



Kings Contrivance Community Association
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November 10, 2011

Board of Education
Howard County Public School System
10910 Route 108
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Dear Board of Education Members:

The Kings Contrivance Village Board understands the challenge and the necessity of redistricting. We thank you and your staff for working diligently to address capacity issues in our local elementary schools while incorporating input from the community.

At our regularly scheduled November 2 village board meeting, residents from our Dickinson neighborhood voiced concerns over proposed redistricting. They are concerned that the neighborhood children may be separated into three groups and sent to three different elementary schools. Additionally, a group of children from only three streets (Blue Sea Drive, Sandrope Court, and Stonebrook Lane) would be sent to a school that no one around them would be attending. This small group would not be kept with their Dickinson village neighbors or their out parcel neighbors, with whom they share a fence.

The village board strongly believes that the success of redistricting lies in keeping neighborhoods together. Elementary school is where parents first become active in their child's formal education. School districting can promote parent and child involvement which will carry into middle and high school. Residents living near each other will work together to be active members of their shared school. This will lend itself to more support for the school, teachers, and the PTA. Additionally, drawing district lines along neighborhood boundaries takes advantage of the planned Columbia communities that are structured to encourage people to meet, engage with their neighbors and to become active community members.

The village board was very clear at the November 2 meeting that we have no preference which school neighborhoods attend. All Howard County schools offer strong academic curriculums taught by outstanding teachers. The Dickinson residents attending the meeting agreed and stated that they do not have a school preference either.

The Kings Contrivance Village Board asks that you revisit proposed district boundaries and keep our neighborhood children together. Please pay special attention to small pockets of neighborhoods (such as the aforementioned three streets) where proposed boundaries would sever a population of students from all close neighbors. Understanding that a goal of redistricting is equalizing future populations at county schools, we have no concerns about which school our residents attend. However, the grouping of elementary school districts is critical to paving the way to an active school community.

Again, thank you for your thorough attention to this complex task.

Warmly,

Barbara N. Seely
Chair, Kings Contrivance Village Board