

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Planning and Evaluation

MEMORANDUM

August 13, 2018

TO: School Board Members

THROUGH: Pat Murphy

FROM: Lisa Stengle

SUBJECT: Seeking School Board Input Ahead of the August 28 Work Session

Planning and Evaluation continues to prepare for the fall 2018 Elementary Boundary process.

Thank you to the School Board for agreeing to focus the fall 2018 boundary process on elementary schools on the eastern portion of the county, and to address the other elementary schools in fall 2020 as we prepare for the opening of Reed. This adjustment responded to our concern about making long-term boundary decisions based on kindergarten projections¹.

The boundary process will reflect on-going input from the community, Elementary Principals and the Department of Teaching and Learning. Based on the guidance from our instructional leaders, the boundary process will aim to rebalance Pre-K across elementary schools. Over time, APS has moved Pre-K programs to manage uneven enrollment growth. As we balance enrollment through the boundary process, APS staff will address Pre-K needs simultaneously. For example, in the boundary process, we are planning to adjust program locations to have two or three Pre-K classes at Hoffman-Boston, a change from the 15 Pre-K classes there in 2018-19.

While my team feels confident about managing most parts of the fall 2018 boundary process, an outstanding concern among the planning team is the need to create an attendance zone surrounding Arlington Science Focus (ASF). ASF parents have actively shared opposing proposals for addressing how best to approach boundaries for their school. This memo provides our recommendation for ASF, including two ways to act upon the recommendation, and the rationale that led to the recommendation. These proposals have NOT been shared with the ASF and Key principals or with their school communities. **Staff is seeking School Board direction by August 21.** The timing will allow staff to build your input into the discussion at the August 28 Work Session.

Staff's Recommendation

In summer 2020, make programmatic moves, swapping the buildings that currently are home to Arlington Science Focus and Key Immersion. Below are two approaches for implementing this recommendation.

¹ APS projections for the overall kindergarten population are reliable, however, there is wide margin of error when examining the kindergarten projections across each of the elementary schools. If staff had proceeded with developing boundaries for the schools around Reed (opening Sept. 2021) in the fall 2018 boundary process, the enrollment estimates would have used kindergarten projections for estimating the number of students four grades (K-3) in the 2021-22 school year.

A. Staff's preferred approach - At the August 28 Work Session, the presentation would announce that we will make program moves (ASF/Key swap) in summer 2020 and we'd include the rationale for the program moves.

Why Now?

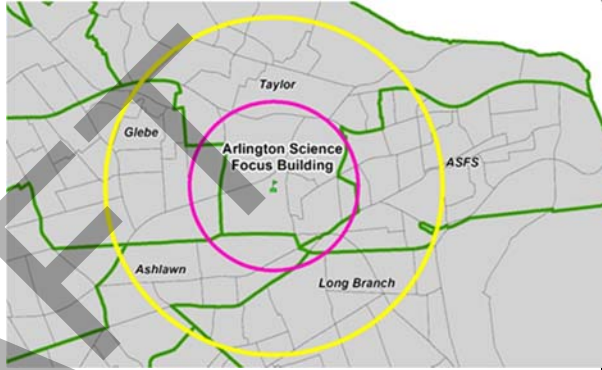

- This boundary process was originally intended to manage the additional capacity in South Arlington due to the opening of Alice W. Fleet and the Montessori move.
- Recent changes to the Options and Transfer policy have shifted a lot of staff time to addressing concerns in and around the ASF community, and we expect this will continue to be a contentious issue throughout the fall 2018 boundary process.
- By stating our intent to implement the program moves in 2020, we believe the boundary process will be able to better address the boundary moves due to the opening of Alice W. Fleet and the Montessori move.
- If this approach is applied, students will remain together:
 - In 2020-21
 - All Key students will move together to a building that is about 1.5 miles west (driving distance) of the current Key location.
 - ASF students will move together to a building that resides within their current attendance zone, about 1.5 miles east (driving distance) of the current ASF location.
 - All Ashlawn students and most Taylor students who live in the planning units (PUs) surrounding the current ASF site remain in their current school boundaries. Please note they may be included in the 2020 boundary process.
 - Current ASF transfer students, including those who live near the current ASF building, and the other team transfers will remain at ASF.

