

Appendix D: Comments in response to question asking for opinion about 6th graders attending middle school if the school were located closer to our community.

1. I would be ok with that. With middle school closer, our family could be more involved and active at the school, and some of my concerns about the developmental aspects of 6th graders in middle school could probably be alleviated. Westland is TOO far away to send my 11-year-old!!!!!!
2. My daughter went to CCES for 6th grade and then Westland. She greatly wishes she'd gone to Westland for 6th grade. She felt at a social disadvantage coming in for 7th when others already knew the school and had good friendships.
3. We live in the neighborhood so we would likely attend this school but I dislike this option very much considering that our neighborhood is already facing construction on the Capital Crescent Trail. We should not also lose the park as an important amenity in our community.
4. This seems the logical solution. If my child is denied the standard 6th grade education at NCC, we would consider private schools. We are also far less likely to support public education and the tax dollars that go to it. It would be short-sighted of public officials to short-change our sixth graders....
5. It makes a lot more sense than to waste precious hours in a child's day with commuting to and from a school as far as Westland. But I think 6 graders are better off with younger kids.
6. I think we should move NCC to the Lynbrook site and rework the NCC site to be the new middle school. I would like our kids to attend this closer middle school. I don't think the county wants to do this (it opens a can of political worms) but I think we need to consider options to improve the quality of life for all (less time on bus, less time in car for parents to visit school/activities)... We need to think local but try to maintain diversity.
7. As noted earlier, we greatly prefer that 6th grade stay at Chevy Chase ES. But if the choice were between building a new middle school and making Westland even bigger, a new middle school would probably be better whether or not our child went to Westland (that way neither Westland nor the new school would be so overcrowded).
8. One of the reasons we're happy that my older daughter will be at NCC for 6th grade next year is she won't have to spend an hour and a half a day on the bus to get to and from school. I'm not happy about her missing out on course offerings, but avoiding that "commute" is worth it.
9. This is a great solution. I fully support this approach.
10. I would support a new middle school provided that the enrollment numbers were sufficient to secure the same funding for programs as Westland; otherwise I end up sending my 6th grader to a middle school and losing the benefits of keeping him in a more "innocent" environment, but NOT gaining the programmatic advantages.
11. I only like that if we remain in the B-CC cluster. I don't want my kids going to someplace other than B-CC.
12. I would prefer a local middle school over sending students to Westland, but I would be concerned that students in certain neighborhoods would be re-districted to other clusters.
13. I still prefer the kids at NCC until 6th grade, unless they change the current structure of the Rosemary Hills/NCC split.
14. Seems like a new middle school somewhere east of downtown Bethesda is necessary. Busing kids from Chevy Chase and North Chevy Chase and Kensington to Westland is crazy!
15. Although somewhat concerned a split articulation school.
16. It seems that no matter what, we will need a new middle school at some point to deal with

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- population increases. A new middle school closer to our neighborhoods seems to make sense.
17. It is much closer and therefore the bus ride would be less, so I think it might be better.
 18. Depends greatly on whether the quality of the school can be ensured and held to the standards of other Montgomery County schools.
 19. Westland is too large to handle all 6 - 8 graders in the BCC cluster, and it is too far away from East Bethesda.
 20. Assuming that a new middle school would have the same class options that other middle schools have, I would be in favor of my kids attending there.
 21. no opinion
 22. Well I went to Lynbrook and we live one block away. It kills me that this school closed with no intention of opening back up. I know the community has grown and we could really use this school to be a part of the community again. I would love to see it used again.
 23. Prefer the newer cluster method in MCPS where schools are funneled up within a cluster. When I was going through school in MCPS multiple elementary schools fed our junior high (Kensington Jr. High) and we fanned back out to five different high schools. The newer cluster model seems better to me -- especially as they move up to larger schools. Spreading to two nearby high schools wouldn't be too much, but I'd hope not to see a repeat of the 70's.
 24. I'm neutral.
 25. Is that site large enough for a school and adequate fields?
 26. Would want to know more--would likely move to "like very much" with more information.
 27. We do not like the long bus ride to Westland and the lack of convenience for us as parents to get there.
 28. I would be in support of this.
 29. Since I live one block from Lynbrook Park, I am wary of advocating for a new school in this location. While I'd love a close and small middle school, it would depend on how much of the park will be taken away.
 30. It would be wonderful to have the middle school be much closer than Westland.
 31. Nice central location. Much closer than current middle school.
 32. Even if new school to relieve would still like to discuss/debate the option of keeping my child at NCC and Chevy Chase in 6th grade. The shortest time in Middle School (Westland or new Lynbrook) the better.
 33. Hard to answer this question - there are too many variables. I would generally be in favor of this on its face.
 34. The alternative of my kids riding on a bus for 2 hours each day of their lives during the school year is worth the gamble
 35. Again, sounds good, but I would probably need to learn more.
 36. Geographically, it would be very much more desirable.
 37. AS mentioned above, I would only be in favor of this option if the school offered the same or

