

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

1. All schools are over-crowded. Threats about withholding resources for 6th graders if they stay in elementary school are truly out-of-line. MCPS doesn't have space for them at Westland anyway. And it is just TOO FAR AWAY for any of our kids.
2. My position is that having our 6th graders attend a 1400 student Westland is a bad option. A school that size cannot provide what middle school students need. If that is the only way to get our students in a middle school, then I would work to keep my child at the elementary instead. The ideal solution is to open a new middle school so that both Westland and the new school can be an appropriate size. I feel very strongly about this.
3. The message I got said "ALL parents complete the survey" but considering that we're moving out of the BCC cluster ... you might as well discard ours!
4. Thank you for getting us involved!
5. The overcrowding really is a problem, but it doesn't end with middle school. The average class size at BCC is 31!
6. Thank you for asking for our comments, this is terrific.
7. Community schools are better schools. We need schools in our neighborhoods not miles away. That way parents can easily be involved. Currently my child spends 75 minutes a day traveling to and from RHPS on the bus. I don't like going there because it's too far. And Westland is much, much farther with worse traffic. The school situation in this area is ridiculous. If it weren't for my husband's commute we would have left this county and moved to Northern VA for community schools already.
8. Thanks for taking this on.
9. I am not crazy about making Westland so large. I think we should be thinking about what is good for the planet, our kids and our parents. Driving to the far edge of our cluster everyday does not seem ideal if another plan can be devised.

I have also changed my mind so many times on this issue that if I take the survey tomorrow, it may come out different. :)
10. It is a very complex problem with no perfect solution- Long term analysis of people entering the schools should determine most appropriate solution.
11. If a decision is made to build a new middle school, I would like information on what will happen until then.
12. I'm not sure how you plan to use the information from this survey but if you expect to represent it as the views of the East Bethesda Community you need to ask for, and validate, addresses of respondents.
13. I'm pleased that the county is finally tackling this issue. I only hope the option of a new middle school, with redrawn boundaries, will be seriously considered. It seems to me to be the best solution for the children and parents in this community.
14. The construction of a 2d middle school solves the long-term overcrowding problem, but until that school is opening, 6th graders at NCC & CCES deserve educational opportunities that are equivalent to all other MCPS 6th graders, including the opportunity to take a foreign language.
15. The current investigation involving Pyle Middle School students "sexting" and selling naked pictures of female students to other each other is a clear indicator of why we do not need our sixth graders advancing to Middle School.

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

16. The school board politicians need to stop thinking about keeping their jobs and start thinking about the kids.
17. I really would not like to see a 10 classroom addition to NCC.
18. Without the option of the New Middle School being build, none of the other options are viable long term solutions.
19. Based on the projected increase in the number of students entering our schools, I think we should strongly consider a new elementary school as well. My concern is that if we don't, we will be revisiting this overcrowding issue again in just several years. All of the proposals I've seen don't address overcrowding in the long term (10+ years from now). We need more "outside the box" thinking at this critical point.
20. Thank you very much for soliciting our opinion. I initially preferred that my future 6th graders remain in elementary for 6th grade but after hearing about the relatively major differences in that curriculum vs. what she would be offered at Westland, I changed my mind because I believe 6th graders are being shortchanged in elementary school. The long-distance school bus rides required of our children are our only disappointment -- but a major one -- of buying our home in East Bethesda. The fact that our children must spend 20-30 minutes on a school bus to get to kindergarten and then leave many of those friends after 2nd grade to go to a 2nd elementary school and then leave some of those friends again to be bussed another 20-30 minutes to middle school is really unfortunate. It works against neighborhood cohesiveness and forces our children to be bussed further than they should while also preventing them from making the kind of long-lasting friendships that are built over time, from one year to the next. We can't wait for this situation to be resolved. ALSO, we believe the only viable long-term solution is to build a new elementary or middle school in East Bethesda. All demographic trends point to today's younger families (and Millennials are showing the same preference for) moving to close-in suburbs like Bethesda to be close to transit and more urban-like environments. This overcrowding problem will continue for the foreseeable future and cannot be fixed with a simple addition to an existing school. (That seems to be a short-term Band-Aid approach, as we were told at the NCC meeting that even with additions to existing schools, overcrowding would continue.) Thank you again.
21. I think we should accept that our 6th graders need to move to Westland (or another middle school, if the county plans to build one) and we should focus our advocacy efforts on making sure that the "transition" kids get all the opportunities possible before that move happens. We should use our "chips" to lobby the county to restore funding to CCES for the things it has lost - like chorus, the science/tech program, etc.
22. Please contact me if there is anything I can help with.
23. I would like for my kids to have the same opportunities for programming and advancement that other 6th graders in the county have. I feel that my son would be ready - in 6th grade - to take on the responsibility of navigating middle school but I do hope that adequate resources are available to all 6th graders to help them with what is likely to be a very difficult transition from elementary to middle school. My older son is a rising 5th grader, and we will attend CCES in the fall though he has had 4th grade at NCC.
24. I would join advocacy efforts to ensure that Westland 6th grade for CCES students is good--or to build another middle school. I would not be interested in advocacy efforts to retain the 6th grade at CCES.
25. We live in the RHPS/NCC/Westland district.

