

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES
 Thursday, December 10, 2020

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the December 10 work session:
Nov. 12, 20 -- 9:47: AM	Emily	Doran	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Thank you for your dedication to the families of HCPS and the opportunity to provide feedback. I wanted to comment on the current proposals for the targeted redistricting in the Tuckahoe district centered around the boundaries for Quioccasin Middle School. I am fully supportive of redrawing the QMS boundary as proposed, and feel that this makes sense, both geographically and from an equity standpoint. The proposed new boundary, using Three Chopt Road as the northern boundary for QMS and moving Maybeury to QMS, is very logical, and improves the feeder patterns throughout the schools feeding into Quioccasin and Tuckahoe Middle Schools, as well as the feeder patterns up to the high school level. This proposal also meets the original goals and guidelines for redistricting by addressing/reducing concentrations of poverty and using major roads as natural boundaries. As a QMS parent, I feel that the proposed boundary change would be a positive step toward addressing significant equity issues that exist between Quioccasin and Tuckahoe Middle Schools. A change is needed because current boundaries not only increase inequality, but also create unnatural feeder patterns up to the high school level that disrupt the sense of community and continuity for QMS students. Because the current QMS zone pulls students from north of Three Chopt Road, the students of QMS are split off into three different high schools. This makes an already difficult transition from middle to high school even harder for QMS students. Furthermore, bringing the Maybeury Elementary community into QMS would strengthen the QMS community by including active and engaged MES families who live close to QMS and the other students who attend QMS. Three Chopt Road also serves as the boundary between the Tuckahoe and Three Chopt magisterial districts, and using this natural boundary for school assignments helps keep students at schools within their magisterial voting districts. The proposed new boundary for QMS would improve feeder patterns, create a stronger sense of community at QMS, improve the use of natural boundaries and proximity, and address equity issues between QMS and TMS.
Nov. 12, 20 -- 6:37: PM	Virginia	Johnston	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I am in support of the plan to transition QMS to a two feeder school plan for Freeman and Godwin and making Three Chopt and permanent transition border for Freeman and Godwin.
Nov. 13, 20 -- 10:52: AM	KAREN	MAYS	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I am extremely disappointed that so little concern was apparently given to the safety of elementary students and teachers due to the return to school date of 11/30. The numbers have been steadily rising for the last month, and no doubt will jump after family gatherings over the Thanksgiving holiday. With only 12 teaching days left in the calendar year till the winter break, it seems foolhardy to return to school for those days. The 11/30 date is the perfect time-table to set up family outbreaks just in time for the winter holidays. A much safer approach would be to start in-person learning on January 11.
Nov. 18, 20 -- 7:29: AM	Leigh	Pickels	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I am in favor of the redistricting to send Maybeury Elementary to Quioccasin Middle School, and therefore clean up the feeder patterns at QMS, provide more active and supportive parents at Quioccasin Middle School, and make QMS more equitable.

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Nov. 19, 20 -- 2:17: PM	Jerry	Dawson	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	As a member of the recent redistricting committee, we spent much time trying to resolve overcrowding in the high schools. Since that has not made your priority list, I am concerned about Glen Allen HS in particular. What is the plan to address this?
Nov. 19, 20 -- 6:26: PM	Jordan	Agudiegwu	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	NA
Nov. 20, 20 -- 7:25: AM	Steve	Winston	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	First, I think it's great that you allow citizens to provide comments that are published. The current COVID situation facing school systems is probably the most challenging in history. The Board seems to be unwilling to lead with a definitive plan and instead defers to the Superintendent. Leaders must make difficult choices and now is that time. The known facts are that children don't learn well in a virtual environment. We also know that opening schools puts teachers at risk. We have seen local private and public schools open successfully without major problems. The Board needs to decide on and work out a plan for kids to return to school! Consideration For exceptions must be given to teachers in high risk categories such as age and health conditions. Extra pay should be given to teachers who work in person. There is no way to eliminate all virus risks just as there is no way to guarantee no more school shootings. School systems must adapt and prepare for adversity and stay committed to a plan. Henrico County has been a leader in government but has become a laggard in education.
Nov. 24, 20 -- 11:13: AM	April	Hatcher	Trevvett Elementary	Since the in-person schedule has been delayed, can we change the option we chose originally. Due to after school care I had to continue with virtual but now that its being pushed back I'm wondering if I can switch to in-person being that the program (hpals) should be starting in January.
Nov. 24, 20 -- 11:19: AM	Renuka	Sankaramaddi	Colonial Trial Elementary Scool- Henrico county	Respected Sir/Madam, Currently we are under CTES which is overfeeding for few years now. All the Twin Hickory neighborhood is supposed to be zoned to Twin Hickory elementary school. Requesting you for this change.

