

From: Patrick Henry and Samuel Tucker PTA Boards

To: ACPS Superintendent and School Board

Subject: Overcrowded and Under-Utilized Elementary Schools in ACPS

Date: 30 November 2022

ACPS School Board and Dr. Kay-Wyatt,

We'd like to again acknowledge and thank you for the work you've done to address the overcrowding issues at our school. We appreciate the time and effort you've put into discussing and thinking about this issue. While we've made progress and alleviated some of the most pressing problems, overcrowding at several ACPS elementary schools is still an issue and a long-term solution needs to be found. The presentation on school capacity at the November 28th school board work session plainly showed the gravity of the situation. The simple fact that four of our elementary schools are 110% or more over capacity while another four schools are 80% or less under capacity can only be viewed as a major problem that needs to be addressed now. The included map shows the geographic distribution of overcrowded and under-utilized schools. It clearly shows a disproportionate impact to west end students. It also highlights the fact that overcrowded schools are located next to under-utilized schools and calls into question the current school boundaries.

Problems of this nature cannot simply be fixed by adding a couple of teaching assistants or another classroom (assuming a school even has room for another classroom). It is going to take a major change in resources and a shift in student populations. The planning and execution of such changes need to happen now so they can be communicated to our community and can be completed by the start of the next school year. Those of us who are parents and caregivers in these overcrowded schools understand the situation was unique this year after two years of a pandemic that directly impacted the school system; we don't blame ACPS for the situation and are willing to give you time to fix the issue. However, you now know about the problem and whether you like it or not, it's your problem to solve. As our school system's administrative leaders and elected officials, we are calling on you to listen to your constituents and make this issue your top priority. We should not find our school system in this same predicament next school year. If we do, you as the leaders of our school system will have to own the problem and explain to the parents and caregivers of our students why you choose not to address the problem and let some students languish in overcrowded schools while other schools sit ideal and unused.

As we've said from the beginning, both Patrick Henry and Samuel Tucker want ACPS to prioritize smaller class sizes. ACPS needs to prioritize rezoning/redistricting our school to reduce the number of enrolled children in overcrowded schools in subsequent years to achieve smaller and balanced class sizes. ACPS should also find ways to increase the capacity and resources of the school system to ensure a more even distribution of students across the schools and access to important educational resources. The parents and caregivers of our school system want smaller class sizes, more capacity across the district and

resources for proper distribution; and we are here to help, but we need you to develop the plan and show us the way.

Sincerely,

Patrick Henry and Samuel Tucker PTA Boards

STRATEGIC PLAN: EQUITY FOR ALL

Building Utilization

