

CMS 2009-2010 School Boundary Options Public Engagement Meeting West Region

**West Mecklenburg High
October 2, 2008**

Purpose: to obtain meaningful feedback from parents and community residents on boundary options. CMS staff will present boundary options and the reasoning behind the options, listen and record input, answer questions and clarify boundaries. Parents and community residents will share perspectives, ideas and reactions to the boundary options.

Discussion: boundary options for-

- new Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road Elementary, opening 2009-2010 school year
 - Schools possibly impacted: Mountain Island and Paw Creek Elementary Schools
- new Belmeade Middle, opening 2009-2010 school year
 - Schools possibly impacted: Coulwood, Sedgefield, Wilson and Kennedy Middle Schools
- New Youngblood/Steele Creek Road Elementary, opening 2009-2010 school year
 - Schools possibly impacted: Lake Wylie and Winget Park Elementary schools
- New York Road/Red Fez Club Road Elementary, opening 2010-2011 school year
 - Schools possibly impacted: Lake Wylie and Winget Park Elementary schools
- New Dixie River Road Elementary, opening 2009-2010 school year
 - Schools possibly impacted: Berryhill and Steele Creek Elementary schools

CMS Personnel Present:

Scott McCully, Executive Director, Planning Services & Student Placement
Rev. Tom Tate, School Board Member, District 4
Dr. Elva Cooper, Area Superintendent, West Learning Community
Christine Hamlett, Planning Specialist, Planning Services Department
Jennifer Dean, Planning Specialist, Planning Services Department
Charles Dickerson, West Meck Assistant Principal, (host school)

Attendance: approximately 17

Welcome: Scott McCully opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and expressing appreciation for their participation in the boundary process.

Each person attending received an informational brochure, maps of 2 boundary options for each new school and demographic datasheets for each option. Later in the meeting, each table received a worksheet to be completed by small groups and turned in at the conclusion of the meeting.

A PowerPoint presentation explained the boundary options as shown by the maps provided. It was stressed that the maps are options, not proposals or scenarios. The maps and datasheets are provided as a starting point for discussions/options. Community input may impact the

boundary proposals that are presented to the School Board in October. Once the boundaries are presented to the Board, they will also be posted on the CMS Website. Questions were asked to clarify boundary options and to help understand the maps. It was explained that several things are taken into consideration when creating the boundary options: natural boundaries, contiguous boundaries, student stability, and the student data file. The Planning Services Department uses GIS, county data, student data and other resources when creating boundary options.

The process timeline was shared —

- Public engagement meetings are held during September & October
- October 14 - Boundary recommendations report is presented to the School Board*
- November 12 – Public hearing and School Board vote*
- First of January – 1st Magnet Lottery begins

Participants were asked what they believe matters most when creating new school boundaries. Answers were:

- Community
- Student/teacher ratios
- Consistency with peer groups
- Stability/continuity (ensure moves minimize impact year-to-year)
- Future consistency
- Impact on student achievement
- Proximity
- Contiguous feeder patterns
- New schools should open under capacity, without mobiles

Participants were then asked to review the 2 options for each school:

Option 1 – new Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road Elementary – in this option, the new school will relieve Paw Creek Elementary and Paw Creek would relieve Mt. Island Elementary.

Option 2 – new Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road Elementary – in this option, the new school will relieve both Paw Creek and Mt. Island Elementary schools.

Option 1 – new Belmeade Middle – in this option, the new middle school relieves Coulwood and Wilson Middle schools, Kennedy Middle relieves Wilson Middle.

Option 2 – new Belmeade Middle – in this option, the new middle school relieves Wilson Middle and Coulwood Middle, Sedgfield Middle relieves Wilson Middle.

Option 1 – new Youngblood/Steele Creek Road Elementary and new York Road/Red Fez Club Road Elementary – in this option, more students are assigned to the new schools, which will open at or near capacity.

Option 2 – New Youngblood/Steele Creek Road Elementary and New York Road/Red Fez Club Road Elementary – in this option, more students remain at Lake Wylie Elementary.

Option 1 - New Dixie River Road Elementary – in this option, the new school relieves Steele Creek Elementary in the North area. Berryhill Elementary boundary is the same in both options.

Option 2 - New Dixie River Road Elementary – in this option, Steele Creek Elementary serves the students in the North area, the new schools serves students in the South area. Berryhill Elementary boundary is the same in both options.

Several questions were asked by participants:

Question: Why do new schools open over capacity? Why can't we build a larger school building?

Answer: Elementary schools are typically 39 classrooms of about 90,000 square feet in size and middle schools are 54 classrooms of approximately 130,000 square feet and high schools are 100 classrooms of about 260,000 square feet. This has been determined to be the standard size for school buildings to serve an adequate number of students while not compromising educational instruction. Long range plans include more schools to be built, relieving those overcrowded schools. However, with the growth in Charlotte, mobile units will always be required somewhere. The building process will always be "playing catch-up" because of growth in every area of the county.

Question: Where can we find the long range master plan?

Answer: On the CMS website, Quicklinks, Construction.

Question: Why are their standard sizes for schools? Can the standard size be changed?

Answer: Mobiles are a short-term solution for overcrowding. Eventually overcrowded schools will be relieved. The standard size has been determined to be the best size for a school without compromising education for the students.

The remainder of the meeting was used for individual and group discussion. Planning Services staff was available to answer questions and discuss options with individuals and small groups as needed. Participants were encouraged to provide feedback by completing their individual comment card. Each small group submitted their worksheet sharing input on the boundary options.

*dates are tentative