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Nov. 24, 20 -- 11:19: AM	Amy	Nelson	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	What do you think is going to change in January with regards to the COVID numbers in our County to allow our kids to get back to school? This is the second time the Board has delayed the in person learning date due to COVID numbers. I do not see how 6 weeks is going to make such a big difference in our infection rate and so would like to see the actual date stay fast. I strongly believe that children should be allowed to go back to in person school and based on the current evidence, COVID infections are not actually occurring at high rates in school- they are occurring in our adult populations at restaurants, bars and gyms as well as other personal gatherings that exceed the governors recommendations. I strongly also believe that schools and teachers should be included in the group of essential workers and that virtual learning should not replace in person learning. It is starting to hurt our children socially, emotionally and educationally as well.
Nov. 25, 20 -- 9:28: AM	Emily	Piacentino	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I am in favor of the entire Twin Hickory neighborhood being together at one elementary school. I believe any neighborhood that is in walking distance of a school without crossing major roads should not be reassigned to one further away and less walkable.
Dec. 2, 20 -- 6:32: PM	Brittany	Rose	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Thank you to Ms. Ogburn and Ms. Kinsella for holding their recent town hall session about redistricting for Rivers Edge and Colonial Trail. I particularly appreciate their directness about the challenges of managing the overpopulation at Rivers Edge Elementary School (REES) and the timeline for increasing capacity either at REES or through the construction of a new elementary school. Although my own children no longer attend REES, my family had between 1-3 students enrolled there for 10 years. The school was at - or significantly over - capacity for that entire time. While I don't think that carving out the 20+ students in the Shady Hills subdivision or any of the neighborhoods along Sadler Road and sending them to schools that are not as full is ideal, especially if it means that students are moved between elementary schools multiple times in the next few years, I also don't think leaving REES at well over 100% capacity for the next 4-5 years while the capacity issue is addressed is acceptable. I hope that the Board will reconsider their decision in this regard.
Dec. 3, 20 -- 1:55: PM	Maria	Greco	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please address the decision to cancel winter sports: swimming, indoor track, competitive cheer, dance team and basketball. Is there any chance to reverse this decision?

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Dec. 3, 20 -- 2:24: PM	London	Perry	Richmond City	<p>The nation was shocked at the young age of the white supremacists who demonstrated in Charlottesville the summer of 2017. In the summer of 2019, the Ku Klux Klan distributed membership flyers to homes in East Henrico. Hanover County is notorious for its membership rates. I wish this was shocking, but they have been canvassing in Richmond over the years. Besides, it is no secret that Richmond serves as a cultural capital for their so-called heritage. What's shocking is a passive community response to this domestic terrorist group. What is shocking is to have been raised and educated in a system that begrudgingly acknowledged the foundational contributions of my ancestors, and those of others', in the foot notes of textbooks and during performative heritage months. All minorities are footnotes in the narratives of American academia. So much so that they become their own topics of study that few students encounter. Such essential knowledge should not be reserved for those who can afford (in-debt themselves to) a college education? How can our public school system claim to foster global citizenship if it is not actively anti-racist in its curriculum? Hate is born of ignorance; as educators we are obligated to eradicate that ignorance. There are tangible consequences for our inactions and we should not feign ignorance to the blatant racial tensions that pervade our communities. I hope that the Board will immediately take preventative measures to enact an anti-racist curriculum for Henrico County. May the county serve as a visionary leader for our state and nation!</p>
Dec. 7, 20 -- 12:44: PM	Jeff	Dowdy	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	<p>I teach at Wilder and after seeing the breakdown of students staying home I think it is absolutely negligent to return to school to serve a small portion at the extent of the strong majority of students staying home. The majority of students coming back to my classes are from other schools attending the GYSA program. While I consider them wilder students I question the equity of prioritizing them at the cost of the students staying at home. The cost of maintaining a safe environment will be carried by the students who have decided to stay home and that is not acceptable to me. I wish there was a way to exercise that voice but so far it goes unheard with the majority wilder families. Now with numbers going up exponentially (remember when we said if we saw a scary increase in the rate of infection we would halt plans to return) I hope you take the opportunity to support the success of all of our students by keeping us safe, keeping us virtual, and most importantly keeping it equitable. All the best, I may disagree with current plans but I respect and I am grateful for the daunting task that you face on our behalf.</p>

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Dec. 8, 20 -- 8:11: AM	Julie	Murphy	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I understand the need for redistricting and know how complicated a decision it is. Thank you for taking it on so that our students receive the best education possible and teachers aren't being forced to teach in overcrowded classrooms. Having said that, my question pertains to the Rivers Edge redistricting, specifically moving the kids from the Innsbrook neighborhood area to Springfield Elementary. The Innsbrook area is a fixed neighborhood without the possibility for growth. There isn't room to build more homes or neighborhoods. The growth is happening, and will continue to happen, in the Wyndham and Wyndham Forest areas. With that in mind, will moving a small number of students from the Innsbrook area (where population growth isn't happening) to a new school have a big enough impact to student numbers in Rivers Edge that it would offset the change these kids will have to endure after an already confusing and at times frustrating virtual year or school? Is it possible to bus kids from neighborhoods being built currently to area schools other than Rivers Edge? Thank you for your time and consideration.
Dec. 8, 20 -- 8:12: AM	Nalani	Payson	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	My name is Nalani, and I'm a senior at Glen Allen High School. I support Diversify Our Narrative, and the Henrico County chapter of this organization has two requests for the School Board. The first request is that all English teachers are required to teach a certain number of books that are written by and about People of Color. The second request is the implementation of a Cultural Sensitivity Training Course for all high school students. As a Henrico County student, I fully support these efforts because I have seen firsthand the lack of diversity within our English class curriculum. We are taught to analyze and appreciate the literature we read; however, that is difficult to do when none of the required texts reflect even the smallest bit about our lives. Also, as a student in Henrico County for almost thirteen years, I unfortunately have seen students disregard others' identities, cultures, and race just to make a joke or seem superior. I have been bullied by people because of my cultural identity, as well, and this needs to stop. The two requests from Diversify Our Narrative should help eliminate issues in the Henrico County Public Schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.
Dec. 8, 20 -- 8:42: AM	ZINAB	BAUWENS	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	Please give parent's an option to send kindergarten and other younger children back to in-person in January. Do not postpone that date again. You temporarily gave parents the option to send their children to in-person, and just a few weeks later, not even a month later, took that decision back. Meanwhile, surrounding counties have been in-person for months (some for several weeks). Virtual is not successful at all for the younger children.