Presently, one of our children is receiving excellent itinerant services 1x/week at RHPS and our

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

eldest will enter Kindergarten at RHPS in the fall of 2010.

What avenues of networking are being implemented to reach out to families of preschool age children in this cluster community to include them in the flow of information?

26. I missed the CCES meeting about 6th grade, and I would appreciate seeing a summary.
27. I have been proud and happy to have our kids in the only county cluster that has 6th graders at an elementary school. Middle school is a tough time, and keeping 6th grade at NCC has worked well for us. The idea of losing Spanish next year, though, has made it clear to me that we should only have 6th graders at NCC/CCES if we can support them adequately. It is not fair to them to arrive at WMS at a disadvantage.
28. NCC currently provides after hours child care for 6th grade students. If you plan to move the 6th grade, would this service be available at Westland?
29. I want to state that I do not think an addition to Westland (and moving the 6th graders) is a long term solution. A middle school of about 1400 kids is way too large and according to the roundtable document the school would be overcapacity even with an 8 classroom addition. I think the county needs to take a more long range approach and recognize that the BCC cluster is growing and is expected to continue doing so - this community can support another middle school. And, as a parent in the NCC/CC neighborhood, I feel like my child would greatly benefit from a school located much closer to our home - the time saved from shorter bus rides could be used for after school activities, sleep, homework, spending time with family/friends, etc. Finally, I think it is important that our 6th graders are given every opportunity the county is offering all the other 6th graders. Middle school and high school is already such a challenge for many kids - why make it harder for them by making them play catch up during 7th and 8th grade? Let's give our kids the strong foundation they need.
30. I am mostly interested in knowing when the 6th graders would be sent to Westland if there is a switch; would this start in 2011, or would the switch wait until 2014 when an addition at Westland is complete?
31. Why has the county not planned for this before it became such a serious problem? It is unfair to the kids in NCC and CC to be in this situation.
32. Thank you for all your hard work and concern for our children!
33. The general concept of 6th grade being moved to a middle school setting is not a terrible idea. But the slow erosion of the 6th grade experience at the schools that have 6th grade currently BEFORE the middle schools are ready to incorporate those extra 6th grade students is punitive. Make the 6th grade experience at CC/NCC equivalent until any move is made.
34. Thanks to ALL of you who are advocating for our children - and those of the future who will be affected by this.
35. It would be useful to know why having 6th graders at CCES and NCC is a good idea. Everyone is focused on the threat of moving them to Westland, but what was the rationale for keeping them at the elementary schools?
36. Lynbrook would be the perfect solution and location for a new middle school. The county needs to stop coming up with excuses and start coming up with a plan FAST to get the project under way.
37. I believe MCPS should meticulously review this project. There appear to be enormous long term consequences that could have a much longer effect on the County than the current economic revenue downturn. Once a reputation goes (a good reputation such that NCC &