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- equal programs as Westland.
38. This sounds like a great option for addressing overcrowding and distance concerns, as well as making the most of community resources and consolidating middle school budget/programs.
 39. That site would be nearby but is way too small and has roads far too small to support a middle school - so that option isn't viable. Why not build something in North Chevy Chase park (off Jones Bridge near the Naval Hospital). It's horribly underused now.
 40. This is a possible long-term solution, but impossible to judge without more concrete information.
 41. I would have liked to put something between dislike very much and dislike somewhat. I dislike this less than sending them to Westland because Westland would be farther than a community school, but it doesn't change the fact that I will be very sad if my children enter middle school in 6th grade for all of the reasons I stated earlier.
 42. I have to make the point that I really like the principal at Westland, and although he could leave, Westland is a good school under his leadership, so the importance of a strong principal for the new middle school is vital.
 43. Like very much. My main criterion is maintaining academic equality with 6th graders as Westland. The current academic situation with 6th graders at CC and NCC seems unsustainable.
 44. Westland is huge, and far away. A new middle school alleviates both of those problems.
 45. Nearer and smaller are positives.
 46. I think that middle school is a difficult time for kids and that the shortest time possible in that setting is ideal. So my preference will always be to leave 6th grade at CCE or NCCE. It's healthier and easier for the kids and so better long-term for their education, development and happiness.
 47. I think in building a new MS, site yet unknown or determined, we need a commitment from MCPS that it will be closer to our school communities (RHPS, NCC, CCES) than the current commute to WMS. That guarantee is not currently on the table.
 48. Again, could be good, could be bad, depends on the specifics
 49. Obviously depends on location, resources, etc.
 50. This is closer to our community than Westland, perhaps, but still not nearly as close as NCC. It is not the distance itself, of course, but the time it takes to get to these locations in DC rush hour traffic. If a child is going to school at 8, then playing a sport and returning home at 5, she will be in rush hour traffic both ways, and spend over an hour each day on the bus, in 6th grade.
 51. CC Elementary is in my neighborhood and I want my children to go to school in my neighborhood for as long as possible.
 52. If the school were smaller it would be ok with this, but like 6th graders with younger kids. A smaller, closer school might tilt me.
 53. I would still prefer keeping 6th graders at CCES, but a closer, new middle school is definitely preferable to Westland.
 54. Read above...Although we're talking about boundary studies within the cluster not breaking off correct?

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55. I like having middle school years limited to 7th and 8th grade.
56. Someone needs to take a big picture view of K-12 rather than looking for a 6th grade fix the same week that the newspapers schools feature stories about administrators not knowing how to address "sexting" and pornography at Pyle, our neighboring middle school.
57. Part of my issue is the ridiculous distance to Westland from Kensington (where I live). We already experience it for Rosemary Hills instead of Parkwood, but Westland is significantly farther even than Rosemary Hills and there's not really back road options there. The other part of the issue is trying to insulate 6th graders with the elementary school children to keep them younger as long as possible. My child is only in Kindergarten (with another coming) so this will be our reality and I am strongly opposed to her going all the way to Westland in 6th grade.
58. I dislike this idea less than moving all 6th graders to Westland, but I would strongly prefer keeping the children in 6th grade in elementary school
59. Although I would much prefer to keep my 6th grader at NCC, if he has to go to middle school, I would much prefer a neighborhood school rather than commuting to Westland. Travel to Westland is oppressive with traffic as it is now, let alone after BRAC realignment, robbing us of family time and work and play time. Participation in sports and band, etc., becomes almost a part-time job for the parents to ferry the kids across town, especially when both parents work outside the home.