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Dec. 8, 20 -- 9:58: AM	Jen	Kelley	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>I am writing to you all to express my concerns about virtual school. Primarily for the youngest learners at my children's Title I School. I have two elementary schoolers a third grader and a kindergartener. My third grader has adjusted. My kindergartener is an entirely different situation, he has gone from loving school to crying everyday when it is time to login and by Thursday every week he is entirely checked out. I am very concerned about the children I see in his class as well, half of whom are in daycare and regularly have none of the supplies, cannot hear the teacher nor be heard when they speak due to all the background noise. This is a terrible disservice to the youngest learners; a huge inequity being created by this situation. Children of families that can afford private tutors and teachers for learning pods are receiving an entirely different education than those children in my sons class in a day care with little to no assistance or those who are home with an older sibling. Research has now shown schools are not the super spreaders that we were all concerned they would be over the summer. Everything needs to be done to adapt and get at the very least our youngest learners in school for face to face learning as soon as possible. Covid is not going away any time soon, even with a vaccine. Groups that are calling for no return until there is zero community spread are entirely unrealistic and if you, the school board, keep catering to them and that idea, school could be virtual for years, leaving behind many of Henrico's already vulnerable learners. Please consider at least allowing for the return of K-2 students as the greatest disservice is being done to our youngest learners. At a minimum, please consider moving forward with the new schedule that was to begin on 11/30, especially for the youngest learners. Five days of 195 synchronous minutes is an unrealistic expectation for kindergarten. The day needs to be shortened to the originally proposed 140 synchronous minutes. Not only that but teachers are working so much harder and longer, having an asynchronous day to plan would improve the experience for their students. Lastly, if all virtual is continuing lunch breaks and recess needs to be standardized. Many Kids in daycare are getting no recess because of the varying schedules. My own children at the same school with different lunch breaks and different recess times are not getting the full benefit of that time because they don't coincide.</p>

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Dec. 8, 20 -- 10:06: AM	Christine	Williams	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I write to express my extreme disappointment in the decision to cancel Winter Sports and in the manner in which the decision was made – without any input from the Board, Staff, Parents or Students and apparently without any input from the ADs. I ask that you reconsider your decision and reverse it. Over 85% of school districts in the Commonwealth are proceeding with Winter Sports and numerous schools across the country have been playing sports since August. Henrico can safely do so as well. Recreational sports have been playing without incident in Central Virginia since June – including multiple indoor activities, like basketball. If this is a financial decision, then you should have given the families the opportunity to address that before stripping yet another irreplaceable activity from our students’ lives. They only get 4 years of high school athletics. My son has already lost one season. The County must consider the negative mental ramifications of its decisions and stop ignoring the medical experts, including Dr. Fauci and our own local expert, Dr. Avula, who advocate for a return to school and activities. Any decision in the purported “best interests” of our students must include the mental impact it has upon them. Please reverse your decision.</p>
Dec. 8, 20 -- 3:38: PM	Jackie	Brown	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Instructional assistants are a keystone in the service of our students with additional support needs. Our part-time instructional assistants are currently working in the building, providing essential services in this pandemic. Yet these employees are making less money and with less benefits than they would receive while working in restaurants and stores in our area. They are professionals, with expertise and skill in their work area. They deserve to receive competitive, living wages and benefits. Henrico must raise the wage and offer paid leave for these critically important employees.</p>