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

- Chevy Chase) it is hard to get that reputation back.
38. I acknowledge that I need more information about these issues - these responses are gut reactions.
 39. Glad to see that this is being taken so seriously. Children should all be granted a school classroom, and not one with an overflow of students. Thank you.
 40. My very strong preference is to have my sixth grader remain at Chevy Chase Elementary and have the same curricular options as other middle schoolers.
 41. My main concern is that my child be on equal footing with her other 6th grade counter parts. If CCES can no longer offer the enriched curriculum or even a curriculum equal to that offered at Westland, then I would rather my child attend Westland for 6th grade.
 42. Bottom line is the quality and equity issue are critical and MCPS needs to address the resources/space issue asap.
 43. More taxes, less services. Where is all my money going if not to education?
 44. We are especially upset about the possible loss of a foreign language component of the curriculum. It also seems surprising that CCES and NCES couldn't share some instructors, as is the case for instrumental music, for example. This loss in the Chases will mean those students will enter Westland at a disadvantage. At the same time, the kids need the extra year at the smaller school, esp. since they already had to transition from RHPS and also since they had to deal with the negatives of an extremely large (and overcrowded) primary school. Additionally, Westland is already over-capacity, so having our kids enter there seems ill-planned.
 45. I believe that the EBCA community may be split between those that live on the side closer to EW highway preferring to go to Bethesda Elementary and those closer to Jones Bridge preferring RHPS/NCC, this may be need to taken into account if the opinions are very split.
 46. One thing that troubles me a great deal is the uncertainty about future budget cuts. What is to prevent the county from "persuading" us to have our kids go to Westland in 6th grade so that they can have the same education as the current Westland 6th graders, only to see the county ultimately cut the very programs that Westland now offers and that CCES and NCES don't offer? I would be LIVID if that happened. We would then lose out in every respect: loss of curriculum, loss of community school, and loss of 6th grade in elementary school.
 47. As an East Bethesda resident, when it's time for my current 3rd grader to attend 6th grade, I will likely try to transfer "back" so she can attend Westland, if she doesn't attend a magnet. Seriously contemplating sending current 1st grader to BE for 3rd rather than transferring to NCC. Kids are really getting gyped in 6th grade at NCC.
 48. We need to spend to build more capacity in NCC and a new middle school. Then, when that is completed, shift the East Bethesda matriculation to BES.
 49. I am ashamed at the budget cuts in the public schools.
 50. This is my last year at RHPS. So any physical changes at RHPS will not affect my children. The current options on the table, with few exceptions, call for RHPS to become even bigger than what it is today. Which I believe to be a huge mistake. I view the size of RHPS, with a concentration of young children pre-K - 2nd grade, to be a major problem with the school. And I believe the PTA should request options from MCPS which call for a rather significant size reduction in enrollment numbers. I believe that very issue should be of primary concern for RHPS parents and soon-to-be parents.
 51. Use research on the child and adolescent development to understand the impact of moving 11

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

and 12 year olds into a middle school when there is already a wonderful program to support them in place. This makes NCC and CCEC unique and a significant MCPC program that should stay in place.

52. I think it is important that the county act in the best interests of the community and the students. For instance, if they are going to try to make NCC and CC just 3 - 5, I think they need to rethink the entire plan and make RHPS, NCC and CC all K - 5. This way kids won't have to change schools in elementary school.
53. We are extremely supportive of CCE and would like our daughter to stay there thru 6th grade
54. Discussion of distance should always be accompanied by recognition of time of commute in rush hour, which is the relevant issue here. Sending our children to 6th grade at Westland will in effect impose a new tax on them and us--one levied in time spent in rush hour traffic.
55. Clearly, MCPS needs to come to a decision about how to move forward with the 6th graders, but, until they do, a basic floor of services/offerings should be maintained for the 6th graders at NCC and CC. Reducing offerings for these children is simply not doing what is in the best interest of these children and cannot be justified.
56. Please make this available to all those without access to computers... including translations when necessary.
57. I am very concerned about the lack of symmetry in the programs offered to the NCC 6th graders versus 6th graders in MC that are in middle school. My strong preference is to have our 6th graders in a smaller, local middle school. It is the best of all worlds. 1300 middle schoolers at Westland is just too big!
58. Please take into account the length of the commute times as a quantitative factor when determining boundary decisions. Our County is growing and even short trips can become long trips during rush hour. Let's reduce the amount of time kids have to be on the bus as much as possible.
59. we need this done ASAP
60. Thank you!
61. MCPS already splits lower primary from upper primary so I don't see the rationale for further parsing of schools. There should be an educational and developmental rationale for this change if it is to be considered, but I can't find any "science" on this topic. Finally NCC is a great school that kids and parents love, so I would like my daughters, who live nearby to enjoy this same benefit in our neighborhood! (unlike now where they are bused far away to Silver Spring)
62. Is the school system really going to let parents make this decision? or are we just going through the motions?
63. In boundary studies, neighborhoods should be protected to remain together. That is a large part of the disgruntlement among our neighbors in East Bethesda. If East Bethesda is to transition to Bethesda Elementary school, I would like to see a relaxed policy to transfer our kids from Rosemary Hills as soon as possible during the transition years. In other words, when my son enters 3rd grade there, I'd like to also transfer my second child to start 1st grade there, rather than wait an additional year for the official year of change.
64. Thank you for providing all the information to our community. When will the survey results be shared with the public so that we know what the masses are thinking?
65. There are 2 big issues. I believe the future of middle school needs to be addressed (i.e. building a new middle school) first and while it is under construction, the 6th grade should stay

