



Representing 1,200 Montgomery County Households

November 17, 2011

Board of Education  
Montgomery County Public Schools  
Carver Educational Services Center  
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 123  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Subject: East Bethesda Community Implementation Request

President Barclay, Vice President Brandman, Members of the Board, and Superintendent Starr:

Thank you for addressing our longstanding concerns with the partial pairing of Bethesda and Rosemary Hills elementary schools.

The superintendent's recommendation for the Board of Education (BOE) to adopt the boundary changes reviewed by the Boundary Advisory Committee as Option #5 is consistent with East Bethesda's longstanding positions. We also wish to articulate our support for additions to provide adequate capacity for all students.

The Superintendent's implementation recommendations for East Bethesda in his 17 November 2011 memorandum to the Board (Action 2.0) are phased in the following schedule:

- Reassignments from Rosemary Hills Elementary School to Bethesda Elementary School (Zones B-5 and B-6 - *East Bethesda*), beginning in the 2013-2014 school year with Grades K-1, and ending in the 2014-2015 school year with Grades K-2.

**We respectfully request additional consideration to "ensure a careful transition for the students and communities."** We ask that the BOE implement the following liberal transfer policies, along with the currently available transportation options, to be included in the boundary decision passed on November 17th. **Specifically we ask that the BOE consider including the following in Action 2.0:**

1) Make clear that those already at North Chevy Chase (NCC) and Chevy Chase (CC) elementary schools under the Change of Assignment process (COSA) be allowed to stay at these schools with transportation.

2) Currently students starting Kindergarten 2012-2013 would have to attend Rosemary Hills Primary School (RHPS) for only one year and then go on to Bethesda Elementary school (BE). With the overcrowding at RHPS, we request they be allowed to attend BE for Kindergarten if there is space at BE.

3) The boundary change is designed to avoid the RHPS/BE (3-5) articulation pattern. Please allow students already at RHPS prior to boundary change the option to stay in the RHPS/NCC/CC track with transportation.

- If you are unwilling to allow all students at RHPS prior to the boundary change this option, we request you at least allow those with older siblings at NCC/CC to remain in this track with their older siblings with transportation.

4) We understand it is normal MCPS practice to have the students in their final year at a school with a boundary change to complete that school; however this is not the normal case. We request these students have the option to attend BE in 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade in the 2013-2014 school year- (where they will be

assigned in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in the 2014-2015 school year).

- If you are unwilling to allow all 2<sup>nd</sup> graders this option, we request you at least allow those with siblings at BE in 2013-2014 to also attend BE in 2013-2014 school year.

5) There are a small number of families with students at both RHPS and BE in the 2012-2013 school year prior to the boundary implementation. We request you allow these students to attend BE beginning in 2012-2013 with their siblings.

We believe **the requests are appropriate** in light of the differences between the pairing of Rosemary Hills and Chevy Chase/North Chevy Chase on the one hand, and the K-5 articulation at Bethesda Elementary on the other hand. **Transferring students from one system to the other is significantly more complicated than the usual boundary change involving two K-5 schools.**

We recognize that the **requests** above reflect liberal grandfathering policies, but they are **time-limited in nature**, would **provide profound relief to the small number of impacted families**, and we believe **similar relief is warranted for all communities who have endured the hardships of the partial paired assignment** of:

- Rosemary Hills Primary School (a K to 2nd grade school) for grades K to 2.
- Bethesda Elementary (a K to 5th grade school) for grades 3 to 5.

**Thank you**, we appreciate your attention to the concerns we have raised, we hope you will act on our requests, and we look forward to working with MCPS and the Board of Education to implement these projects to meet the educational needs of our children.

Sincerely,

//electronically signed//

Monica Hayes  
Education Chair  
East Bethesda Citizens Association