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Dec. 8, 20 -- 3:59: PM	Colleen	Wilhelm	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>My comments are not reflection on the principal and staff at Lakeside Elementary. They have been wonderful, supportive, responsive. My concern is w/ HCPS and the current curriculum guidelines. I am confused why HCPS appears insistent on adhering to the standard educational curriculum/pace during an academic year when kids are virtual, especially since spring was difficult and what we know @ equity and the educational gap. The 3rd grade curriculum/pace on HCPS website does not appear to have been adjusted to reflect current circumstances. I understand HCPS is concerned that students will have learning gaps. Frankly, it is a given, as all students, with some exceptions, will have gaps. Personally, I have always felt that the curriculum was too advanced from the start and didn't match up with what we know about the science of kid's brains. However, during a pandemic, with virtual learning, a shortened school day, managing new technology and all the changes both educationally and personally our students face, the current curriculum and pace perplexes me even more. Why not reduce content, limit the new content, stick to basics and repeat, repeat and repeat? Give teachers more time with each subject/concept. I would rather my daughter come out of virtual learning with confidence and a solid foundation on limited subject/content rather than a rocky foundation on a lot of subjects/content and lack of confidence. I have reached out to HCPS leadership with these same concerns as well as shared with my principal and teacher. I understand that there is a delicate balance between amount of material vs. mastery of materials. I am concerned about what happens next year when all these 3rd graders go to 4th grade perhaps without a solid foundation, knowledge and the skills needed to succeed. That's when this push to adhere to current curriculum and pace will show. I know every 3rd grade parent I have spoken to feels the exact same way. I understand that pacing guides help teachers stay on track and ensure continuity across schools but it's a pandemic and a very different year. With that said, I hope that January allows teachers to repeat and review all that was learned in the previous months rather than launching into yet more new content. As a parent, I will continue to manage and support my daughter's education - step in where we can, pull back when we think necessary as our first responsibility is to her mental and physical well-being during this time.</p>
Dec. 8, 20 -- 4:44: PM	Audra	Vanderland	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>I apologize if this is a double comment, as the meeting dates have blended together. I just wanted to reiterate how essential our instructional assistant staff have been throughout this year, but also for many years before. I know my own daughter's success has so often hinged on having exceptional support staff in her classroom. These professionals should be compensated with professional wages and benefits. I hope that as Henrico discusses the future budget, we will return to finding ways to turn part-time instructional staff to full-time positions, or to pay living hourly wages with paid leave and benefits.</p>

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Dec. 8, 20 -- 7:14: PM	Mary	Morrissey	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	As a follow up to my February 2020 address to the School Board concerning HCPS Veteran Teacher salary, I hope that the board is still considering the disparate impact the current salary scale has on teachers hired between the years of 1990 - 1993. These long-term county veterans are earning significantly less than their counter parts with only 3 more years of service. The compounded inequality in salary earnings has created a blatant lack of equity among HCPS employees. Your loyal veteran teachers are still standing even in the midst of this "current Covid storm. What is the School Board's plan to correct this long-term salary disparity?
Dec. 8, 20 -- 8:36: PM	Carrie	Hagin	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn, Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I would like to know how the board thinks this school year is going. Have you talked to students that are going on their 8th month of virtual learning while other school systems in the adjacent area made it work and allowed for their students to be in school since September? I didn't hear the about the hundreds and hundreds of students and teachers that were going to contract COVID from the children and didn't hear about multiple schools shutting down for long periods of time due to COVID. The Board and Superintendent Cashwell need to acknowledge that they made a big mistake by not allowing students to return to the classroom if that was their desire. Students could have at least had a 2 to 3 month of normalcy in their lives by now if you had given parents and students that choice. Now Henrico County has opted out of winter sports. Why? To date, there are 37 of of 318 schools (12%) in the VHSL that have opted out of winter sports. Again, Henrico is leading the pack to do what they can to ruin their students school and extracurricular experiences. Meanwhile you have adjacent schools participating, as well as recreation and travel leagues continuing on in a safe manner and guess what, they are making it work. Why won't Henrico County just TRY and allow their students this opportunity? Do you realize the mental and emotional stress you have added to our children's lives with not allowing them to have this athletic outlet? For some students, this is their last chance to participate in something they are passionate about and the last opportunity for a college to see them play.
Dec. 8, 20 -- 8:54: PM	paul	green	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Helps to increase utilization at Echo Lake
Dec. 8, 20 -- 9:48: PM	James	Hines	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Please hold to the boundary of Hungary Road and Staples Mill Road so the subdivisions of Dove Hollow and Brittany remain in the Glen Allen High School area.

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Dec. 8, 20 -- 10:32: PM	Jessie	Sanborn	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I am so disappointed in all that our students are missing this year. It seems as if everytime we turn around, another thing is being taken away from them. The decision to eliminate winter sports was just one more in a long line of ways that our county is creating a disservice for our students. As an employee and parent in our county, I recognize that the board and divison leadership team are in a "no win situation." However, my dissapointment comes in that it seems that we are unwilling to try to give our students these services and opportunities that they need and should have. If private schools across the state have been successfull with in-person learning and sports competitions, it seems that we should at least try. Other divisions across our state are participating in face to face learning and winter sports. It seems like we are taking the easy way out in deciding that we aren't even going to try these things. Students who have the opportunity and resources to attend private school are being given chances to learn in-person, which we all know is more effective, and to participate in sports, thereby giving them a leg up in the college admissions competition and in scholarship opportunities. I cannot believe that we as a county are actively holding our students back without first trying to see if we can mitigate the health risks that the pandemic presents. So many of our sports have been practicing for months without a major incident so why are we cancelling them now? For so many of our students, these practices and workouts have been the one thing tethering them to the world. The coaches and accountablity that athletics provide have been the one thing for the student-athletes to cling to in these times of turmoil. Having the routine and schedule that a team provides has been a grounding influence and the one thing that these students have going for them. The fact that we, as a county, have taken that away while so many other counties are making it work is immensely frustrating! I would very much like to see the board reconsider this decision and to try to make it work. I've been an educator for many years and have had "no child left behind" ingrained in me, but here I feel like we are leaving so many children behind! I know it is a difficult situation, but I would be proud of the county for at least trying.</p>
Dec. 8, 20 -- 10:51: PM	Ashley	Woodson	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>I am in full support of the current proposal of redistricting our Ironwood neighborhood, census tract numbers 10314 and 16309 Ironwood from Longan ES to Echo Lake ES. It makes sense for our children to move to Echo Lake because it helps to increase utilization at Echo Lake which is currently at <80%. It also helps to alleviate overcrowding at Rivers Edge and free up space at Longan which is approaching capacity.</p> <p>The move supports all redistricting guidelines by: utilizing the major roadways of Staples Mill and Hungary Roads as boundaries at all three school levels, ensuring safe and efficient transportation maintaining existing feeder patterns therefor keeping our children's K-12 progress intact.</p>

