school activities is dependent on parent transportation. Ride-sharing is very difficult for Unity students currently attending Gaithersburg Middle and High School because of the distance located away from other students. The activity bus for these schools hasn't been typically used by this community because doesn't align with after school practice times.
The action would be precedent-setting	Option 1- No Change Option 2- Boundary Change		The Unity community is a small area of homes within the Agricultural Reserve at the northernmost tip of the Gaithersburg Cluster that protrudes into the Sherwood Cluster boundary. The distance from the current Middle and High School highlights a boundary move that makes sense for this particular community. Precedence should not be a consideration as to whether this change is undertaken. Every future boundary change request should be able to be assessed on its own merit.
Promote diversity with respect to racial and ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations		Option 1- No Change Option 2- Boundary Change	Change to diversity across all ethnic groups is <5% at both the Gaithersburg and Sherwood Cluster schools if boundary change is made. The Unity neighborhood has diversity within its existing and upcoming students, however, provides <5% change to Sherwood Cluster when incorporated into overall school growth figures.
Address socioeconomic composition and variance		Option 1- No Change Option 2-	Change to projected students under FARMS is <5% increase at Sherwood High, no change at Rosa Parks Middle, and <5% decrease for Greenwood Elementary and Rosa Parks Middle with boundary change.

		Boundary Change	
Ensure desired levels of school utilization	Option 2- Boundary Change	Option 1- No Change	Projected utilization for the Gaithersburg Cluster through 2022 is at or over 100% at the elementary level. Future growth projects over-utilization across the elementary, middle, high school levels by 2020. Sherwood Cluster utilization is projected to average between 80-90% utilization across elementary, middle, high school levels through 2022 (later) and is not affected by boundary change.
Maintain stability of school assignment over time	Option 2- Boundary Change	Option 1- No Change	The Unity community is located within the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve and is surrounded by Rachel Carson Conservation Park and Patuxent River State Park. This location limits future development within the area.
Maintain class size ratios	Option 1- No Change Option 2- Boundary Change		Class size ratios would continue to utilize existing formulas for teacher allocation. Impacts from other communities can influence class size.

Other Comments:

While I support the re-assignment of the Unity community to the Sherwood Cluster, I highly recommend and request that the very small number of students within the Unity community that currently attend Gaithersburg High School be allowed to finish there, with bus service, and to allow their siblings to continue into Gaithersburg High School with them. These high school students want to continue as members of their existing GHS teams and organizations, and to continue their enrollment in special academic programs offered at Gaithersburg. Because of the distances involved, families should not be required to split siblings across separate high schools.

I also recommend that the small number of residences next to the Howard County line on Elton Farm Road and Damascus Road leading from Unity to Griffith Road be included in the Unity boundary change. This would avoid leaving a pocket of isolated homes in the Gaithersburg cluster with the same distance concerns.

Brett and Jessica Snyder

4023 Damascus Road

Laytonsville, MD 20882

Position Paper on Unity Boundary Study

We respectfully submit this position paper as residents of Damascus Road, assigned to the Gaithersburg Cluster. We feel that this community proposed boundary study is short-sided, rushed, and is not analyzing the boundary map with responsible inquiry to the handful of houses just outside the defined scope as set by the Unity community. The proposed Unity study grew out of a parent movement by 1 small neighborhood that wrote the initial proposal intentionally narrow in the hopes that it would get quickly approved almost like a COSA, rather than a legitimate boundary analysis of the outlying area. The proposed study is leaving 18 houses on Damascus Road in the GHS cluster without effective solutions to the same problems the Unity request presents. The Unity boundary study presents very solid reasoning behind it but there has been zero analysis or exploration of the Damascus Road houses (presently 1 household with children in the GHS cluster).

The three main criteria established by the Boundary Study Committee and the BOE include enrollment forecasts/capacity, demographic profile/increase diversification, and geographic proximity. The boundary study should be expanded to include an impact analysis of the Damascus Road houses changing to the Sherwood Cluster because of positive effect on enrollment forecasts/capacity, negligible impact on demographic profile, and positive effect for residents desiring better geographic proximity.

The Boundary Advisory Committee has simultaneously stated that the scope and boundaries are defined and not negotiable, while verbally advising the Damascus Road house(s) to submit a position paper, provide feedback to each cluster school PTA, and speak at the communitywide meeting to ask the board to “see it another way” and expand the boundary proposal defined area and scope. Consistent with this advice, we therefore respectfully submit our position paper that BOE expand the defined area and scope to include the Damascus Road houses in the final analysis and determination and approve the change of boundary.

