Pre-CIP Report Community Table Sessions – July 31 and August 22

Responses to Questions and Comments Posted (partial, as of 8/28)

Swing Space & Long-Range Renovation Plan for Existing School Facilities

Submitted Comment	Response
Anonymous The Nottingham swing space proposal appears to depend on large part on enrollment projections. How does APS's projection methodology account for data, outside of Arlington birth rates, that can nevertheless significantly impact student enrollment? E.g., empty nesters move out and are replaced overwhelmingly with families with children born outside Arlington, fewer families choose private school, etc. I did not see these factors discussed in detail in Appendix B to the report. Thank you. Anonymous I'm sorry but you said the projections are base on county data which is basically based on birth rate only.	This topic is covered in a yearly 10-page report that explains the data, assumptions, trends and methodology used by grade, by school level and by program. Please visit the website for the full report: https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/APS-Fall-2022-10-Year-Enrollment-Projections.pdf
Anonymous How does turning a thriving neighborhood school into a swing space align with APS Core Values?	The APS Mission is to ensure all students learn and thrive in safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments. As noted in Strategic Plan goals, operational excellence includes facilities that are designed, developed, and maintained for high-performance learning and working environments. Core values which are derived from these principles include excellence, equity, inclusivity and stewardship. Repurposing a school retains a facility for use by the school system in support of a plan which the system needs is essential to students' well-being as we prepare to renovate other schools.
Anonymous The speaker didn't address relocating to local schools. Can you please address that? Do you mean how students will be redistributed to other neighboring schools?	The option to distribute students to nearby schools was covered in the presentation and in the FAQs: This idea was thoroughly evaluated, ultimately not pursued for several reasons.
	 Only a limited number of schools have sufficient capacity and nearby schools may not have enough open seats to accommodate all of the students from the school under renovation. Spreading out students from the school under renovation would disrupt both their community and the communities at the

Submitted Comment	Response
	receiving schools for every project, every year or every other year. Those same receiving schools would be required to host new groups of students for each renovating school presenting new disruptions with each new project. 3. Providing transportation and distributing staff across multiple schools, every or every other year, would be extremely complex. APS believes that it is preferable to reassign students permanently and limit disruption to one school with each new project.
Anonymous APS has stated "walkability is a priority" and agrees that "proximity encourages the relationship between schools and community, allows walking, and minimizes bus rides." Please explain how APS believes that it makes sense to shut down a school that is the 2nd most walkable neighborhood school in the county.	APS' is committed to ensuring that all students learn and thrive in safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments. While walkability is important, it is not the priority. It is true that some students who can walk to Nottingham today may not be able to walk to their newly assigned school. However, the walkability measures at their new schools will go up as some of those students may still be walkers. The proximity of Nottingham to two other schools is seen as an advantage in reassigning students and still being able to keep them close to home.
 Anonymous Why is APS planning to close a school without specifying the construction plans needed and timeline for construction at other APS schools? If the enrollment is expected to climb in parts of Arlington, why not add an entirely new school in that specific region? 	First question, see above. The cost of constructing a new school is estimated in excess of \$70 million. There is capacity within the system and enrollment imbalances will be addressed through various means including boundary changes.
Anonymous Wouldn't families from impacted schools want the option to attend a more local school as opposed to blindly being bussed somewhere? How can we have informed discussion if you cannot share the impacted schools?	The option to distribute students to nearby schools was covered in the presentation and in the FAQs: This idea was thoroughly evaluated, ultimately not pursued for several reasons. 1. Only a limited number of schools have sufficient numbers of open seats and nearby schools may not have enough open seats to accommodate all of the students from the school under renovation.