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

at CC and NCC with full curriculum. One question: what happens to kids who must have the IB diploma and can't get into the program bc their 6th grade no longer offers it? We have many families from abroad who rely on the IB program and it's start in 6th grade.

66. I feel that as the mother of 3 children living in East Bethesda, we have gotten the short end of the stick. The obvious choice for our neighborhood is to allow our children to attend BE from k-5th grade. The one redeeming aspect of East Bethesda's special arrangement was thought we had the option of attending NCC or CC 3rd through 6th grade. For many, the 6th grade option for elementary school was an enticing part of our arrangement. Now that the 6th grade option is fading away from the Elementary schools, I feel as though the county must take action to ensure that the academic needs of our children are being met. For the families of east Bethesda that means either allowing us to attend BE, or building an Elementary school that is walking distance to our neighborhood!
67. It seems clear to me that not only does Sixth Grade need to move out of "the Chases" for space reasons, I am becoming more convinced that this is a good move for the kids because of the fact that there are more sophisticated "offerings" for the Sixth Graders at the Middle School. I tend to believe that as configured right now, the Chases do not have the facilities to offer the same level of classes as at the Middle School. That said, we liked the idea of our daughters being able to walk to CC for four years (we live two blocks away from that school) and being able to grow and learn in that wonderful environment, so it is with some sadness that we view this change. I also think it is critical, however, if at all feasible, to add both an additional primary/elementary school and middle school to the cluster. RHPS, where we have a First Grader and a rising Kindergartener, is a wonderful school that is just too large. By moving the 6th Grades out of the Chases and creating a second Middle School in the cluster, I imagine there will be significantly more interest on the part of parents and kids to stay in the public school system instead of making the move to private school. This likely dynamic, coupled with the overall expected student population growth in this area, will clearly support two vibrant and top-tier middle schools in our cluster. Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment, the hard-work of those representing our cluster, and the consideration of the State and County decisionmakers.
68. People in my community are very happy with CCES and especially the optional 6th grade year...but I would be even happier if we had a small, local middle school.
69. 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.
70. I believe that students currently attending CC and NCC elementaries currently perform very well in Middle School and beyond. Socially, I would strongly prefer for them to remain in elementary school. I do not want Westland to be expanded to almost 1500 children.
71. Keep our 6th graders at NCC! It is a great school with a fine principal and involved, caring teachers. Kids grow up way to fast these days--with high school courses in middle school and college courses in high school. Let's slow down a little and give them back the gift of childhood.
72. The taxes in this area - particularly real estate taxes - are high for a reason: We expect (and have been receiving) exceptional returns from our County. I want no cuts in service unless they are accompanied by drastic cuts in taxes.
73. Ideal situation for East Bethesda is to have all of our kids attend the same school for K-5. It would not be idea if they had to attend a large middle school, but better than a 6th grade struggling to get equal class options. Ideally we would get a new middle school in Lynnbrook Park.
74. Thanks for doing this. It would be helpful to have more guidance on the criteria that will be used

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

to determine whether a new middle school is built; what time frame and priorities are for additions to existing schools; and impact of increasing populations in particular schools.

