

Redistricting Public Hearing Comments- DECEMBER 8, 2016

Abby Ingols

My name is Abby Ingols. I am a resident of Planning Block 72 and the parent of two children who attend George Mason Elementary School. In all maps that are currently under consideration, PB72 is moved out of George Mason's boundaries.

Residents of Planning Block 72 and the George Mason PTA have come up with several viable solutions which would allow PB72 students to remain at George Mason. These solutions include using relocatable classrooms for music and support teachers, and accelerating the date of the rebuild at George Mason. From the start, the school board, ACPS and its contractors have been adamant that community participation is an integral component of the redistricting process. Parents of students in PB72 have been active and vocal in the process, perhaps more than any community in the city, yet none of our concerns are reflected in the recent maps. This is despite the fact that moving PB72 out of George Mason's boundaries violates several of the redistricting criteria.

Removing the students from Planning Block 72 from George Mason's boundaries will necessitate current walkers to utilize bus transportation. In many cases, it will more than double the distance our children travel to school. Converting current PB72 walkers to bus riders blatantly violates the redistricting criteria and is unfair. The importance of attending a neighborhood school has been ignored.

Yesterday, a petition was delivered via email to school board members urging the board to keep Planning Block 72 within George Mason's boundaries. This petition was signed by more than 150 residents of PB72 and concerned community members. Please consider our request to keep our children in their neighborhood school. Keep George Mason's current boundaries intact. Thank you.