

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ZONE
2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR**

DECISION AND ORDER

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On April 3, 2018, the Board of Education issued a charge to the Facilities Enrollment Advisory Committee (FEAC) to examine school boundaries in preparation for the opening of the new Sharpsburg Elementary replacement school.

The FEAC was requested to provide recommendations on the development of a new attendance zone for the anticipated opening of the new Sharpsburg Elementary replacement school, which was to include recommendations for long-term enrollment relief at Boonsboro Elementary and other adjacent schools as needed. The Sharpsburg Elementary project is to be completed in time for the opening of the 2020-2021 school year.

Following that, FEAC met six (6) times and considered eight (8) possible attendance zone realignment options—a process that has been reported numerous times in the local media and through the Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) website.

On November 13, 2018, FEAC presented a progress report to the Board of Education at a public meeting. At that time, the Board offered feedback to the group in anticipation of the final report that was expected in February of 2019. On February 19, 2019, the group presented the Report and Recommendations for a New Sharpsburg Elementary Attendance Zone to the Board in a public business meeting. At that time, the Board was provided an opportunity to ask questions about the report.

After the Board's public business meeting, the Superintendent further reviewed the FEAC's work and issued a final report to the Board, which was presented on March 19, 2019, at the Board of Education's public business meeting. The reports from FEAC and the Superintendent were then presented and discussed at the April 16, 2019 public hearing, where the Board heard comments from community members.

The school system communicated the recommendations to families in the Sharpsburg, Boonsboro, and Pleasant Valley communities through various platforms. A notice was sent via the U.S. Postal Service to every affected address that was known to the Washington County Government's Geographical Information System (GIS) records. Affected schools partnered with the Public Information Office to disseminate notices through social media and letters sent directly to the homes of parents.

Notifications were also distributed through the WCPS Connect system—through phone calls, e-mails, and text messages. A copy of the reports from the FEAC and the Superintendent, along with a listing of all affected addresses, was available for inspection at each affected school and the Center for Education Services. This information was also available online, accessible from the WCPS home page. Additionally, the WCPS website and social media channels, Board business meetings, advertising in The Herald Mail, and extensive coverage in the local media were all ways the realignment recommendations were communicated to the public by the Board and WCPS.

Additionally, notice of the Board of Education's final vote scheduled for May 21, 2019, was publicized on the WCPS website, communicated to the media, posted to the WCPS Facebook and Twitter pages, advised in The Herald Mail, and a notice was distributed to students to share with families at each school potentially affected by the Board's decisions.

The members of the Board of Education considered three (3) boundary realignment recommendations.

An overview of the process was provided during the public business meeting on May 21, 2019, and the Board of Education was requested to consider each recommendation one-by-one.

DECISION AND ORDER

After due consideration of each recommendation, the members of the Board of Education of Washington County voted at their public business meeting on May 21, 2019, to approve three (3) boundary realignments.

The approved minutes of the public business meeting conducted on May 21, 2019, reflect the action and formal vote of the Board of Education.

This Decision and Order serves to confirm the action taken by the Board of Education at its public business meeting on May 21, 2019.



Melissa Williams, President
Board of Education of Washington County

May 24, 2019

Date of Washington County Board of
Education's Decision for Appeal Purposes

NOTICE OF DECISION

Notice of the Board of Education's decision will be posted on the school system's website and advertised in The Herald Mail, a paper of general circulation in Washington County, Maryland. Media coverage of the Board's decision was provided by The Herald-Mail.

NOTICE OF APPEAL PROCESS

The date of the Board of Education of Washington County's decision for appeal purposes is May 24, 2019.

In accordance with Board of Education Policy JCA, within five (5) business days from the date of the Board of Education's decision (for appeal purposes the date of the Board of Education's decision is May 24, 2019) to accept a recommendation regarding changes in attendance areas, any interested parent/resident may appeal, in writing, by a timely notice to the President of the Board of Education, 10435 Downsville Pike, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740. The parent/resident shall state in writing specific objections to the Board of Education's decision and the basis for such objections. The Board of Education shall, within five (5) business days of said written objection, respond in writing to such objections.

An appeal may also be filed within thirty (30) days of the date of the Board of Education's decision (for appeal purposes the date of the Board of Education's decision is May 24, 2019) to the Maryland State Board of Education as provided by §4-205(c) of the Education Article and the Code of Maryland Administrative Regulations Chapter 13A.01.05 – *Appeals to the State Board of Education*.