75. I would much prefer we do what's best for our children than what's best for Ike Leggett's budget. He will not have my vote in the next election. I would think that there are other programs in the county that would be cut before our school programs. I will not stand for our children suffering due to poor county government priorities and decisions.
76. I hope that the best decision for the benefit of the children is made. I should be more informed about the situation but have not been able to attend meetings in our neighborhood. I can say from experience that new schools promote growth and stimulate new ideas. Love this idea.
77. Thank you putting this survey together.
78. The bottom line is that the all children be provided with the same excellent level of education that we have come to expect from Montgomery County. Although many like the idea of keeping our students "young" in a smaller school, the benefits do not outweigh those students being behind when they arrive at Westland.
79. Seems the best solution is to expand NCC and CCEC, not move the 6th grades to Westland - which will move the overcrowding there.
80. I feel that 6th graders are still too young to be in Middle School with older kids.
81. Any proposed or selected changes should take into account and foster racial and economic diversity in our communities and the BCC cluster.
82. We are being given the false impression that NCC and CCES students are falling behind in 6th grade when in fact their MSA scores are higher than the Westland 6th graders. The county has required us to put up with the split enrollment of a K-2 and 3-6 elementary school and they should support middle school programming at NCC and CCES until they can provide us a new viable option. Simply moving our kids to Westland results in Westland being overcrowded with almost 1,400 students, is not a long term viable solution. If we move the East Bethesda students to NCC or CCES, we will have about 250 6th graders; about the same amount as if we built a new middle school with 750 students. Ultimately, which option will work better depends on our ability to get funding and support from the county. In the meantime, don't move are kids!
83. A new middle school seems like the best long range problem solver. It could alleviate overcrowding at 4 schools (NCC, CC, BE & Westland).
84. I think it is hard at this time to advocate for one position or another until we understand exactly what resources would be lost if the students stayed at NCC/CC for 6th grade.
85. I do not want my children's schools to change. They should attend Westland and BCC HS.
86. I greatly appreciate all the work that members of the PTA and the other various committees are doing on this situation. I hope that we as a community can remain open-minded and reach consensus on what is the best outcome for our children. Thanks so much.
87. Thanks for the opportunity to complete this survey.
88. See my comment above - how does Montgomery County have the legal discretion to afford a lesser 6th grade curriculum to a subset of students?
89. I think that the longer we keep our children in an environment such as CC the better the children will perform by being with younger children longer. Definitely, I don't support the idea of moving the children anywhere else.

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

90. I would like more information on the decision-making on this and how I can help. Thanks.
91. MCPS should not gut the current 6th grade program at NCC or CCES. Either move the 6th graders to Westland or fully fund the curriculum.
92. MD residents pay the 4th highest taxes in the nation!!! For that money I expect the school system to keep up with high performing private school curriculum and most importantly, keep the class size at 20-22 kids.
93. I strongly disagree with sending the kids from NCC or Chevy Chase to Westland. While I know Rock Creek does it, I believe it has been a very hard transition for my oldest even entering 7th. Not because he is coming in, in the middle. More because it is such a huge school and the small home feeling he had at NCC has been lost and I don't feel we need to rush them growing up so fast. However the Lynbrook option, because they are staying with the kids they have known, is a good option because it gives the kids a comfort in the transition and friendships are more easily held onto. Which important in life as well. On top of the fact that Lynbrook is a large school with great outside areas.
94. tx for collecting info from the community
95. The county never should have kept the 6th graders at CCES and NCCES back in the 80s when the rest of the county changed to middle schools. However, it's too late to dwell on past mistakes. Now the county has to figure out what to do with these 6th graders who deserve the same education as every other 6th grader in the county. Serious redistricting should be done in both the BCC cluster and the Whitman cluster. It makes no sense that students who are in walking distance from Westland (the Wood Acres kids) go to Pyle while the students from Chevy Chase are bused across town first to Rosemary Hills and then later to Westland.
96. I want to be sure as this moves that there is no chance that the Kensington area ends up outside of the BCC district.
97. Keeping children in elementary school for a longer period of time is best for them educationally and socially, and that should be the primary driving force in this decisionmaking.
98. I really think 6th graders belong at westland. it is a great school, with lots of resources and a wonderful staff. it's a bit far, but totally worth it.
99. 6th graders at NCC and CC do great in 6th grade and beyond. There is much to be lost by moving them out of NCC in terms of the learning environment, social development, nurturing, keeping them with younger siblings, shorter commutes, and a small team of dedicated teachers who can better respond to their individual needs.
100. my children age 18 in College , 16 in Bethesda Chevy Chase and my daughter 7 going to Chevy Chase Elementary . We will like to keep her in ChCh Elementary no to go to Westland because It is a big transition and It is a difficult age 6th grade . Thanks.
101. Because of the focus on 6th grade issues, I don't think there has been adequate information present on new elementary school/new middle school options. I would also like to see MCPS explore, in writing, the idea of opening a new k-2 and making Bethesda 3-6. Based on presentations, I really believe the issue of 6th grade should be advocated separately from the larger capacity studies issues -- the 6th grade issue should be framed and advocated NOW. Right NOW, our 6th grade kids are getting less than their peers at Westland and that needs to change by Sept. 2010. I'd like to see the principals of CCES and NCCES, after consulting with the Westland Principal about how he can contribute, make a joint presentation to parents about what they currently have and what they need to create equity and I'd like to see a joint advocacy campaign between CCES/NCCES on this issue.