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	 Spreading out students from the school under renovation would disrupt both their community and the communities at the receiving schools for every project, every year or every other year. Those same receiving schools would be required to host new groups of students for each renovating school presenting new disruptions with each new project. Providing transportation and distributing staff across multiple schools, every or every other year, would be extremely complex.
	permanently and limit disruption to one school with each new project.
	Smaller projects are scheduled during school breaks and may be done without using a swing space. Major renovations can be extremely disruptive to the school and community. APS believes it is more appropriate to use a swing space, if possible, during major renovations to limit academic disruptions to students, safety risks, and costs. Experience has shown it is in the best interest of the school community to be relocated during major renovation and this is an industry best practice.
Anonymous Why was central location in the county not considered as a factor for swing space considering that students will have to travel to the swing space daily? Anonymous Wouldn't it be better to use a more centrally located school for "swing space"? Rather than bringing dozens of busses and hundreds of cars into a neighborhood that is I'll-equipped to handle it? A neighborhood that has already experienced traffic fatalities near the school?	APS would have preferred a central location, however the sites in central locations, including the W-L Annex, the Syphax Education Center, and the existing ACC building require a significant investment that would not be available for renovations. Locations all over the County were considered and alternative options were presented for comparison to the school board. See page A-159 in Appendix J for more information. APS recommends repurposing Nottingham for Swing Space. Location is an attribute that was noted for swing space options. Evaluations were holistic and sought to optimize the mix of location, cost, project scope, timing, implementation feasibility and minimizing impacted families.

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Anonymous It feels like you are being secretive about the nature of the renovations- it seems like you are apprehensive about being challenged on how long renovations take and whether a swing space is truly necessary. What are three examples of a multi-year renovation that would require swing space?	The development of prioritized facility needs is being undertaken by the Department of Facilities and Operations and is based in part on criteria vetted with the Facilities Advisory Commission and Joint Facilities Advisory Committee over the past two school years. You are invited to review the March 2023 FAC meeting that covered this topic on their web page www.apsva.us/citizen-advisory-groups/non-instructional-advisory-committees/advisory-council-on-school-facilities-and-capital-programs/
Anonymous, what list sorves do you monitor for	The contractor conducting the study was hired earlier this spring and the report will address the extent and magnitude of work required at each school. The Long-Range Plan to Renovate Existing Facilities will be presented as an information item to the School Board in September 2023.
Anonymous what list serves do you monitor for feedback?	We invite input through Engage@apsva.us . Just within the past weeks, APS has launched an anonymous social media tool called ThoughtExchange.
Anonymous Staff's presentation presents closing Nottingham as the recommended action but does not rank alternatives. What would staff's recommended action be if it's recommendation to close Nottingham is not accepted by the school board?	Staff narrowed the list to eight alternatives of which one was recommended. All of the considerations are provided for the school board and the public to compare alternatives. See page A-159 in Appendix J for more details. APS will evaluate alternatives sites for swing space as defined in the School Board's October vote on CIP direction.
Anonymous Wouldn't families from impacted schools want the option to attend a more local school as opposed to blindly being bussed somewhere? How can we have informed discussion if you cannot share the impacted schools?	APS will not be in a position to ask families where they want to attend schools while their school is undergoing renovation. Instead, APS will be charged with making each school's time in swing space as seamless as possible. The students who attend a school that is to be renovated will be impacted for 1-2 years. We are gathering ideas about how to lessen the impact on families during that limited period after which the students will enjoy a renovated facility. No schools have sufficient open capacity to receive an entire student population.
Anonymous Was only cost considered when choosing the option to close an elementary school? The presumption here is the cost of the mental health of our children and ripping apart a thriving community was not considered. Using an existing	Site evaluations were holistic and sought to optimize the mix of location, cost, project scope, timing, implementation feasibility and minimizing impacted families. See more information regarding the evaluation starting in page A-188.

