

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

November 27, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 Boundaries

The new Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 is needed to address current and projected overutilization at each of the four existing elementary schools in the Richard Montgomery Cluster. From March through May 2017, a Boundary Advisory Committee (Committee) met to explore options for boundary assignments for the new school. During the committee process, a total of eight options were developed and evaluated. At the conclusion of the process, a Committee report was drafted and the final report was released in July 2017. On October 23, 2017, the superintendent of schools released a recommendation for the Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 boundary assignment.

Subsequent to the release of the superintendent's recommendation, the following three events resulted in the need to provide updated boundary options:

1. Due to favorable construction costs, it became evident that the capacity of Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 could be increased within available funding to allow for additional future flexibility to meet student enrollment changes, as well as the opportunity to lower utilization rates across all Richard Montgomery Cluster elementary schools. Building out the planned shell space increased the capacity of the new school from 602 to 740 students.
2. As the boundary option data continued to be reviewed by community members and elected officials, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) staff identified an error in the calculation of the Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) information. Unfortunately, this error altered the FARMS data presented in the boundary options, including the recommendation by the superintendent of schools. Following the identification of this error, the demographic information was recalculated and carefully analyzed and reviewed. The corrected information for all eight original options was disseminated to the Committee, as well as the community at large.
3. At the November 2, 2017, work session, the Board adopted three alternatives, as well as a resolution requiring that the superintendent of schools review the boundary recommendation for Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5, solicit stakeholder input, and "submit more equitable recommendations for FARMS distribution of students to the Board of Education."

To reflect the increased capacity and the corrected demographic information, MCPS staff developed updated effects tables for each of the eight options developed as part of the boundary advisory process. In addition, tables were developed for the three Board adopted alternatives. Each of the 11 options reflected the most recent data available, which included:

- The increased capacity at Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5;
- Current year enrollment figures for each school;
- Current year demographic data; and
- Corrected FARMS calculations.

The updated tables and information were distributed to the school communities, posted on the MCPS website, and reviewed by the Committee.

Based on the updated and recalculated FARMS data, the superintendent of schools' recommendation no longer met the intended objectives for the factor of demographic characteristics of the student population—one of four main factors for consideration in development of school boundaries as indicated in Board Policy FAA, *Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning*. Therefore, and consistent with the Board's November 2, 2107, resolution, the superintendent of schools submitted three options that represent "more equitable distribution of Free and Reduced Price Meals System students in the Richard Montgomery Cluster elementary schools."

In total, the Board has before it five boundary options—three approved Board alternatives and three options submitted by the superintendent of schools (one of the three options submitted was the same as one of the Board's alternatives). These boundary options are now referred to as "Board of Education Adopted Alternatives A–E."

Board Policy FAA, *Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning*, provides for "a different and/or condensed process and time schedule, developed by the superintendent of schools, for making recommendations to the Board of Education regarding the Capital Improvements Program and the facility planning activities listed above, including but not limited to changing school boundaries and establishing geographic student choice assignment plans in the event that the Board of Education determines that unusual circumstances exist." As a result of the three events noted previously, the superintendent of schools has developed a different time schedule and process than outlined in MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning*.

WHEREAS, On November 14, 2017, the superintendent of schools requested that in light of the unusual circumstances noted previously, the "Board of Education determine that unusual circumstances exist in the boundary assignment process for Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 and authorize the superintendent of schools to develop and implement a different process, consistent with policies on community engagement and in a timely manner"; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education, on November 14, 2017, adopted the resolution that acknowledged the unusual circumstances in the boundary assignment process for Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 and authorized the superintendent of schools to develop and implement a different process; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education, on November 2, 2017, adopted three alternatives for the Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 boundaries; and

WHEREAS, On November 14, 2017, the superintendent of schools, pursuant to the Board of Education adopted November 2, 2017, resolution, submitted three boundary options, one of which was the same as one of the Board of Education's alternatives; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education has before it a total of five adopted alternatives, Alternatives A–E; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education adopt the boundary assignment labelled “Alternative B”, one of the five boundary alternatives, for the new Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5; and be it further