At CCES my sense was that parents were very angry about the situation in 6th grade and the

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

perceived lack of commitment by MCPS to fix it and that was forcing many to either consider sending their kid to Westland when they didn't otherwise think it was in their child's interest or to agree that Westland should be the only middle school because to create a new middle school would take too long and leave the 6th grade at great disadvantage.

I also was very concerned that the parents participating in these meetings did not seem very diverse. Was there bus service to participate at CCES meetings? A translator present at the meeting for those parents who don't speak English? etc.

102. 6th graders belong in the elementary school. Westland is a far commute for the 7th and 8th graders. Let's let them play instead of commute.
103. Simply stated, I find it unacceptable that NCC/CC sixth grade students are provided with a lower standard than students at other schools. If the only way to ensure parity is to move sixth graders to Westland, then that should be done.
104. There are numerous advantages to keeping our six graders in elementary school. Up until recently, our schools were able to provide a great education and a far superior social environment for our children. The recent cuts in staffing have eroded the quality of the entire CCES population.
105. I think the large size can be intimidating, so if we are going to ask that our 6th graders are in a MS, not ES than I would like to have it smaller, closer to home, and a new facility would be great. However, I do worry that the classes that are not offered to NCC and CCES will hold them back. For example, the idea that IB status will be taken away due to the lack of funding for teachers/classes due to budgeting difficulties. Ultimately, it is not the choice of the residents of this area to make. However, whatever choice is made for us, MCPS is required to make it equitable for all children.
106. When pushing our agenda with the county, I would like to suggest having the various community councils that govern areas within the schools boundaries also lobby our cause.
107. None
108. Please do what you can to keep 6th grade in CC. Thanks
109. I feel VERY strongly that the 6th grade program at CCES and NCC should remain. It is a reason that we decided to go to Rosemary. I love the unique atmosphere of 6th Grade in the elementary and have wonderful things about how well the students who leave their sixth grades do as compared to Westland students. I like the idea of 6th graders in the elementary school - giving them an additional year to develop without the pressures of a regular middle school and with the supportive attitude/atmosphere of an elementary school.
110. My wife has clearly identified to me and others that the decision in essence has been made to move the 6th Graders to Westland by decisions to decimate the middle school program at NCC and CCES. We are inclined to accept the kids going to Westland in lieu of a sub-par program at the E.S. However, the thought of a 1400-student middle school is terrifying; and progress for future students in a new middle school should be made.
111. I appreciate all the outreach and efforts being put into this process, but I have to say it's very difficult to have an informed opinion about whether 6th graders are better off at the Chases or middle school, since we are projecting the effect of future budget and curriculum changes. Basically, I now feel comfortable that both options have pros and cons.
112. Save the 6th grades at CCES and NCCES!!!! It's the right thing to do for our students and our community.
113. Being an East Bethesda resident, my biggest frustration is that our neighborhood is scattered