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Dec. 9, 20 -- 7:10: AM	William	Cahoon	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Thank you for your consideration in addressing our community (Ironwood at Crossridge) which is north of Hungary Road, west of Staples Mill Road as a component of the targeted redistricting. We fully support a move from Longan Elementary to Glen Allen Elementary. This redistricting, as proposed, would alleviate overcrowding at Rivers Edge Elementary, would free space at Longan which is reaching capacity, and would utilize space at Echo Lake (< 80% capacity). Further, this redistricting would be consistent with the previously released redistricting guidelines (utilization of major roadways as boundaries - Staples Mill, Hungary Roads, provide safe, efficient transportation, and provide a consistent feeder pattern of Echo Lake, Hungary Creek, and Glen Allen High School). At present our community is "carved out" from neighboring communities and has a feeder pattern of Longan, Hungary Creek, and Glen Allen High School. This is disparate from our neighboring communities (Dunncroft for instance). Therefore, we fully support an Echo Lake, Hungary Creek, and Glen Allen High School redistricting. Thank you for your consideration.
Dec. 9, 20 -- 8:55: AM	Sabine	Vora	HCPS	I fully support redistricts us to Echo Lake
Dec. 9, 20 -- 9:24: AM	Robin	Hare	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I SUPPORT the current proposal that redistricts census tract numbers 10314 and 16309 to Echo Lake ES. More importantly, it is critical that the Brittany and Dove Hollow neighborhoods STAY at Glen Allen High School This option is logical and preferenced because: Helps to increase utilization at Echo Lake which is currently at <80% Helps to alleviate overcrowding at Rivers Edge and free up space at Longan which is approaching capacity Supports all redistricting guidelines by: Utilizing the major roadways of Staples Mill and Hungary Roads as boundaries at all three school levels Ensuring safe and efficient transportation Maintaining existing feeder patterns, keeping our children's K-12 progress
Dec. 9, 20 -- 9:39: AM	kenneth	elgert	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I support the redistricting recommendations that the Dove Hollow subdivision be included in the Echo Lake-Hungary Creek- GAHS plan for several reasons. As a retired senior I often walk this proposed bus route and for the safety of our children suggest it is the optimal school choice, in addition to the fact it will reduce crowding at RC Longan and better utilize Echo Lake. I am also in favor of our children having a consistent school path in their education that includes attending schools with their neighbors and friends which promotes lifelong friendships, teamwork and sense of community in their upbringing. I think it is a common sense approach to redistrict this subdivision and schools as suggested in the recommendation, thank you for your attention and time.

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Dec. 9, 20 -- 10:01: AM	Sarah	Stewart	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I appreciate efforts to proceed with redistricting by addressing certain hot spots in our county and minimizing the number of students impacted given the current pandemic. Phase 1 prioritizes overcrowded elementary schools in the far West End of which include myself (Ironwood at Crossridge) and my small group of neighborhoods on the NW corner of Staples Mill and Hungary Roads (census tracts 10314 and 16309). In this proposal, the School Board has us rezoned to attend Echo Lake ES beginning with the 2021-2022 school year which we fully support. In fact, both final options during the redistricting process- D4 and E4- proposed the same. We are happy to see that we are once again being considered for this positive change. Redistricting our neighborhoods (Ironwood at Crossridge, Twin Oaks, Hill Trace, Mountain Cove, Brittany, Dove Hollow, & Staples Mill Trace) to attend Echo Lake ES would not only help increase utilization at Echo Lake, which is at <80% capacity, but also free up space in the surrounding West End schools that need it. Moving our students to Echo Lake ES alleviates Longan ES, which is approaching capacity, and overcrowding at Rivers Edge. Additionally, this move supports all redistricting guidelines by recognizing major roadways of Staples Mill and Hungary Roads as boundaries at all three school levels, ensuring safe and efficient transportation, and maintaining existing feeder patterns to keep our children's K-12 progress intact. We are very thankful that you are focusing on our area and fully support redistricting our neighborhoods to Echo Lake ES for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. Thank you!
Dec. 9, 20 -- 10:03: AM	Colleen	Wilhelm	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	We need to get these kids back to classroom. Schools all over are showing it can be done. A hybrid model with half at home and half at school and teachers trying to do it all - not sure that will work in January. I think we should plan for all kids back to school in Feb. https://www.businessinsider.com/anthony-fauci-close-bars-school-instruction-coronavirus-infections-health-2020-11
Dec. 9, 20 -- 11:27: AM	Robin	Huff	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Will leadership continue to change the timeline for in-person learning? Families cannot continue to be jerked around. Every student in grades PreK-2 need an opportunity to be in front of his or her teacher and that is not happening. When will education be a priority for these young learners?
Dec. 9, 20 -- 11:38: AM	Brooke	Lipscombe	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I support the current proposal for Echo Lake. This will help free up space at Longan, and increase utilization at Echo Lake. This will also make Staples Mill and Hungary boundaries at all three school levels, which makes perfect sense.