Parent of current RHPS student and past NCC/Westland/BCC grad and NCC/Eastern grade 6/Mont Blair CAP program. (We've seen many facets of MCPS education and have formed our opinion based on experience.)
60. We would need to know more.
61. This would be an ideal use of Lynbrook.
62. Middle school years are the most difficult for most children. I would much prefer they spend only two years there as opposed to three. Sixth graders are too young to be grouped with eighth graders regardless of the geographical boundaries.
63. Sending these youngest children on a LONG bus ride with 7th and 8th graders is yet another reason why it is difficult to conceive of giving up the option to have the children in a smaller, truly local 6th grade setting.
64. I am in favor only if this action decreases classroom size while maintaining educational excellence no matter what school.
65. Would need more information
66. I would prefer to keep the 6th graders at NCC and CCES but if that isn't possible, this is the next best option.
67. We moved to CC Village from DC for the schools and structure identified and currently in place. We want the structure to stay as planned and identify those outside of the boundary to attend alternative schools.
68. It would be a lot closer than Westland for us and would be a new school!
69. Distance is not the issue, rather maturity level of a 6th grader being able to handle 7th and 8th graders. there is a huge difference in maturity levels that exist.
70. I would consider this option, but still think I prefer leaving 6th grade at NCC.

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71. would the kids who were outside of the boundary still go to Westland?
72. We should, however, look at the factors that led to the closing of Leland Middle School and take steps to ensure that will not happen again.
73. I still would want to visit the school and see how 6th graders fit into the middle school environment, but I would feel more comfortable with a smaller classroom size and the fact that it is closer to the community.
74. I think it makes absolute sense. Westland is so far from our neighborhood.
75. I am still advocating the option to keep 6th graders at NCC and CC.
76. Again, it all depends but I'd rather a closer middle school than schlepping to Westland, which would be huge if the 6th grades in CCES and NCC joined it.
77. I think NCC is the best option for my family -- two daughters (4 and 7 currently) We live walking distance from NCC and moved to neighborhood for it!!!!
78. I think 6th graders are better served socially, emotionally and academically by being the oldest at their school, so I prefer keeping them with the lower grades. But this would be the second best option.
79. Depends on resources, class size and other factors.
80. This would be great for the East Bethesda folks who are bused out of their neighborhood from kindergarten until high school. I think I will also pull more students from the Bethesda/Silver Spring area which would help overcrowding in the cluster.
81. I like keeping the 6th graders with the younger crowd, in a smaller school with fewer students where most everyone is known; and NCC is within walking distance of my house (Lynbrook is not). However, I would prefer a new school at Lynbrook Park over Westland.
82. I believe if the school were to include the whole neighborhood and not divide in crazy ways where one street goes and another doesn't, than it is a great option
83. I think the whole Bethesda/Chevy Chase area needs to be redistricted.
84. not sure
85. Might be fine. Hard to know from the question though.
86. Provided my daughter moved to a new school with her peers and the curriculum, level of services, etc. were consistent with those provided at RHPS and NCC I would like for her to attend a school closer to home (e.g., Lynbrook). Currently children in our neighborhood that attend Westland spend more than eight (8) hours each week on the bus and at the bus stop! I think it is a tragic loss of valuable time but more importantly, the commute requires an excessively early start to the day and essentially eliminates the time these children should have to "decompress" before focusing on homework, extra-curricular interests and home life responsibilities. I frequently observe my neighbors having to "push, push, push" their Westland students through the day to ensure everything gets done in time for adequate rest before the early start of their next day. I would be delighted if a plan were in place that relieved these pre-teens of a lengthy commute that only serves to add to the many stressors being handled by our rapidly changing (awkward yet beloved) adolescents.
87. My answer to this question would depend very much on the articulation to this school, the