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

- between too many schools. I would like one school option for our neighborhood.
114. I actually really like Westland - just wish it wasn't on the extreme far reaches of the cluster and I am glad my boys had 6th grade in NCC. Westland was the right thing for them by 7th but they needed the additional attention and smaller setting in 6th.
 115. This is too important an issue to be made simply on the basis of expediency of the county and school system. It is unacceptable that the 6th grade at NCC and CC do not receive equal consideration to the 6th graders at Westland. The indicators are that they perform as well if not better than 6th graders at Westland. They should not have to fight for resources in such a fashion. It is my firm belief that the 6th grade should remain in CC and NCC. I am very supportive of the current K-2 at RHPS and 3-6 at NCC and CC structure and feel that if adequately supported it is the most developmentally and educationally appropriate formulation. I oppose the potential and supposed capacity 'solution' of moving the 6th grade to the middle school.
 116. I strongly oppose any plan to remove the 6th grade from NCC or CCES, especially when it involves placement in Westland. My daughter, now a 7th grader at Westland, was grieved to hear of this proposal. In her words, the chance to remain in the elementary school environment (a small nurturing community where kids and teachers can develop close relationships) when she and her friends were experiencing the throes of early adolescence, was a valuable resource for her. She felt better understood by teachers and administrators with whom she had a long term relationship--even at those times when she didn't quite understand herself. Kids grow too fast already; if anything education should slow down to match the developmental needs of the kids, not to work harder to push them into developmental and social situations for which they may not be prepared. We need more school programs like NCC and CC, not to lose the few treasures we have.
 117. I like the idea of a new school.
 118. There are many unknowns in this equation but for me the most important issues are curriculum differences, support services (reading, etc) and class sizes.
 119. MCPS should not gut the 6th grade program at CCES in an attempt to coerce parents into supporting a change to Westland
 120. Westland is too far away for Chevy Chase residents
 121. The most important thing about 6th grade at Chevy Chase Elementary is the quality of the teachers and the small school size. As long as the physical resources remain (the science lab, the computer room), the excellent teachers should be able to fill in the gaps left by the loss of dedicated technical and science teachers.
 122. Please do not consider cutting programs (Spanish, PE, etc) as a viable option. If the 6th grades cannot stay fully functional @CCES & NCCES, then students should go elsewhere--Westland or a new school--but they should NOT stay at schools that cannot offer the full curriculum!!
 123. Again, before we can be honestly asked what we prefer we would like to know the full impact on Westland with the influx of so many more students. The school may become too big!
 124. I really prefer to have my 11 year old not in the same school with older (13 and 14 year olds) kids.
 125. We should have the same set of offerings within each grade for all schools within the country. Discrepancies are simply not permissible or ethical.
 126. WE LIVE NEAR THE OLD LYNBROOK SCHOOL. WOULD LOVE TO SEE A MIDDLE

Appendix F: Open Forum Comments

SCHOOL OPEN THERE.

127. I strongly support keeping 6th grade in CCES. My older children benefitted from continuing that year in CCES. Westland would have served them poorly in 6th grade.
128. I think it has been beneficial for my child to be with an elementary school rather than being with a middle school in pre-teen years. I think that they have a better opportunity to demonstrate leadership in an elementary school as well as not to be low man on the totem pole at a time when they are most vulnerable to peer pressure, low self-esteem, etc.
129. For me, I like that my child stays young for one more year in the elementary school setting. Once they go to middle school, they become teenagers and education aside, I believe in letting them stay kids, which they are, for as long as we can.
130. All sixth graders should receive the same curriculum county wide. If this were going to happen, I'd definitely say keep sixth grade at NCC. But, apparently, this is not easy and maybe not even practical and probably won't happen. As a result, I'll settle with my children going to Westland for sixth grade.
131. All the educational research indicates that it is best for children to stay in one school through 8th grade.
132. our home school is westbrook, we love Chevy Chase and think it is a wonderful opportunity for 3-6 grades, I also think keeping 6th graders out of middle school is the right thing to do developmentally - sadly it is not an option for my daughter.
133. I am sympathetic to budget constraints. However, I want to understand the short term and long term impact of these decisions on our children. I also believe that the school board should be providing more information about these proposals and the data underlying them. I think it is difficult to make informed decisions about these important issues until we have more information.
134. more information needs to be available
135. It is astonishing to me that despite all of the research about the importance of thoughtful middle school education, a plan to eliminate one of the few child-needs'-based 6th grade programs is on the table.
136. I appreciate the work the task force is doing. This is not a small undertaking. The best solution may not be what we all want but we need it to be the right solution for the future. The issue of middle school overcrowding is already a reality. Making Westland the largest school in MoCo and still having it be overcrowded is not the solution. Building a new middle school in the BCC cluster is what we need to do and focus our efforts on what is the best site for this.

Thank you again for your hard work!