Sincerely,

Brett and Jessica Snyder

Kira (3rd grade LES), Cole (6th grade GMS), and Paige (8th grade GMS/rising 9th grade GHS)

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: Gina Woodward	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: Rosa Parks Middle School
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number 1	Option Number 2	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Promote community identification and involvement		Meets	The community of Unity has chosen to align themselves with the Sherwood/Olney community and this will strengthen that.
Promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools, and parent involvement		Meets	
Reduce commute time on bus		Meets	
Promote greater access to after school activities		Meets	
Consider whether the action would be precedent-setting	Meets		There have been many outside persons attending the meetings interested in also getting their community added to this cluster.
Promote diversity with respect to racial and ethnic composition of existing and proposed populations	Meets		Does nothing to promote diversity in the Sherwood cluster and takes away diversity from the Gaithersburg cluster.
Address socioeconomic composition and variance	Meets		Does nothing to promote socio-economic variance in the Sherwood cluster and takes away socio-economic variance from the Gaithersburg cluster.
Ensure desired levels of school utilization		Meets	With reservation: the current elementary boundaries already in the Sherwood cluster need to be evaluated and re-worked.
Promote interpersonal relationships and friendships for students			Not evaluative.
Maintain stability of school assignment over time		Meets	
Maintain class size ratios	Meets		The number of students is so small that it will add to the population without adding enough students to support raising staffing at the Sherwood cluster.
Other Comments:			

Unity Boundary Advisory Committee Evaluation of Boundary Options

Representative Name: <i>Bobby Smith</i>	Meets Criterion	Does not Meet Criterion	School Name: <i>Greenwood</i>
Evaluation Criteria	Option Number	Option Number	Narrative Evaluation Statement
Comm. identification & involvement	1		Kids play alongside Olney comm in ^{OBGE} sports
Prox to schools, distance of bus, & parent involvement	2		Distance is significantly shorter w/ less traffic.
Reduce commute time on bus	3		Bus times would be markedly shorter.
Access to afterschool activities	4		Closer schools offer more opportunity to participate
Precedent setting		5	This would set up a precedent if a larger community wants to switch. Laytonsville as a whole could offer up many of the same arguments.
<u>Other Comments:</u> The number of students involved seems negligible for demographics and capacity concerns.			

Appendix E

Position Papers

GAITHERSBURG



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ESTABLISHED 1904

GHS PTSA

Position Paper on Unity Boundary Study
January 2017

The Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) of Gaithersburg High School (GHS) supports the request of the Unity area members of the Gaithersburg Cluster to be reassigned to the Sherwood Cluster *as long as the two following points are considered:*

In review of this boundary study, the GHS PTSA strongly requests that students currently enrolled in Laytonsville Elementary, Gaithersburg Middle School AND Gaithersburg High School be allowed to attend AND have MCPS transportation to their current Gaithersburg Cluster schools. We also request a grandfather clause/exception for siblings and those currently enrolled in Laytonsville Elementary, Gaithersburg Middle and Gaithersburg High School to remain on track to Gaithersburg High School, should that be their desire.

Pulling these students out of their current schools where they have established rapport with staff and peers, neighbors and community could be disruptive. Certain programs in which students are enrolled in or wish to participate in at Gaithersburg High School are not offered at Sherwood High School, such as Project Lead the Way Biomedical Science, Auto Body, Auto Shop, and Cosmetology.

The GHS PTSA also requests consideration that the boundary is expanded to include homes along Damascus Road up to Griffith Road, Elton Farm Road and homes on Howard Chapel Road north of Damascus Road. These families have contacted the GHS PTSA asking to be included, as incoming ninth grade students and future GHS Students, and the GHS PTSA supports them.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this boundary study. We hope this letter helps you come to a reasonable decision.

Sincerely,
Carrie Bohrer
Boundary Advisory Committee Representative for GHS PTSA
Gaithersburg High School PTSA President



Gaithersburg Middle School
Parent Teacher Association
2 Teachers Way; Gaithersburg, MD 20877

**Position Paper on Unity Boundary Study
January 2017**

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) of Gaithersburg Middle School (GMS) supports the request of the Unity area members of the Gaithersburg Cluster to be reassigned to the Sherwood Cluster.