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- specific school boundaries (i.e. if the CCES elementary area had a split articulation to Westland and the new middle school, that would be a huge negative) and whether (and if so, from where) the new middle school would take students from outside the BCC cluster.
88. My only reservation would be that the new middle school is of sufficient size to ensure that it receives resources comparable to those that would be provided at a larger, undivided Westland.
 89. Again, this is contingent on funding for an equitable program. Ideally, I still prefer to keep the six graders at CCES.
 90. I would still prefer to have our children attend sixth grade at an elementary school than go to a middle school, but having one close by would be a big plus.
 91. Less time on the bus and more time to study and play.
 92. I've heard some say that it is a foregone conclusion that the Chases will lose their 6th grades. If that is truly the case (and I hope that it is not), it would be a better alternative to Westland - smaller, shorter bus ride, closer for parents - thereby putting less stress and financial burden on families with students at 3 different schools
 93. Based on my wife's experience as a middle school educator who helped to open a new middle school, new middle schools are pretty rough the first few years, especially with regard to staff turnover.
 94. closer too far can't attend
 95. Middle school is a tough time for kids. I'd like mine to be there for only two years (i.e., just 7 and 8). I like the idea of a new middle school, but would prefer it to also be for 7 and 8 only.
 96. I would not describe Lynbrook Park as "downtown". It is a very suitable site; despite the concerns of the neighbors.
 97. I still feel that 6th graders belong in elementary school, but having a new school in the neighborhood that also had all the curricular support from MCPS probably tips me over a little from neutral to "like somewhat".
 98. I prefer they stay in NCC and you refund the program - why make the change at all. You need and addition there regardless - a few more rooms is not going change the overall cost that much. For that matter save the addition at Westland and put more of the 6th grade at NCC. But again - the decision appears to be made - program already stripped and then ask if you want to stay, right?
 99. I still think that the academic and social benefits of keeping 6th graders at the elementary school far outweigh any other solution.
 100. A new middle school closer to our community would be ideal- relieves overcrowding and time spent on the bus.
 101. Once again, the issue is my belief that the 6th grade should not be in the middle school to begin with. It may be a good thing to build a new middle school, but not to include 6th graders. The k-2 at RHPS and 3-6 at CC and NCC is a good overall structure. We just need to adequately address resource and capacity issues.
 102. I'm just not crazy about middle school in general.
 103. It would depend on the location of the new school. Sites like Lynbrook are problematic because they involve the loss of a park, significant intrusion into a residential community that really does

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not have the infrastructure to handle the increase in traffic and demands that come with a middle school. Sites like Larchmont or even Rollingwood (problems of its own in terms of land and access) are still better choices. The location of the new school would greatly influence how I would feel about my son's attendance there.

104. need more information to fully answer
105. If it was closer to our neighborhood, would feel more comfortable about child attending and would be more involved with school.
106. I'm not crazy about further splitting the kids up from their friends like that, but, again, need more information.
107. If the school gets all the funding Westland has and is also in the Middle Years Program (IB)
108. Especially if the middle school model was a more reasonable size.
109. I prefer they stay at their neighborhood elementary, but I would be more open to this transition if the middle school were closer.
110. A middle school of appropriate size that has parity in its curriculum with other MCPS middle schools is ideal. The county has indicated that parity cannot be provided with the small sixth grades at NCC and CC. Westland is not a viable option due to its location and size.
111. I would still prefer the 6 graders to stay in CCES
112. It really would depend on the curriculum -- would still prefer to keep at CCES with better curriculum.
113. I live very close to CCES and want my children to attend CCES for as long as possible.
114. The children who attend an elementary school for 6th grade do well. I did not have middle school aged children when MCPS moved the 6th grade to the middle school; so, I would like to review the research before this decision is considered.
115. My first choice is 6th grade at the ES. I think that's the best "environment" for this age group. But if curriculum cannot be brought up to a par, a new MS is my 2nd choice.
116. I would like even more it if it meant that the school enrollment was not huge, meaning I prefer a reasonably sized school, not the largest in the Co.
117. Lynbrook Park or another site like this makes the most sense. As a community and EBCA resident, we need to realize that our options are limited and that we need to be open to having a middle school wherever one can be made.