Submitted Comment	Response
building or literally any other option would not tax the mental health of our students.	
Anonymous You are not factoring in people moving into the area.	Enrollment projects use trend data that reflect inward and outward migration in our schools. We use trend data which includes larger demographic moves.
Justin Heminger Why did APS not solicit stakeholder input before selecting Nottingham as the recommended swing space site? The process seems to have been in the works for a long time (swing space study completed in April 2023) and to be far along before it was made public in late June.	Swing space is one piece of the Pre-CIP Report which was being prepared for publishing in June. It is also worth noting that in the past, reports were released in the Fall. APS has moved this timeline and completed the work during the past school year to publish recommendations in June and allow for more time for community engagement. We are counting on everyone's participation throughout the entire process, which is why in addition to engage@apsva.us, we've opened additional channels such as the community table sessions and the ThoughtExchange forum. It is also accurate that we are compiling your input, forwarding it to the relevant experts, and will present all this feedback to the school board.
Anonymous Why does APS find it acceptable to constantly shuffle and relocate neighborhood based school populations? Can we find a solution to our constant redistricting woes? Recent examples also include McKinley and Patrick Henry. This is always deeply frustrating and disruptive to our communities.	APS enrollment grew by 43% in the last decade and schools were built where they could be accommodated, not necessarily where most of our students reside. The APS Mission is to ensure all students learn and thrive in safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments. New boundaries are an important tool available to a school system to avoid expensive capital building projects. APS uses a variety of tools to balance enrollment as outlined in the Pre-CIP Report. The ability to move specific programs helps minimize the changes required when enrollment is very imbalanced. Learn more starting in page A-83, Appendix F, Results of APS Initiatives Addressing Enrollment and Building Utilization
Anonymous How many buses will be required to take students OUT of the neighborhood to rezoned schools? How many buses will be required to bring swing space students INTO Nottingham?	The actual number of buses will depend on the enrollment at the schools involved. As this is three years out, transportation will use selected school-specific enrollments with updated data closer to 2026.

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Anonymous Were option schools considered as a swing space and what was the basis for eliminating them from consideration?	No, this process did not consider option schools for swing space since option schools support enrollment across the district and are typically at max capacity.
Anonymous The set of factors that went into evaluation of the swing space options were very robust. I noticed that the need for swing space has a lot of similarities and parallels to the need for space for the Montessori school. However, the process for evaluating space for Montessori is not following this same robust process and if we evaluated it the same way as swing space, we would find that it is a very expensive option (converting the ACC building into an elementary school). The board has not signed off on the current \$40M cost for Montessori, so the search for space for this options program is still a live issue. Why are we saying 'no' to expensive options for swing space, but we aren't asking the Montessori space search to follow the same process and meet the same lower cost?	The June 2023 School Board vote on the FY 2023-32 CIP identified repurposing the existing ACC building for MPSA. The School Board could revisit that decision in light of cost estimates.
Anonymous This proposal by APS projections puts Tuckahoe at 113 percent capacity. How is that acceptable?	The Pre-CIP Report recommends an elementary boundary process for 2025 to be implemented concurrent with opening any swing space in 2026. This will allow enrollment to be balanced in zone 1, between ASFS and Innovation, between Oakridge, Hoffman-Boston, Fleet, Drew and Abingdon and Glebe if needed. Tuckahoe can be addressed as well at that time.
Anonymous Why is a traffic study not being conducted before finalizing the plan for Nottingham? There have been 3 fatalities adjacent to the school in recent years. The school currently only has 2 school buses - it has a small parking lot and no major streets adjacent. How will it handle the influx of buses? Of parents driving to and from the school?	Traffic is a concern at every school in every process and cannot limit the consideration of any site. Based on the feedback so far, the recommendation will be refined to have the SB direct the Supt. to provide an initial transportation proposal for the schools using the swing space that addresses the following and will be developed in full by the 2025-26 school year: • Transportation to and from the neighborhood school to Nottingham provided - Occasionally for families attending information night, conferences and or other school events. • Identify if the bell times will be adjusted during the renovation period. • Identify possible improvements to pedestrian safety on the site