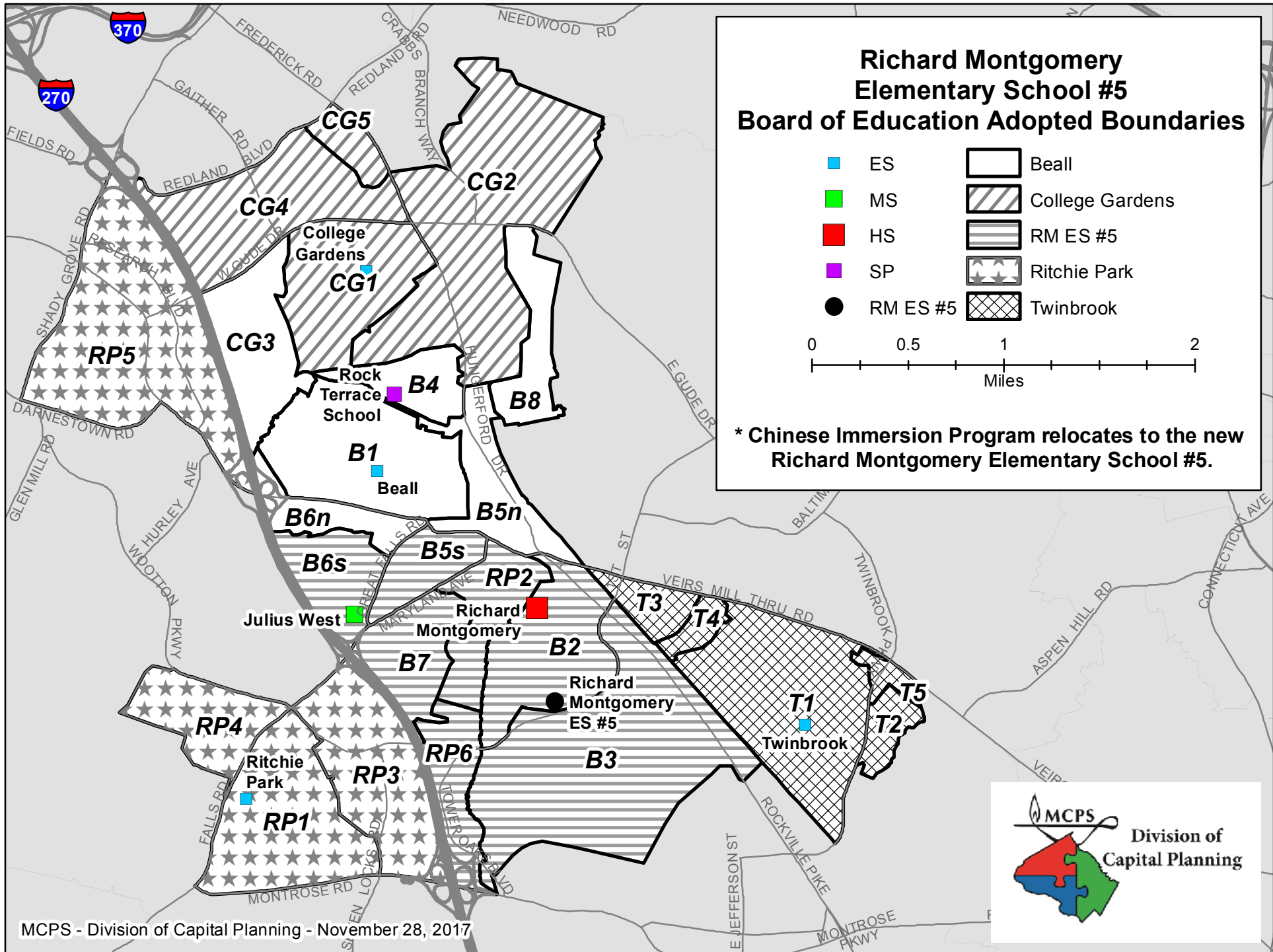
Resolved, That this boundary assignment be implemented by reassigning all of the Chinese Immersion Program students to the new Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 when it opens in September 2018; that for College Gardens Elementary School students only, any rising Grade 3 through Grade 5 students who are recommended to be reassigned be allowed to remain at College Gardens Elementary School to complete the Primary Years Programme; that Grades K through rising Grade 2 students who are recommended to be reassigned from College Gardens Elementary School will be reassigned in September 2018; and that for the remaining elementary schools in the cluster that Grade 5 students in the areas recommended to be reassigned be allowed to complete elementary school at their current school of attendance; and be it further

Resolved, That capacity issues in the Richard Montgomery Cluster should be reviewed to identify possible options to address elementary school capacity if an elementary school in the cluster is projected to require more than four relocatable classroom units in the six year period, or at the end of the fifth year of operation of the new Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 and that the superintendent of schools provide a recommendation to the Board of Education based on those options as part of the Capital Improvements Program process; and be it further

Resolved, That a map of the adopted boundary be attached to this resolution.

JRS:AMZ:JS:ak

Attachment



Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5 Board of Education Adopted Boundaries

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|---|--|-----------------|
| ■ ES | | Beall |
| ■ MS | | College Gardens |
| ■ HS | | RM ES #5 |
| ■ SP | | Ritchie Park |
| ● RM ES #5 | | Twinbrook |



*** Chinese Immersion Program relocates to the new Richard Montgomery Elementary School #5.**