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Dec. 9, 20 -- 1:19: PM	Godwin Athletic Association	(GAA)	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>December 9, 2020 Dr. Amy E. Cashwell, Superintendent , Henrico County Public Schools, 3820 Nine Mile Road, Henrico, Virginia 23223; Re: Winter Sports</p> <p>Dear Dr. Cashwell:</p> <p>On behalf of the Godwin Athletic Association (GAA), we write to express our extreme disappointment regarding the cancelation of Winter Sports and the manner in which HCPS made that decision and we respectfully ask the County to reverse its decision. The decision to cancel Winter Sports was made at the last minute without any input from the Board, Staff, Parents or Students. Further, despite the County's assertion to the contrary, we understand the Athletic Directors of the nine (9) Henrico County High Schools also did not have a say in this decision. It is inconceivable that those HCPS employees with the most knowledge about County athletics were excluded from such a consequential decision. We ask that this decision be reconsidered immediately. Multiple school districts in the Commonwealth are proceeding with Winter Sports and Henrico can safely do so as well. Recreational sports have been playing without incident in Central Virginia since June – including multiple indoor activities, like basketball. Indeed, sports have been played in numerous states without significant issue since August. If this is a financial decision, then organizations like GAA and families should be given the opportunity to address that before stripping yet another irreplaceable activity from our student-athletes' lives. While we as parents always want to watch our children play, we are more than willing to forgo that and make any other sacrifices to salvage their Winter Season. The County's decision ignores the research indicating that schools and these types of activities are not the source of virus spread and it fails to take into account the dangerous and negative mental ramifications this decision has on our student-athletes. Please reverse your decision. Sincerely, Godwin Athletic Association Board of Directors cc: HCPS Board Members</p>
Dec. 9, 20 -- 1:51: PM	Yael	Levin	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	<p>My 8th and 6th grader sons are struggling. They used to LOVE school. Both are gifted and in advanced classes. Both were well adjusted socially and academically. Now both are struggling academically and with mental health. I am at a loss on how to help them. Nothing I do seems to work. Hanover county seems to make it work. Other states with much higher positivity seem to make it work. Other countries seem to make it work. HCPS seems to not even want to make it work. Virtual might be fine for some, but it isn't fine for my kids and for so many others.</p>
Dec. 9, 20 -- 3:40: PM	Steve	Sweeney	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Do you know how many deaths, with (not from) COVID, there have been in Henrico under 50? Six! How do you justify destroying our younger generation's development and jeopardizing their mental health by closing public schools? What metrics show that virtual learning is effective and not hurting our children? While local day care and private schools continue to operate, what metrics show that public schools spread the disease? Meanwhile the education gap widens. Do you feel any responsibility for your culpability in developing a cure that is worse than the disease?</p>

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Dec. 9, 20 -- 3:41: PM	Jennifer	Cahoon	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I appreciate the School Board moving forward with redistricting in phases in an effort to immediately address specific hot spots while minimizing the number of students impacted given the ongoing COVID pandemic. The current proposal has the small group of neighborhoods at Staples Mill and Hungary Roads slated to move from Longan Elementary to Echo Lake in 2021-22 to alleviate overcrowding at Rivers Edge and Colonial Trail, and I am in full support of this change. Rezoning us to Echo Lake not only helps increase utilization at Echo Lake, which is under 80% capacity, but also frees up space in surrounding elementary schools, allowing for the cascading changes necessary to reduce overcrowding in neighboring West End schools. In addition, it supports all redistricting guidelines by utilizing the major roadways of Staples Mill and Hungary Roads as boundaries at all three school levels, which ensures safe and efficient transportation, maintains existing feeder patterns, and keeps our children's K-12 progress intact. Redistricting is an extremely difficult issue made even more complicated by our current circumstances. I appreciate the Board's efforts to address this issue now and fully support rezoning Census Tracts 10314 and 16309 to Echo Lake in 2021-22 as proposed in your current plan. Thank you.
Dec. 9, 20 -- 6:56: PM	Sabine	Vora	HCPS	I fully support redistricts us to Echo Lake
Dec. 9, 20 -- 8:36: PM	Keith	Lippa	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	As a member representing Census tracts 10314 and 16309 (subdivisions on the NW corner of Staples Mill & Hungary Roads), I wanted to offer some positive support and feedback for the currently proposed redistricting efforts, which redistrict our neighborhoods to Echo Lake ES. We are in full and complete support of this change. In addition, this proposed change follows all the redistricting guidelines set forth in the comprehensive redistricting efforts that started at the end of last year. This change also helps facilitate additional capacity relief efforts for other far west end schools, while taking advantage of Echo Lake's currently low utilization. A win-win-win. I wanted to share with the board that we are excited and supportive of the change, and to also say thank you for taking our feedback into consideration throughout this effort. We appreciate the transparency of the overall process and wanted to again reiterate that we support the redistricting proposal to move us to Echo Lake ES. Thank you.
Dec. 9, 20 -- 10:19: PM	Lara	Rayburn	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Hi. I wanted to let you know that our small section of neighborhoods at Staples Mill and Hungary Roads fully support moving forward with the redistricting plans in the final D4 and E4 plans as they stood back in March; we are now identified as a hot spot for the current 'scaled-down' redistricting process. Both plans are supported by our cluster of neighborhoods (census tract numbers 10314 and 16309) and we support transitioning sooner than later. These moves will transition us from Longan ES to Echo Lake ES. They will successfully free up space in some other neighboring schools, so it would be a trickle-down positive impact to others where needed.