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Anonymous How will parents from a school that is being renovated on the other side of the county handle picking up from extended day? The time from the south side of the county to Nottingham during rush hour can take 30 min each way.	Based on the feedback so far, the recommendation will be refined to have the SB direct the Supt. to provide provide an initial proposal for extended day services in 2026 for Nottingham, ensuring that extended day staffing resources grow in line with enrollment changes resulting from the fall 2025 boundary process. schools using the swing space – explore providing extended day at a facility close to the neighborhood school undergoing renovations to reduce the distance for drop off and pick up.
Anonymous Why does the total number of children affected only include the current number at Nottingham but not the 90 students moving from Discovery to Taylor?	The 509 figure counts an enrollment of 419 and the students and the approximately 90 students who would move from Discovery to Taylor.
Anonymous So to be clear, the recommendation for Nottingham was made without knowing what renovations are needed, and what schools need to be renovated?	Yes, the 2023-32 Capital Improvement Plan directed the Superintendent to prioritize the renovations of existing APS school facilities, identify and develop swing space if needed, and begin construction on the first renovation project by Fall 2026 if feasible.
Anonymous Is one of the schools targeted for renovation in Zone 1? If so, why isn't that school being selected for closure?	The list will be completed in September in time to be presented to the School Board. We do not know which schools will be prioritized for renovation.
Anonymous The speaker just mentioned that they want to keep the staff of the renovated students together to follow the students. Who will be following Nottingham students when they are split among three schools? Anonymous The County Board's strategic vision is to increase housing supply. The Board Chair explicitly said they are trying to address a "housing crisis" in Arlington. The CIP report makes only passing mention of County Policy. How do you reconcile a policy that will reduce school capacity and place most North Arlington schools above 95% capacity when the County Board is following an explicit long-term	Nottingham students will go either to Discovery or Tuckahoe and will join those school communities. Because resources follow students and Nottingham teachers would receive priority in filling vacancies, it's possible some may move with Nottingham students. Each Year, APS updates its projections which include data from the County construction office. That way trends will become apparent with adequate time to react. Current projections show declines in the student enrollment. If needed in the future, Nottingham could be repurposed back to an elementary school.
growth strategy?	For reference, the system overall is projected to reach a total 95% capacity in 2025-26 and begin to decline

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	after that. North Arlington schools utilization will be consistent with the rest of the County.
Anonymous There are three option schools in Zones 2 and 3. If the major renovations are for those zones (or Zone 4), why not convert one of the option schools into swing space?	APS would still need a facility for swing space. The swing space site would be used by different schools for each project, as needed.

Anonymous (Unverified) How many full building	The Fenwick Building will be demolished to provide
demolitions do you anticipate?	space for the new ACC building.
	MPSA will be demolished after the existing ACC
	building is updated for use by MPSA.
	 At this time, APS does not have an anticipated number of full building demolitions. The study needs to be completed first. It's a multi-stage process. Even when study is complete, the School Board will tell APS which group of buildings to further examine. APS will look at whether the building should be renovated, replaced, or an addition and a renovation. This information comes after completing the 2nd phase of the study. After 2nd phase, APS will know what's going to happen and when. Facilities will also be working with Planning and Evaluation to look at enrollments and projections, which will feed into overall
Anonymous (Unverified) Will a swing space prohibit you from completing multiple renovations at the	discussion. A swing space will not prohibit us from completing multiple renovations at the same time, and not
same time?	having swing space will make things very difficult. In a larger presentation, the renovations at Abingdon
	were shared. The renovations were broken into nine
	different phases, and it made it very difficult for students and staff. APS is trying to avoid repeating
	that situation. We did it at McKinley, Ashlawn,
	Abingdon, and Yorktown. Each instance, it took
	longer, cost more, and hampered the building
	renovations. Best case is when we have an empty

