


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

November 17, 2011

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Joshua P. Starr, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Recommendation to Conduct a New Site Selection Process for Bethesda-Chevy Chase Middle School #2

The construction of a new middle school in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster is necessary in order to address increasing enrollment in the cluster and to reassign Grade 6 students, currently served at Chevy Chase and North Chevy Chase elementary schools, to the middle school level. The new middle school is included in the *Superintendent's Recommended FY 2013 Capital Budget and the FY 2013–2018 Capital Improvements Program*, with a scheduled opening date of August 2017.

Determining a site for the new middle school has been a significant challenge in this largely built-out portion of the county, where few parcels of undeveloped land are available. A site selection process was conducted in December 2010 and January 2011 and a report from the Site Selection Advisory Committee (SSAC) was completed on March 8, 2011. The Board of Education took action on April 28, 2011, to select Rock Creek Hills Local Park—one of the two locations recommended by the SSAC—as the site for the new middle school.

Following Board of Education action on the Rock Creek Hills Local Park site, a concern was raised about the site selection process. I determined that these concerns and complications with federal funds used to develop the park were eroding support for the site and that the best course of action was to conduct the site selection process again, including an expanded group of stakeholders and being as inclusive as possible. In addition, I recommended that the new process be conducted to allow any additional candidate sites be identified and evaluated by the new SSAC.

WHEREAS, On November 2, 2011, the superintendent of schools recommended commencement of a new site selection process for the new Bethesda-Chevy Chase Middle School #2 in order to address concerns about the previous process and to provide an opportunity to reconsider all candidate sites considered by the previous Site Selection Advisory Committee and to identify any additional candidate sites; and

WHEREAS, On November 8, 2011, the superintendent of schools provided a memorandum to the Board of Education describing how the new site selection process would be conducted, including the following:

- New provisions for use of an external facilitator to lead the meetings;
- Representation of homeowners associations who serve the communities surrounding candidate sites of the Site Selection Advisory Committee;
- Solicitation of candidate sites in advance of the first meeting of the Site Selection Advisory Committee;
- The ability of the Site Selection Advisory Committee members to submit minority reports for the Site Selection Advisory Committee report at the conclusion of the process;
- A period of public review of public sites recommended by the Site Selection Advisory Committee prior to Board of Education action;

and

WHEREAS, In the memorandum dated November 8, 2011, the superintendent of schools recommended that the previous Board action of selecting Rock Creek Hills Local Park for the site of the new middle school be rescinded and cautioned that it not be interpreted as meaning that this site no longer is a candidate for the new middle school; and

WHEREAS, The new site selection process is an expansion of the process described in Montgomery County Public Schools Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning*; now therefore be it

Resolved, That Board of Education Resolution No. 221-11, selecting the Rock Creek Hills Local Park as the site of the new Bethesda-Chevy Chase Middle School #2, is hereby rescinded; and be it further

Resolved, That a new site selection process for Bethesda-Chevy Chase Middle School #2 be conducted to reconsider previous sites and to consider any other candidate sites that may be identified through the new process.

JPS:LAB:JS:lm