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Dec. 9, 20 -- 10:51: PM	Jessie	Sanborn	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I am writing, again, to advocate for a return to in-person learning and a return to high school sports for our students. I previously wrote on this topic from an emotional and anecdotal point of view, but have heard, repeatedly, that we should listen to the science in the times of COVID. Dr. Fauci, who has been widely accepted as the expert on the pandemic, has said "close the bars and keep the schools open." While you don't have the power to close the bars, you do have the power to open the schools, and I sincerely hope that is still the plan for January. Dr. Redfield of the CDC recently said that "there's extensive data that we've gathered over the last two to three months to confirm that K-12 schools can operate with face-to-face learning and they can do it safely and they can do it responsibly." The science and the experts are saying that our kids are safe back in school. Please remember this as we get closer to our date for a return to in-person learning and honor that date. In addition, in the study linked here about Wisconsin High School Athletics (https://bloximages.chicago2.vip.townnews.com/madison.com/content/tncms/assets/v3/editorial/2/00/2003d353-a9a4-5f92-188ea7813.pdf.pdf?fbclid=IwAR32_VhfYaBptKnYshbK7Vux-0zYNMbgdnfC4k2N5UQXlslpwG7hDKNkz2A), researchers found that the incidence rate of COVID-19 within student athletes was 0.000320, as compared to the general population of 14 to 17 year olds of 0.000370. Whether the students were participating in sports or not, does not seem to have an impact on Corona virus rates. While playing sports does not seem to have a significant affect on COVID numbers, not playing sports and not being in school has had significant effects on our students. In an article in the Washington Post, William Wan states that "when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently asked young adults if they had thought about killing themselves in the past 30 days, 1 in 4 said they had," and that 75% of young adults are struggling with mental health issues. I understand that many people have real and legitimate reasons for not returning to school or sports, but please recognize that scientists and experts have given the go-ahead for schools to be open and sports to be played. The mental well-being of our students depend on it. Thank you</p>
Dec. 9, 20 -- 11:05: PM	Tonna	Saturday	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn, Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Henrico SB, I am writing to let you know that I have seen a huge change in my daughter since missing out on school and important peer interactions that come along with attending school in person. I have watched my daughter's excitement when learning about her upcoming return date quickly turn to sadness when I have to tell her that yet again she cannot go back yet. I have watched her cry by the mere sight of children on TV attending school. She is 7 years old and not once have I seen my child be down about anything until now. I watch the world turn around us and yet it feels we're at a stand still. People are able to go out to eat, go to clubs, and bars but yet my child cannot come to school. We've seen the counties around us go back with no problems and yet here we are still watching our children see others go while they cannot. Please I am begging you give our children a chance. I understand what brought us here but if this is the new normal which it seems to be for now can we not adapt? When surveys were done about 50% of parents chose for their kids to go back when chose this because our childs mental health is just as important as physical which seems to be the only argument at this point to why they cannot come back. I don't want to let my child down again when Jan 11th comes around. Please don't do that to my baby or any others.</p>