	building.
	building.
Sarah (Unverified) The other sessions were run in tandem and I am not sure how the community can engage in both sessions at the same time. I am a Nottingham parent and am deeply concerned with this matter but also the other matter of closing my community school. Having these sessions at the same	The CIP process happens over a number of years. Multiple major projects at same time, may or may not occur. Facilities will have to work with Planning and Evaluation and Finance to see what projects need to be done and what we can afford when. It's possible to do multiple at a time, but we're trying to minimize and avoid that possibility. The recordings from the three rotations will be available on our website under Community Table Session Meeting Materials & Recordings. Staff will certainly keep this in mind when planning the future table sessions.
time is not a good idea in the future.	
Anonymous (Unverified) When will arlington county voters vote on the bond funds for these renovations? Nov 2024?	The Nov. 2024 Bond is anticipated to include funds for the long renovation plan and swing space will be included
Anonymous (Unverified) I don't think you understood my question. With a swing space, you can only complete one school renovation at a time. So how does that speed up the renovations?	 Swing space does not restrict APS from doing other, possibly smaller renovations at other facilities. As of today, we are not sure if we need to renovate or work on more than one project at a time or one major project. If full replacement renovation, then we have to think about where school has to go. Limited renovations or improvements, for example HVAC system at Barcroft, are being done while school is in session. Not every project that is an output from the study will result in a 100% replacement or renovation of building. We can still utilize swing space for whatever project where we need to physically move a school and at same time still work on minor projects in APS system.
Anonymous (Unverified) From what I can tell, APS will only have \$30 - \$40M to complete all the long-range facilities needs, because they are spending all their money on the Career Center site. Are you worried that we will run out of money before we can even use a swing space for remodeling anything?	When finalizing a CIP, the School Board has conversations with the county government and different funding departments. From the approved FY 2023-32 CIP, there appears to be \$30-40 million remaining. The Superintendent of Finance shared how revenue changes from year to year. Our availability of funding can change. The county may

see increased revenue which would contribute to our line. The funding line could change.

We are assuming that some of the renovations will not be a complete rebuild of a school. We could have a major renovation at one school but some renovations going on at other schools that are not complete overhauls.

Anonymous (Unverified) I'm struggling with why Nottingham and why not Syphax? Syphax has great capacity, parking, capacity to deal with transportation, and a fantastic location. Yes it is more expensive but once Syphax is retrofitted you have A WHOLE NEW SCHOOL in a location where capacity is badly needed. Not to mention relocating office workers to an office building should be seamless given the dire situation of office space in Arlington.

Locations all over the County were considered and alternative options were presented for comparison to the school board. See page A-116 in Appendix J for more information.

The potential steps and approximate costs for repurposing Syphax were less practical than repurposing an elementary school. Syphax would require an investment likely in the \$40-50 million dollar range. It assumes the building owner will allow it, and in the end, APS will have invested in a building that it doesn't own.

Repurposing a neighborhood elementary school with existing available capacity for swing space was recommended because it:

- Meets the minimum requirements and the educational specifications.
- Depending upon the school could have the lowest potential costs for repurposing a facility, leaving CIP funds available for renovations of other school facilities.
- Eleven neighborhood elementary schools are projected to have 90% capacity utilization or lower in 2026-27.

Regarding EHOs, 3 new townhouses were just approved zones for Taylor ES. How did the Pre-CIP take EHO into account when they didn't know the EHO pipeline at the time?

Would any Zone 1 schools be over capacity if Nottingham closes? Which ones would likely be over capacity? During his initial presentation on the swing space proposal, Dr. Duran suggested that would be the case.

See FAQ "Why does the planning unit data (Table 2) not include the Missing Middle (now known as Expanded Housing Options (EHO))? Will EHO housing be factored into projections? (Added 8/17)"

In the Pre-CIP Report Appendix K: Swing Space School Site Recommendation Report (p. A-217 or PDF p.259), the reassignments in the recommendation to repurpose Nottingham are estimates based on total projected enrollment at Nottingham and surrounding