B. Staff's alternative approach - The fall 2018 boundary process will propose two boundary maps in the "What We Heard Session." Map 1 will maintain Immersion at Key and ASF at their current sites; Map 2 will incorporate the swap of Key and ASF.

Rationale for the Program Move

- 1. ASF is the only APS neighborhood school which sits outside of its attendance boundary.**
 - The location of the schools is inconsistent with School Board Policy B-2.1: "maintaining attendance zones that are contiguous and contain the school to which students are assigned."
 - The June 2017 revision of the Options and Transfers policy, beginning fall 2018, impacts families who live in the ASF boundaries. Students who live in the Key/ASF attendance zones are only admitted to Immersion at Key via a lottery.
- 2. The Key building can accommodate the current and projected enrollment for ASF,** using the preferred maximum number of relocatable classrooms.
- 3. Swapping locations, rather than doing boundary changes, allows staff more flexibility for the 2020 boundary process;** in that process, we'll have more capacity with the opening of Reed, and we'll need to look at adjusting the boundaries to consider including Key's expanded walk zone (current in the attendance zone for Taylor).

4. **A swap would minimize the number of students needing to be reassigned to different schools. If new boundaries are developed around ASF**, many more families and surrounding schools will be impacted by the fall 2018 Boundary process.
5. **Reduce the transportation time for students.** Swapping building locations for Key Immersion and ASF results in:
 - For ASF, the number of buses would be reduced—currently 116 students who attend ASF live within the Key existing walk zone.
 - For Key, the number of buses would essentially remain the same with approximately 12 countywide buses—40 current walkers would become bus riders.

<p>Boundary Process No swap (Create a Boundary Around ASF) A new attendance zone for the ASF building will require the reassignment of a large number of current students from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taylor PUs, including the walk zone around ASF and across Highland that maintain “contiguity” as we attempt to include some of the existing attendance zone. Note, Taylor will likely see significant shifts in its student population. • Ashlawn PUs in the Virginia Square area. • Glebe is not included for 2018 because it is next to Reed and the adjacent planning units are in Glebe’s walk zone. • ASF students in the Eastern end of the current attendance zone 	 <p>Purple=1/2 mile Yellow=1 mile</p>
<p>Boundary Process Incorporating Staff’s Recommended Program Moves If the recommendation to swap the buildings in 2020 is adopted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will place ASF into its existing attendance zone ; • No ASF PUs would be impacted by boundary moves; • Will minimize the number of students currently being bused to ASFS who currently live in the Key/ASFS walk zone. 	

6. **The boundary policy consideration on demographics is informing the recommendation.** As in other boundary policies, the elementary boundary process will focus on the percentage of students eligible for Free/Reduced Cost Lunch to evaluate demographic
 - The planning units in the ASF walk zone, and the ones needed to avoid making islands of ASF students (Boundary Policy considerations for contiguity) are not diverse. Across these planning units, 0% to 6% are eligible for Free/Reduce Lunch.

- Staff is aware that student demographics in the VA Square neighborhood may change if the county approves the affordable housing projects. The Boundary Policy directs APS to review boundaries every five years. Arlington County has clarified for APS that
 - none of the projects have been approved for development.
 - once they are approved, the earliest opening is estimated at 4 years after approval.
- Five planning units on eastern edge of ASF attendance zone, in Rosslyn, range from 10% to 59% of students eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch. These planning units would be strong candidates for reassignment to another school.
- 83% of the students who attend ASF live within the Key/ASFS boundaries, and ASF is likely to lose the majority of its current students to make room for the students who live within the walk zone of ASFS and the contiguous planning units.
- There may be a significant shift between Taylor and ASF in order to make a boundary that includes the Taylor neighborhood around the current ASF building.
- Across Arlington, families continue to express their strong desire to attend their neighborhood school. The neighborhood surrounding ASF attends Taylor, and with the building swap students who currently attend Taylor would continue to do so, which is a desire we have heard from those families.
- The students who are most likely to remain part of ASF community are students who transferred from the neighborhood surrounding the school.