The GMS PTA has gathered input from its community through emails. It also used an online survey based on the most pertinent criteria established by the Boundary Advisory Committee to collect input. The following are the questions asked in the survey and the responses:

1. Would a reassignment to the Sherwood Cluster reduce time spent on buses for students from the Unity area? 93.33% Yes

2. Would a reassignment to the Sherwood Cluster promote proximity to schools, distance of families to schools and parent involvement in schools? 93.33% Yes

3. Would a reassignment to the Sherwood Cluster provide Unity area students more access to after school activities? 87.5% Yes

4. Would a reassignment to the Sherwood Cluster be setting a precedent for other communities to change boundaries? 86.67% Yes

(Comments were that setting a precedent should not be a deterrent.)

5. Would a reassignment to the Sherwood Cluster promote racial and/or ethnic diversity to the student populations? 41.67% Yes (Comments were there is little change.)

6. Would a reassignment to the Sherwood Cluster address socioeconomic composition and variance? 30.77% Yes

7. Would a reassignment to the Sherwood Cluster ensure desired levels of school utilization? 93.33% Yes

Distance and school utilization play the key roles in our support of the Unity boundary change.

In review of this boundary study, the GMS PTA strongly requests that students currently enrolled in Gaithersburg Middle School AND Gaithersburg High School be allowed to attend **AND** have MCPS transportation to their current Gaithersburg Cluster schools. Pulling these students out of their current schools where they have established rapport with staff and peers could be disruptive. Certain programs in which students are enrolled in Gaithersburg are not offered in the Sherwood Cluster such as Project Lead the Way Biomedical Science.

The GMS PTA also requests consideration that the boundary is expanded to include homes along Damascus Road up to Griffith Road, Elton Farm Road and homes on Howard Chapel Road north of Damascus Road. These families have contacted GMS PTA asking to be included and GMS PTA supports them.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this boundary study. We hope this letter helps you come to a reasonable decision.

Sincerely,

Kim Braun

Boundary Advisory Committee Representative for GMS PTA

Gaithersburg PTA President

Position Paper
Laytonsville Elementary School Parent Teacher Association

January 11, 2017

The Laytonsville Elementary School (“**LES**”) Parent Teacher Association (“**PTA**”) supports the request of the members of the LES community who live in the Unity area that the Office of the Superintendent of Schools (“**Superintendent**”) for Montgomery County Public Schools (“**MCPS**”) consider a cluster reassignment from the Gaithersburg Cluster to the Sherwood Cluster.

The LES PTA, however, has also received feedback from several of its members that the MCPS Superintendent should engage in a more extensive study of the assignment of the entire LES community to determine whether or not all or portions of the LES community should be reassigned to one or more school clusters and/or whether or not construction of new middle and/or high schools (and/or expansion of other such existing schools) should be considered to service the LES and neighboring communities.

While there are many positive reasons for LES children to attend the Gaithersburg Cluster, the children in the LES community travel a significant distance and length of time by bus on heavily traveled multi-lane roads and highways to attend the Gaithersburg Middle and High Schools (“**GM&HS**”), placing them at great risk of injury via vehicle accidents and impacting their sleep, ability to learn in school, and time after school for activities, homework, play, and family time. Further, the vast majority of the children in the LES community participate in activities and sports located in the nearby Damascus and Olney communities.

Accordingly, for these reasons, in addition to the expected overpopulation of the GM&HS by 2020, the LES PTA respectfully requests that the MCPS Superintendent perform a boundary study to consider reassignment to one or more school clusters and/or whether or not construction of new middle and/or high schools (and/or expansion of other such existing schools) should be considered to service the LES and neighboring communities.



January 2017

Sherwood HS - Unity Boundary Study Communications Report

A call for community members was sent via PTSA listserv and posts to our website 06 – 09 Dec 2016. The invitation to attend the 22 Dec 2016 meeting was posted on the Sherwood PTSA website on 09 Dec. Cindy Cacace and Randall MacGill represented Sherwood at the 22 Dec 2016 meeting. One of the action items from the 22 Dec meeting was to solicit community feedback, which was done by the PTSA listserv on 27 Dec, with updated data and information from the county distributed on 29 Dec 2016.

Due to the time of year, and the short timeframe in which to collect feedback, only a limited number of responses have been received (< 5). However, all responses have been supportive of accepting the boundary change to now include the Unity area within the Sherwood cluster. All have noted the small number of students transitioning, and the limited, if any impact on the larger Sherwood High School community.

Sherwood High School Unity Boundary Study Representatives:

Cindy Cacace

Randall MacGill