

FCPS Community Meetings to Discuss School Boundaries

All in-person community meetings

This document summarizes the key outcomes that community members identified under Question 3 regarding school boundary changes, along with direct excerpts from their discussions.

Question 3:

What do you hope the outcomes of this boundary review process will be? How could this review process positively impact our community?

Minimizing Disruption to Students and Families

Community members expressed a strong desire to minimize disruptions for students, ensuring stability in their academic and social environments. Many parents worry about students being forced to change schools in the middle of their education, which could affect their mental health and academic performance. There is strong support for grandfathering policies that allow students to complete their education at their current schools.

- "Minimal impact to students/disruption."
- "Students will not have to move during their Senior year."
- "Grandfathering to finish out in the same pyramid will be an option."
- "FCPS understands people want longer transition time so kids don't have to move schools mid-experience."
- "Keeping social continuity for students with pyramids (elementary → middle → high school) to keep friends together."
- "Grandfather kids of secondary or elementary schools to avoid disruption."
- "Do not move existing 7–12th graders."
- "Siblings should stay together regardless!"

Equitable Access to Programs and Resources

Many families emphasized the importance of ensuring that all students, regardless of where they live, have equal access to educational programs. Concerns were raised about disparities in access to Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and specialized programs like gifted and language immersion. Parents and students hope

boundary adjustments will focus on bringing programs to all schools rather than forcing students to travel long distances to access them.

- "Programs are bolstered without needing to shuffle students."
- "Even distribution of resources across the county."
- "Bring programs to students, not vice versa."
- "Ensure that ESOL students and special education programs are evenly distributed."
- "Local AAP access."
- "More options for AAP, Special Ed, Title I, etc., for families to find the right programs for their students locally without needing to sacrifice long-distance travel."
- "Disparities in course offerings will be eliminated."
- "Why do some schools have 26 AP choices vs. 9 at a similar school?"

Transparency and Community Engagement

Families want a clear and transparent decision-making process, with more direct involvement from the community. There is widespread concern about the lack of clear communication regarding how boundary decisions are made and what data is used. Parents expect the school board to actively listen to their feedback and incorporate it into the final decisions.

- "Listen to and incorporate feedback—especially from caregivers."
- "More data on consultation and transparency."
- "Transparency—focus on what needs to be addressed."
- "We want transparency and hope the school board will take the opportunity to be clear and open."
- "Process transparency (town halls, clear data, and input from representatives)."
- "Transparency of the review of boundaries."
- "Eager to see public data on how decisions are made."
- "Ensure the decision-making process is community-driven and fair."

Transportation and Proximity Considerations

Many parents emphasized the importance of keeping students close to their schools to reduce long and inefficient commutes. There is strong support for prioritizing walkability, improving bus routes, and reducing transportation times for students. Community members also highlighted the need for better planning to prevent students from having to cross dangerous roads or rely on extensive busing.

- "Reduce transportation times."
- "Shorter bus times for elementary students."
- "Walking or biking options specifically for high-school in the boundary."
- "Concerns about lack of sidewalks impacting walkability."
- "Students should not have to cross major highways to reach their schools safely."
- "Better bus routes - less passing of other schools, shorter rides/distance to stops."
- "Time on bus—traffic and bus patterns."
- "Transportation costs should be factored into the decision-making process."

Stability of Communities and Home Values

Parents expressed concerns about the impact of boundary changes on neighborhood cohesion and home values. Many families purchased homes specifically for their school assignments and fear that redistricting could negatively affect their property values. There is hope that boundary adjustments will maintain community stability and minimize economic disruptions.

- "People move into certain areas to attend certain schools/greatly impacts home values."
- "Home values can change with boundary lines."
- "Impact on property values and economy based on rezoning, with a shift out of public school into private school."
- "Concerned that boundary changes could concentrate low-income students in certain schools."
- "Afraid that lower-income neighborhoods will all be linked together and lose access to all resources + people."
- "Keep kids in their pyramid or give parents the option to choose."
- "Hope that FC does not get 'shaken up.'"
- "Ensuring that families can stay in the same school system without moving."