School Board Requested Data Points

The tables on the following pages address information that the School Board's requested based on the project plan for the Fall 2018 Elementary School Boundary Process

Table 1. School Board Request for data on enrollment, projections, immersion, etc.

Enrollment, Capacity and Other Considerations Based on 2017-18 data		Arlington Science Focus	Immersion at Key	Notes
Total Capacity of Building		553	653	
PreK-5 Enrollment, Sept. 30, 2017		684	745	
	2017-18 Capacity Utilization	123%	113%	
	Estimated impact on demographics	Refer to “Boundary Impacts” section in the memo		
Enrollment Projections for Fall 2019 Does not include boundary changes		670	834	Assumes six K immersion classes in 2018 and 2019. Does not reflect adjustments that APS may proposed in annual update, as required by J-5.3.31 Options and Transfers Policy.
	Estimated 2019-20 Capacity Utilization	121%	128%	
Immersion program				
	Enrollment of Spanish speakers	N/A	333 out of 745 PreK-grade 5 students (45%) identified their background language as Spanish.	Source: Fall 2017-18 Statistics from LSRC & ESOL/Office K https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2017-18-English-Learner-Fall-Statistics.pdf
	Woodbury Park Students, PU 24120 has 108 total K-5 students	19	76	All Woodbury Park students are eligible for bus service to Key and ASF now, and would continue to be eligible for bus service if the buildings swapped.
Buses in 2017-18		10	12	ASF currently has the highest number of bus eligible students for a neighborhood school
Transfers – how would implementation apply to exiting transfers		Addressed by Item A “Why Now” Section		
PTA Donations - how do we account for PTA fundraising and sweat equity amenities at each site?		APS will work with each school community to relocate amenities. Policy D-15 External Funding -All facility improvements (including in-kind contributions) financed with private contributions become the property of APS		Food for Thought: <i>Consideration should be made to sentimental and historic value of parts of the buildings or donations that would require APS to resolve.</i>

Table 2. School Board Request for data related to the walk zone

Walk Zone Considerations Based on 2017-18 data		Arlington Science Focus	Immersion at Key	Notes
Existing walk zone				
No. of K-5 students who live in existing walk zone:		101	170	
No. attending ASF		32	116	
No. attending Key		13	40	
No. attending Taylor		52	2	
No. attending other neighborhood schools		4	2	
No. attending other option school (exc. Key)		0	10	
Expanded walk zone				
No. resident K-5 students in expanded walk zone (regardless of where they attend school)		101	303	
Resident K-5 students as % of school capacity		18%	46%	
Additional Housing within school's walk zone				
Does Arlington County's Quarterly Development Tracking Report include additional residential development in existing or expanded walk zone?		Not at this time	Yes	

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Table 3. School Board Request for data on facility related issues

Facility Related Issues Based on 2017-18 data	Arlington Science Focus	Immersion at Key	Notes	
Timing of proposed swap	Summer 2020 for 2020-21 school year			
Cost of proposed swap	APS received a rough order of magnitude (ROM) cost estimate of \$44,150 to move approximately 30 classrooms at 10 boxes per room, school library, storage and records, electronic equipment, music room, and contingency.			
Potential for Expansion				
	With addition	Yes, 4 to 12 classrooms at a cost of \$5-10.3 million	Will need to study	Source: ASF Feasibility Study, rev. 8/25/17
	If APS has access to Buck properties	Potential to increase capacity	No impact on capacity	Food for Thought: <i>What would be the best use for the site?</i>
Facilities Optimization Issues				
2017-18 Optimization Study				
	Max. no. relocatables	14	20	
	Preferred max. no. relocatables	12	4	
	Use of relocatables, impact on green space	TBD	TBD	Facilities is working with FAC to update the Facilities Optimization Study during the 2018-19, it will address impact on green space

