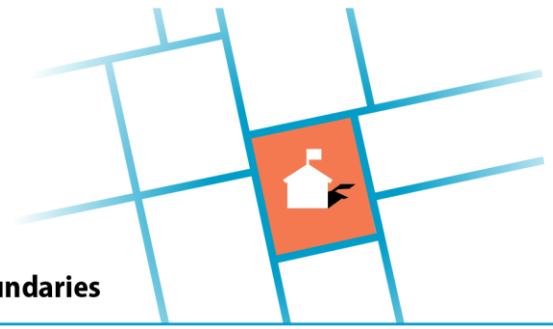




Redistricting

at Alexandria City Public Schools

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ACPS Redistricting Update - September 20, 2016

As the redistricting process gets under way this fall, ACPS would like to inform you about some proposed changes.

The implementation of the new boundaries is likely to be pushed back to the fall of 2018 to align the process with the opening of the new Patrick Henry and West End schools.

The retrofit of the West End building is now expected to be ready in September 2018 – the same time the new Patrick Henry School will open its doors to students. The pre-K center – potentially to be co-located within John Adams Elementary School – is also likely to open in 2018.

This means that all student movements for boundary changes, new schools and pre-K would be scheduled to take place at the same time, simplifying and streamlining what would otherwise be a complicated logistical process. Although no final decision has been made, this coordinated timeline makes more sense than trying to implement multiple timelines for different facilities.

Last week, the Alexandria City Planning Commission agreed that ACPS' proposal to purchase West End office space and convert it into an elementary school was consistent with the master plan for the City.

ACPS has until the end of September to conduct a review of the proposed site of the new West End school before making any final decision. This review period may need to be extended, which would impact the original plan to open the school in 2017. The City will be informed of and included in all discussions, but any final decision regarding the property will be made by the School Board.

The plan currently under review is to purchase and retrofit the office building at 1701 N. Beauregard, making substantial changes to the inside to convert it into space suitable for approximately 650 elementary students. The purchase would include the parking garage adjacent to the building, part of which would be converted into outdoor space for students at the school.

This kind of retrofit has been utilized in school divisions across the country including the highly successful urban school at Bailey's Upper Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences. ACPS

staff is confident that this model is an efficient and effective way to create new learning spaces and help reduce capacity issues. The anticipated cost of purchasing the land and retrofitting the building will be significantly lower than long-term leasing of the building, or purchasing land and constructing a new school.

A West End school, along with the increased size of the new Patrick Henry School will help ease ACPS capacity issues. This school year marks the first time that the ACPS student population has exceeded the seats available. Division-wide capacity based on the Long Range Plan currently has approximately 1,200 fewer seats than the projected 2016-17 student enrollment. This seating deficit is projected to increase further in the next five years. By FY 2026, ACPS is projected to have approximately 20,000 students, up from 15,220 today.

ACPS explored multiple options for the pre-K location but was not able to find a suitable stand-alone site that met our criteria. As a result of site constraints and programmatic feedback, we concluded that co-locating the pre-K center within John Adams Elementary School was the most optimal solution.

This model accomplishes both the goal of purchasing a building for a new school and creating a stand-alone pre-K facility that provides opportunity for integration with a K through five program using available funds.

John Adams was identified as a potential site for the pre-K center, as it is designed for the needs of pre-K students. It currently houses the largest number of ACPS Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) students, Early Childhood Special Education students and Head Start students combined. It also has outdoor space specifically designed for pre-K. This model addresses several suggestions from the community and ACPS' early education partners, and fits the School Board's academic model for elementary schools to accommodate between 600 and 850 students.

The pre-K center, which would serve up to 360 students in 20 classrooms, will offer a range of wraparound services. This model will promote joint professional development and collaboration of staff employed by the schools and Campagna (Head Start) and support the Early Care in Education Workgroup's mission of seamless points of entry for parents seeking services. It will also promote joint program development and delivery within VPI and Head Start while maintaining critical funding streams and other policy requirements required for state and federal funding.

The Redistricting Review Committee will discuss these possible changes at their meeting this Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at 7 p.m. at Patrick Henry Elementary School. All meetings are open to the public.