

Annandale Study FAQs

Why is there such overcrowding at Annandale High School?

While many county schools have experienced significant growth, the crowding at Annandale High School is extreme when compared to other schools. Due to site constraints, Annandale cannot readily absorb the continued influx of students. Because of the slump in the economy and the depressed housing market, people have not moved out of the area, but Fairfax County's ability to attract jobs did not diminish. Student migration from adjacent jurisdictions and students coming from private schools also affected school enrollments. This can be validated by the fact that Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) has gained approximately 5,200 additional students in last two years.

Why doesn't Fairfax County Public Schools construct additional classrooms to be added to Annandale High School to relieve the crowding?

The site of Annandale High School is physically built out and does not have sufficient land area for additions. Even if it were possible, adding additional classrooms might provide more student spaces but would not increase the core capacity of the school. The core spaces, which include hallways, cafeteria, library, restrooms, and media centers, are all an integral part of operating efficiency and instructional effectiveness.

Why aren't other options under consideration for reassignment as part of this study?

The School Board directed the Office of Facilities Planning Services staff members to conduct a limited scope study to relieve Annandale High School and Poe Middle School from overcrowding by using underutilized space at Falls Church High School, Lake Braddock Secondary School (high), Glasgow Middle School, and Lake Braddock Secondary School (middle).

This recommended boundary change considers selected areas that staff members believe would inevitably be included for change even under a broader study. It also minimizes change to the demographic character in both sending and receiving schools while providing meaningful relief for Annandale. Reduced enrollment of 150 to 200 students frees up six to eight class sections and classrooms. A broader study with a much-expanded scope and multiple options is expected for this area in the future. The opening of Lacey Center as an elementary school will be a major factor in determining the extent of changes. Other areas will be looked at with several options during this future study.

If approved by the School Board, how soon would the boundary changes take effect?

Because middle and high school students are already registering now for this fall, the proposed changes cannot be implemented until the 2010-11 school year. Staff members are exploring the possibility of extending an option to middle schools students to begin this fall, if registration, curriculum, and staffing changes can be accommodated.

What students will be grandfathered and allowed to remain at Annandale, and what transportation will be provided?

Typically, in a high school boundary study, the School Board grandfatheres rising seniors, who are 12th graders and transportation is provided. Since this study also includes changes at the middle school level, the rising eighth graders at the affected middle schools will also be grandfathered, and transportation for them will be provided. Grade 11 IB students (current grade 9 students) who are deemed to be IB diploma candidates will also have the option to remain at Annandale High School with transportation.

What impact will this have on International Baccalaureate (IB) students--especially those middle school students who are currently in the middle years IB program (IBMYP)?

Grade 12 IB diploma candidates (current grade 10 students) will be grandfathered to stay at Annandale High School. Grade 11 IB students (current grade 9 students) who are also deemed to be IB diploma candidates will also have the option to remain at Annandale High School. Transfer options under the pupil placement guidelines will be available for those students who want to pursue an IB diploma but will most likely be assigned to either Lee or Stuart High School; however, transportation would not be provided. Currently, no provision exists for IBMYP students currently in grade 8 and lower to attend other IB schools in the area. However, transfer options remain under the prevailing pupil placement guidelines.

How does this study conform to and/or address School Board policies and regulations?

Policy 8130 sets forth the School Board's authority to redistrict school boundaries to "improve operating efficiency and/or instructional effectiveness." The proposed boundary change conforms to the policy by taking into consideration proximity of schools to student residences, projected enrollment, capacity, school feeder alignments, demographics, and contiguous school attendance areas as stipulated in the policy considerations.

The assignment of students to Falls Church High School eliminates an attendance island. The assignment of students to Lake Braddock Secondary School relieves both Poe Middle School and Annandale High School and respects existing major roads, I-495 and Rt. 236, which border the area to be moved. The proposal sends students to schools with the

largest of surplus capacities and would result in minimal demographic changes. The proposal to move students from Poe Middle School to Glasgow Middle School aligns the feeders at the middle to high school level because the Poe students proposed to be reassigned and Glasgow students feed to Stuart High School.

What about future boundary studies and changes?

The School Board has directed FCPS staff members to develop a comprehensive plan and process that can better anticipate the need for and timing of changes to facilities that could include boundary and/or program changes or building additions. A comprehensive plan would be used to guide School Board decisions on these matters and as well as provide guidance to staff members on the annual capital improvement program and investment in facility improvements. The plan would rely on more in-depth research prior to initiating changes, including current and projected enrollments, potential new residential growth, existing and proposed programs, and other factors specific to the area. Looking at the recent enrollment growth in the area and demographics, it is likely that there may be some recommendations for the Annandale area. In addition, staff members will review the elementary school boundaries with the opening of a new elementary school at the Lacey site.

What are the dates for the information meetings?

April 27, 2009--Falls Church High School

April 28, 2009--Annandale High School

April 29, 2009--Lake Braddock Secondary School

What is the schedule for the School Board to consider this boundary study and how can I have input?

The School Board will conduct a public hearing on the proposal on June 3, 2009, and will take action on June 25, 2009, at Jackson Middle School. Both of these meetings are open to the public. Requests to speak at a public hearing must be submitted either online or by calling 571-423-1075 by 4:30 p.m. on the last business day prior to the meeting date to ensure an individual's place on the speakers list. The School Board chairman shall decide when the speakers list is full, because the process may require additional nights.

Only individuals who have signed up in advance will have an opportunity to speak at a public hearing (unless a speaker who has signed up agrees to permit someone to substitute and speak on his or her behalf). Each speaker on the list shall limit his or her remarks to three minutes. The Board expects that speakers deliver their comments with the decorum and respect appropriate to the conduct of the public's business. Speakers at public hearings must limit their remarks to the topic germane to the public hearing.