

Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

November 19, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Boundary Study to Explore the Reassignment of Students from Bethesda and Somerset Elementary Schools to Westbrook Elementary School

As part of the *Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Capital Budget and FY 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)*, the Board of Education approved plans to address overutilization at Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools. For Bethesda Elementary School, a classroom addition project was approved with a completion date of September 2025. For Somerset Elementary School, a boundary study was approved and conducted in winter 2020 to explore the reassignment of students from Somerset Elementary School to Westbrook Elementary School.

Due to the fiscal constraints that have impacted the recently adopted CIP, and the anticipation of continued fiscal constraints for the next CIP, it was important to evaluate possible opportunities that would take advantage of existing capacity for schools that may be overutilized. Therefore, after review of the Boundary Study Report, updated student enrollment projections, and the anticipated excess capacity at Westbrook Elementary School, even after the proposed reassignment options, the superintendent of schools recommended that no action be taken to reassign students from Somerset Elementary School to Westbrook Elementary School.

Instead, as part of the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2021–2026 CIP*, funds are reallocated from the Bethesda Elementary School addition project to build out a master-planned shell classroom addition at Westbrook Elementary School. The three-classroom shell, along with the current available capacity, will provide approximately 270 seats at Westbrook Elementary School to address elementary school overutilization at Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools. The projected total seat deficit for Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools will be approximately 200 seats by the end of the 6-year planning period.

WHEREAS, On October 26, 2020, the superintendent of schools presented to the Board of Education, the *Superintendent's Recommended Fiscal Year 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the Fiscal Year 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program*, which included a recommendation for a boundary study to address the overutilization at Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools; and

WHEREAS, On October 29 and November 12, 2020, the Board of Education conducted work sessions on all capital and non-capital items on the *Superintendent's Recommended Fiscal Year 2022 Capital Budget and Amendments to the Fiscal Year 2021–2026 Capital Improvements Program*; and

WHEREAS, On November 2 and 5, 2020, the Board of Education conducted public hearings in accordance with Board of Education Policy FAA, *Educational Facilities Planning*, and Montgomery County Public Schools Regulation FAA-RA, *Educational Facilities Planning*, on the superintendent of schools' recommendation; now therefore be it

Resolved, That a boundary study be conducted in spring 2021 to address the overutilization of Bethesda and Somerset elementary schools in accordance with Board of Education Policy FAA, *Educational Facilities Planning*, and Montgomery County Public Schools Regulation FAA-RA, *Educational Facilities Planning*; and be it further

Resolved, That Bethesda, Somerset, and Westbrook elementary schools be included in the scope of the boundary study; and be it further

Resolved, That the Bethesda, Somerset, and Westbrook Elementary Schools Boundary Report be released in summer 2021; and be it further

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools release his recommendation for the Bethesda, Somerset, and Westbrook elementary schools reassignments in October 2021 as part of the *Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Budget and Fiscal Year 2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program* process; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Education take action on the Bethesda, Somerset, and Westbrook elementary schools reassignments in November 2021.

JRS:DGT:EM:SPA:AK:ds