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Dec. 9, 20 -- 11:35: PM	Dawn	Moore	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>Dear Dr. Cashwell:</p> <p>On behalf of the Hermitage Athletic Booster Club, we write to express our extreme disappointment regarding the cancelation of Winter Sports and the manner in which HCPS made that decision and we respectfully ask the County to reverse its decision. The decision to cancel Winter Sports was made at the last minute without any input from the Board, Staff, Parents or Students. Further, despite the County's assertion to the contrary, we understand the Athletic Directors of the nine (9) Henrico County High Schools also did not have a say in this decision. It is inconceivable that those HCPS employees with the most knowledge about County athletics were excluded from such a consequential decision. We ask that this decision be reconsidered immediately. Multiple school districts in the Commonwealth are proceeding with Winter Sports and Henrico can safely do so as well. Recreational sports have been playing without incident in Central Virginia since June – including multiple indoor activities, like basketball. Indeed, sports have been played in numerous states without significant issue since August. If this is a financial decision, then organizations like Hermitage Athletic Booster Club and families should be given the opportunity to address that before stripping yet another irreplaceable activity from our student-athletes' lives. While we as parents always want to watch our children play, we are more than willing to forgo that and make any other sacrifices to salvage their Winter Season. The County's decision ignores the research indicating that schools and these types of activities are not the source of virus spread and it fails to take into account the dangerous and negative mental ramifications this decision has on our student-athletes. Please reverse your decision. Sincerely, Hermitage Athletic Booster Club</p>
Dec. 9, 20 -- 11:45: PM	Kari	Crider	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>For Middle Schoolers: I'd like to ask again for the school board to consider moving the advisory block up before lunch - so that on days where no activity is required during Advisory the middle school children can have a little extra time to go outside, burn off some energy or fix their lunch and eat without rushing to get back to class. I'm told by Pocahontas Middle that it's county wide - not a decision that can be made at the school level. Either way - please consider making it county wide! High schoolers get that full hour four out of five days a week (at least Godwin and Deep Run do) and from what I hear, elementary is able to combine "recess" time with lunch to provide them more time for lunch break as well (I'm not certain that applies to all schools but I've heard some do that!). I also request a response if you're not able to - so that I can better understand the rationale behind the decision. Thank you!!</p>

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Dec. 10, 20 -- 12:24: AM	Gabi	Harris	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>Hello, My name is Gabi Harris, and I am currently a student at Glen Allen High School. I'm writing this comment in support of the Diversify Our Narrative petition. Diversify Our Narrative is a national student-led grassroots organization working to diversify high school education primarily through English curriculum. We have obtained over 790 signatures from HCPS parents, students, teachers, and alumni. Along with requesting a more diverse English curriculum, we are also asking that a Cultural Sensitivity Training Course be implemented for all Henrico County Middle and High School students. We hope we have your support in our efforts in making Henrico County a place of inclusivity where all students are represented in their education. I stand in support of this because in my high school English classes, I've never been taught a book by an author of color or a book that centers a story of a person of color. As a young Black woman in predominantly white schools, I've always looked to stories by Black authors to find characters that I can relate to. In school, I've always had to seek those stories out because I was never taught them. In English classes, I have been made to read stories by white authors that center stories of white characters and find universal themes in them. It's not only important for me to have the opportunity to find universal truths in books by people of color with characters of color but for all students to. All students should have the opportunity to see themselves reflected in the literature taught in their English classes. In order to create a more supportive community across the county, it is essential for students to understand their peers' cultural backgrounds and the influences that make them who they are. This will allow students to interact with each other with more empathy and understanding. For these reasons, I urge you to take action and support this petition in mandating these requests.</p>

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Dec. 10, 20 -- 7:45: AM	Sondra	Washburn	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>On behalf of many of the members of Deep Run High School Athletic Booster Club, we write to express our extreme disappointment regarding the cancellation of the winter sports season and the manner in which HCPS made that decision and we respectfully ask the County to reconsider its decision. The decision to cancel winter sports was made abruptly and without any input from the board, staff, parents or students. In addition, the Directors of Student Activities of the nine Henrico County High Schools did not have a say in this decision. It is extremely incomprehensible that those HCPS employees with the most knowledge about County athletics were excluded from such a consequential decision. We ask that this decision be reconsidered immediately. Multiple school districts in the Commonwealth are proceeding with winter sports and Henrico can safely do so as well. Recreational sports have been playing without incident in Central Virginia since June – including multiple indoor activities, like basketball. Indeed, sports have been played in numerous states without significant issue since August. We understand that some families may not be comfortable allowing their students to play but sports are a voluntary activity. Please allow individual families the choice to have their student participate not a blanket decision made for all. We also understand that certain precautions and restrictions must be followed in order to keep everyone safe such as limitations on spectators. While we as parents always want to watch our children play, we are more than willing to forgo that and make any other sacrifices to salvage their winter season. The County’s decision ignores the research indicating that schools, these types of activities and this age population are not the source of virus spread; and it fails to take into account the dangerous and negative mental ramifications this decision has on our student-athletes. Although we cannot speak for every Deep Run parent, we again ask to please reconsider your decision.</p>
Dec. 10, 20 -- 7:53: AM	Ashley	Waddell	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>School Social Workers play a critical role in enhancing the social and emotional well-being of students. These practitioners often provide more than six to eight weeks of intensive, mental health services to our students. COVID-19, poverty, racial injustice, and trauma is impacting the mental health needs of our students. School social workers are crucial in the implementation of a comprehensive model of school based mental health support. The School Social Work Association recommends an approximate ratio of 1 school social worker for every 250 students. The approximate ratio of HCPS school social workers is 1 school social worker for every 1,643 students. Staffing at a ratio higher than the maximum recommended by SSWAA compromises the quality of services provided to students and affects the potential for positive academic and emotional outcomes. To support positive educational outcomes for all students, particularly those who struggle with mental health concerns we ask that the Board consider funding additional school social work positions to meet this growing need.</p> <p>Signed -HCPS School Social Workers</p>