If Nottingham is closed would come a suitting attribute	schools. They also include additional recessions and
If Nottingham is closed, would some existing students at nearby schools need to be redistricted to other APS schools? Can you comment specifically on how students at Tuckahoe, Discovery, and other Zone 1 schools would be impacted?	schools. They also include additional reassignments of students from Discovery to Taylor so that schools are able to manage their enrollment. Actual numbers may vary between now and Fall 2025 when the elementary boundary process will be conducted.
	Zone 1 is projected to have sufficient capacity, even if Nottingham is repurposed for swing space. The projections in the table below show Zone 1 neighborhood school capacity is 4,201. If Nottingham is to be repurposed as a swing space, Zone 1 capacity falls to 3,688 and there will be a surplus of 96 seats (excluding relocatable classroom capacity).
	In Spring of 2025, APS will use the most current enrollment and projections to prepare for the elementary boundary process guided by Policy B-2.1 Boundaries.
What are the eight swing space finalists?	The eight sites that met requirements and evaluation criteria for swing space include: 1. Repurpose neighborhood Elementary School (recommendation) 2. Repurpose Fairlington Community Center 3. Repurpose Washington-Liberty Annex 4. Build New Elementary School next to an existing school 5. Repurpose Syphax Education Center 6. Repurpose Current ACC Building on Career Center Site 7. Repurpose Commercial Building 8. Build a New Elementary School at Virginia Highlands Community Center and Park The Pre-CIP Report Appendix J, Swing Space Project Report, and Appendix K, Swing Space School Site Recommendation Report, details the process followed to identify a recommended swing space site.
Did APS engage with Arlington County regarding finding other swing space, such as using the Central Library property? Fairlington Community Center?	See FAQ "Did APS consider other locations?"
Did APS consider using the current Career Center as swing space?	See FAQ "Did APS consider other locations?"
Why not move Campbell to Nottingham to get a more central elementary school?	See FAQ "Did APS consider other locations?"

Are swing space educational specifications worksheets available online? Appendix D of swing space project report. If so, can you tell us where? If not, would you please make that data available?	The Pre-CIP Report Appendix D includes the worksheet template (p. A-182 or pdf p. 224). Note that it does not include education specifications for each of the sites because the team only did educational specifications as a task and not as a task compared to each site.
What is the list of renovations? How many schools need disruptive renovation?	See FAQ "What is the Long-Range Plan to Renovate Existing Facilities and when will it be available?"
Will cap-x for renovations be solely dedicated to facility improvements or should we anticipate another kazoo academy overspend disaster?	In the FY 2023-32 CIP, there was \$30-40 million available for renovations. Note that availability of funds for capital projects changes over time. The May 2024 Supt's Proposed FY 2025-34 CIP will update the available funds. Assumptions about renovations some may be smaller projects major projects may be scheduled for one school at a time.
Need to plan for summer. The cost of moving teachers, staff, and students to another school is extreme. We need schools and space for students yet somehow this school is empty and yet other schools are overcrowded. This makes no sense.	Smaller projects can scheduled during the summer and may be done without using a swing space; however, major renovations are disruptive to the school and community.
	Swing space will limit academic disruptions to students. It will also allow the projects to be completed quicker, reducing costs and safety risks.
Regarding a plan for staff attrition over the next 3 years, the answer on the slide that "we will have a plan" is a non-answer to one of the most significant issues in this process. Can you be more specific?	See FAQ "What will happen to the staff at Nottingham? Will they be transferred to other schools? (Added 7/27)"
Do you think Nottingham kids can receive a free and adequate public-school education (FAPE) with long-term substitutes, teachers covering each other, and admins teaching classes long term?	See FAQ "How will APS support families and students in their transition to their new location? (Added 8/22/23)"
Why did the Pre-CIP report make a recommendation to close Nottingham in contravention to ample data about unprecedented levels of stress and mental illness among students and teachers and the need to establish and maintain strong relationships with	APS' mission is to ensure all students learn and thrive in safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments. To minimize educational disruptions and social-emotional impacts:
admins and teachers?	 Families and staff play a key role in helping students through transitions. APS will work with impacted schools to facilitate transition activities. Students from Nottingham would move to nearby schools in sizable cohorts, join other

	students who will continue with them into M.S. and/or H.S.
	 Every year our schools welcome new families in PreK-12
Would your recommendation be different if	The Pre-CIP Report Appendix J, Swing Space Project
Nottingham was rated as #1 best school in the county	Report, and Appendix K, Swing Space School Site
and the 10 th best in the state of Virginia?	Recommendation Report, details the process
	followed to identify a recommended swing space site.
	APS evaluated 61 potential sites against educational
	specifications and additional requirements. APS
	recommends repurposing Nottingham as Swing
	Space.