Table 4 - Comparing Boundary Processes

	No Swap, Create a Boundary Around ASF		Incorporating Staff's Recommended Program Moves	
	ASFS	Immersion at Key	ASFS (in Key Building)	Immersion at Science Focus
<p>Keeping students together</p> <p>No Students were impacted by a previous elementary boundary change.</p>	<p>Boundary moves would require over 200 students moving from the Taylor attendance zone into the new ASF attendance zone for the ASF building to be in its boundary.</p> <p>An equal or greater number of students would need to move out of the ASF boundary into adjacent school boundaries.</p>	<p>No changes to Immersion at Key.</p> <p>Would remain county-wide program.</p>	<p>Few if any boundary moves required.</p> <p>Ashlawn and Taylor would only need to be involved in 2020 boundary process.</p>	<p>No changes to Immersion program.</p> <p>Would remain county-wide program.</p> <p>The ASF building has ART bus access within 1/4 mile of the site compared to ART Bus, Metro Bus, and Metro Rail access at the Key building site.</p>
<p>Building capacity</p>	<p>Capacity = 553</p> <p>ASF is projected to be at 121% capacity utilization, a deficit of 118 seats, in fall 2019 based on its current boundary.</p>	<p>Capacity = 653</p> <p>Enrollment for option schools can be controlled annually through the admissions process, while neighborhood schools must accommodate all students within their boundary.</p>	<p>Capacity = 653</p> <p>Neighborhood school would gain 100 permanent seats.</p> <p>Site can accommodate relocatable classrooms.</p>	<p>Capacity = 553</p> <p>Enrollment for option schools can be controlled annually through the admissions process, while neighborhood schools must accommodate all students within their boundary.</p> <p>Site can accommodate relocatable classrooms.</p>
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>ASF had 10 buses in 2017-18, the highest among neighborhood schools.</p> <p>Need for buses may decrease slightly as students who live in the walk zone would be able to attend the school. The existing walk zone was not expanded and remains only two planning units.</p>	<p>Key had 12 buses in 2017-18 for county-wide immersion program, number of buses would likely remain the same.</p>	<p>It is expected that if ASF has access to the Key building's larger walk zone more students would be able to walk and fewer students would need bus transportation.</p> <p>It is also expected that bus ride times would be reduced for some students, especially those in Rosslyn and the eastern end of the boundary.</p>	<p>Key currently has 12 buses for county-wide immersion program, number of buses would likely remain the same.</p> <p>Some bus ride times may increase slightly as the Immersion program would move approximately 1/2 mile to the west. This will add time to the ride for students who live in the Woodbury Park planning unit.</p>

Table 4 - Comparing Boundary Processes

	No Swap, Create a Boundary Around ASF		Incorporating Staff's Recommended Program Moves	
	ASFS	Immersion at Key	ASFS (in Key Building)	Immersion at Science Focus
Walk Zone	Resident K-5 students in ASF building's existing walk zone is 18% of ASF's building capacity; approximately 101 students would be able to walk to ASFS.	Resident K-5 students in Key building's existing walk zone is 26% of Key's building capacity.	More ASF students would be able to walk to their neighborhood school due to the Key building's larger walk zone.	Fewer students would be able to walk due to the ASF building's smaller walk zone; however, Immersion remains a county-wide program.
Impact on Demographics	Potential planning unit moves to put ASF in its boundary will likely not reduce diversity, these planning units are currently part of the Taylor boundary. The Free-and-Reduced Lunch (FRL) percentage for Taylor is 4%.	FRL percentage at Key would likely stay the same due county-wide immersion program.	Both schools would likely maintain a Free-and-Reduced Lunch percentage similar to its current level: ASFS at 23% and Key at 41%.	Both schools would likely maintain a Free-and-Reduced Lunch percentage similar to its current level: ASFS at 23% and Key at 41%.

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