

CAPA-MC statement on MCPS Board of Education's Countywide School Boundary Analysis

CAPA-MC is deeply concerned about the transparency, equity participation, and many flaws of the recent Countywide School Boundary Analysis by WXY Inc. Many CAPA-MC members have participated in some of the recent MCPS school boundary studies and believe the process was transparent and fair to all the communities involved, especially the families. However, after the publication of the revised FAA policy by BOE in late 2018 and the recently approved Seneca Valley High School boundary study, questions remain on whether BOE and MCPS's approach would serve the best interests of our students, parents, and families.

1. School Boundary Studies are carried out when population changes. New school is built or old school gets expansion when student population grow. School boundary studies are necessary to relief student population growth, facility concerns, and new developments and are essential to ensure a healthy long-term school environment for all students. We fully support and understand those needs.
2. There are more than 23,000, Asian American students in MCPS, accounting for 14.4% of total students. It's evident that, as a community, we value diversity and equal access in public schools, and we thrive on a very diverse student and staff bodies in MCPS.
3. We also appreciate MCPS's commitment to the five core values that define what it means to be an exceptional school system: Learning, Relationships, Respect, Excellence and Equity (LRREE). With these values in mind, our community believes the recent Countywide School Boundary Analysis is not in concert with LRREE. The WXY Analysis has unwisely used much needed resources to create unnecessary confusion and uncertainty for all the parents of 162,680 student families, not just our immigrant community who are trying very hard to establish roots and a sense of community in our new home in America. **Countless researches have shown that Uncertainty is the last thing new immigrant families want to experience and also the biggest obstacle for all children's success in Learning, Relationships, and Excellence.**
4. Our community also found that the process of WXY Analysis is very unequal regarding our input and concerns with this process, and almost feel we have been rushed and manipulated into believing the study is most critical to solve all the academic achievement problems by redrawing boundaries to balance out certain student bodies.
5. Though the Consultant emphasis on no recommendations will be made and only a study of current school situations, it is not the most convincing for such long, well planned development over last two years. Doing a study without purpose or next step plan seemed to be unnecessary. **Many questions remain unanswered, especially how those changes will impact family and students' daily routine.**
6. Using "Ever Farm" rate by MCPS and WXY to define diversity and equity also created wide confusion because it exaggerates the total number of students on FRAM. Many families, especially the families of immigrants, do climb out of poverty after obtained job skill via education and training.
7. Though important, using Ever FARMS Rate as a benchmark to evaluate how MCPS has been doing with Diversity and Inclusion is definitely not the best way, which does not reflect the

whole picture of the communities. When we talk about Diversity, we do not only talk about FARMS rate, we also talk about culture, ethnicity, gender, personality, race, religion etc. The Study is not a reflection of Diversity and Inclusion in our communities, and it is a contrast to what we have believed in the LRREE core values. As a matter of fact, currently, four out of top ten most diverse cities in the nation are in Montgomery County.

(<https://wallethub.com/edu/cities-with-the-most-and-least-ethno-racial-and-linguistic-diversity/10264/>). We would love to see such diversity is treated with respect. During the recent SVHS Boundary Study and WXY Analysis community meetings, some concerned immigrant parents with strong accents and less savvy communication skills were ignored by WXY host and even humiliated by native speaking activists who, we believe, may have the students' best interests in their hearts, yet completely disrespected these parents, who worked hard and juggled busy schedules, but still made time to participate in this important Study. You may not agree with these parents, but such disrespectful action should be denounced and stopped.

8. CAPA-MC strongly urges that in the second stage of the WXY Countywide School Boundary Analysis, WXY, MCPS and BOE respect and engage diverse parents AND students themselves, and provide more time for in-depth discussions on the possible resolution's impact on students' holistic mental health and energy level, family coordination of students' daily activities, long term learning experience before and after the possible changes, among other concerns. Only by patiently and genuinely addressing these concerns could BOE and MCPS achieve the goal of using redistricting to solve the Diversity and Inclusion problems.

As a community organization focusing on education, CAPA-MC very much values the strong partnership and candid trust with MCPS and BOE. It is our obligation here to provide our community's input and look forward to making good progress in this topic. We also request WXY to discuss their study with our community directly so the residents could speak freely without worrying if their spoken English sounds correctly in both grammar and vocabulary.

Thank you!

CAPA-MC

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