

BOUNDARY PROCESS GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS
Agreed on by the Members of the Fairfax County School Board
October 15, 2007

1. Carefully review staff boundary adjustment study recommendation
 - a. What is the problem or objective the study is designed to address or achieve?
 - b. Do the areas and the schools to be included encompass a broad enough geographic area to ensure that all schools likely to be impacted are included?
 - c. What are the key decision criteria to be considered in formulating any school boundary changes?
 - i. What is the order of importance?
 - ii. Should any other criteria be included?

2. After agreement by the Board to begin a boundary adjustment study, Board Members should do the following:
 - a. District Members whose schools are directly impacted by the area to be studied, and any other interested Member, should review the staff communication plan to ensure the affected communities receive sufficient information including:
 - i. The Letters/Flyers/Notices to be sent;
 - ii. Timing for sending;
 - iii. The schools and how parents will be notified; and
 - iv. Neighborhood or community associations and how they will be notified.

 - b. Affirm the Board's decision to proceed with the study with their respective communities and:
 - i. Reinforce your personal engagement as a Board Member in the boundary process and that you will be actively listening to all participants and the issues presented;
 - ii. Seek ways to reaffirm the purpose of the study while acknowledging the challenges and reiterating the decision criteria to be used;
 - iii. Support staff as they follow the Board's expectation that they will:
 1. Follow the decision criteria spelled-out by the Board;
 2. Present the most accurate information available; and
 3. Professionally sort through the multitude of options available to arrive at their recommendation to the Board.
 - iv. Remind the public that the Board has charged staff with performing the boundary study and holding town meetings and that the Board's next involvement and action role begins after staff has completed their work and makes their recommendation to the Board.

 - c. Reinforce the value and purpose of the study process in constituent communications.
 - i. Remind constituents of the Board's objectives for asking staff to perform the study and reiterate in constituent communications the study's specific decision criteria on which the Board's decision will be based.
 - ii. Direct constituents to the staff's town meeting process and urge them to participate.
 - iii. Reinforce that Board Members have agreed to be observers and to actively listen during the staff portion of the boundary study and to refrain from commenting on staff study activities, except to encourage community participation, until after staff makes their recommendation to the Board.
 - iv. Encourage effective community input within the process to maximize effectiveness, not through separate meetings.

- v. Refrain from making comments or offering alternative scenarios that might undercut the boundary study process while it is being performed by staff.
 - vi. Refrain from making public comments in advance of the public hearings that imply or confirm that you have already made a decision on the boundaries
- d. Communicate with our communities:
- i. Create email templates of responses that help to reinforce the Board approved decision criteria and highlight the most effective ways to communicate questions, support or concerns and to be involved:
 1. Pre town meeting
 2. During town meetings
 3. Post town meeting/recommendations by staff
 4. Post Board public hearings
- e. Communicate with other Board Members:
- i. Share comments from the affected communities;
 - ii. After staff's recommendation to the Board, discuss individually with Members alternatives the Board may want to consider; and
 - iii. After the Board's public hearings, send to Members modifications or amendments that you want the Board to consider.