

**Modified Open Enrollment (MOE)
Questions and Answers for Charles Barrett PTA Meeting: 1-27-10**

NOTE: The School Board has not yet adopted a policy on modified open enrollment. The answers below are based on staff proposals to the Board.

- 1. Why do we need MOE? Where are the demographic projections and analysis that support the need for this policy overall? How far out do demographic projections exist? How are school capacities determined (explanation of the chart on page 8 of the 11-3-09 Work Session document would be appreciated).**

Enrollment in ACPS elementary schools has increased by over 900 students from SY 2006-07 through the current year, or almost 17%. Some of our elementary schools are at physical capacity, and many more will reach physical capacity limits over the next five years without changes in enrollment policies, class sizes, or construction of new facilities. Modified open enrollment is a policy option that allows ACPS to accommodate all ACPS students while recognizing budget and space constraints.

Enrollment projection data is prepared for the next six budget years. Attachments A and B show the history and projections for FY 2001 (SY 2000-01) through FY 2016 (SY 2015-2016). These projections do **not** include students that might be enrolled under modified open enrollment policies. Of the currently enrolled students at Barrett, 49 attend from other school boundary areas, as follows:

Mount Vernon:	23
Patrick Henry	1
Maury	3
Douglas MacArthur	1
Cora Kelly	11
William Ramsay	1
Samuel Tucker	1
Jefferson Houston	8

Capacity is a function of the number of students enrolled at a school, class size, standard programs and standard space allocations, special programs, and the physical configuration of space at a school building. The capacity analysis shown in Attachment C takes all of these factors into account. For Barrett in FY 2011, all rooms will be used to accommodate next year's projected enrollment. In future years, there will not be space for expansion for students from the Barrett boundary area or for students attending under modified open enrollment.

MOE is a temporary solution that will place grade level caps on schools that are over capacity. It is also an efficient use of space and teachers that will result in lower costs for facilities and personnel while keeping class sizes small. See the attachments for the Jan. 5 School Board work session for more information: www.acps.k12.va.us/board/meetings/2009-2010/20100105sbn.pdf

2. Barrett currently has about 290 students. What is the projected enrollment for FY 2015?

Without regard to capacity constraints and without accounting for open enrollment students, Barrett is projected to have about 421 students in FY 2015. This is an increase of about 106 students, or five classes, compared to the FY 2011 projections. To put this in perspective, we have six schools projected to have over 600 students in FY 2015 – again, without regard to capacity constraints or accounting for open enrollment students. For additional information see the response to question 1 and Attachments A and B

3. Are modular units being placed at Barrett in order to accommodate redirected students?

No. They are being placed at Barrett to accommodate growth in the Barrett attendance zone. Enrollment projections show that unless additional classrooms are placed at Barrett, newly enrolling students in the Barrett attendance zone will need to be redirected. By SY 2011-12, Barrett will need additional space for Barrett area students. See Attachment D for the analysis of modified open enrollment and capacity, without any expansion of the number of classrooms available. Current projections show Barrett over capacity by 11 students in FY 2012 (SY 2011-12); 18 students in FY 2013; 26 students in FY 2014, and 31 students in 2015. The additional classrooms will allow students in the Barrett attendance zone to stay at Barrett AND they will accommodate redirected students. In addition to the five classrooms to be used as homerooms, the FY 2011-2016 CIP requests additions for program (art and music) and core space (cafeteria) expansions.

4. What criteria were used to determine that Charles Barrett can accommodate modular units and additional students? Specifically regarding transportation?

And

5. Why did Barrett receive a positive score for the traffic criterion, given the significant issues we've been dealing with for years? What analysis led to a higher score assigned than for other schools? (School Board Work Session 11-3-09 page 17 Site Matrix)

And

6. What about traffic safety? Barrett has had challenges for years with safely loading and unloading students from busses. With increased enrollment, how will this be addressed? How would additional traffic (cars, buses, pedestrians) be handled? Is there coordination with the city as they work towards an immediate solution to our already dangerous conditions? Where would additional teachers park?

The size and width of Martha Custis Drive as compared to other schools was the main factor in determining whether a school was given a +1 or a -1 rating. The two schools with a negative rating are both located on narrower neighborhood roads (see Attachment F). The traffic situation at Barrett will be reviewed by the ACPS risk manager, in collaboration with the City of Alexandria Police Department. There will

be an opportunity for school staff and parents to provide input into the analysis. The resulting recommendations will probably require some changes in drivers' drop-off patterns and will be supported by communication and enforcement from the Police Department. Construction of additional parking spaces is also planned.

7. How was the criterion "Impact on Green Space" evaluated? (School Board Work Session 11-3-09 page 17 Site Matrix)

The classroom additions will be installed on the asphalt area behind the school and not impact any fields or playgrounds. In selecting sites, ACPS staff must be mindful of City needs for open/green space, and comply with City Planning & Zoning requirements for construction impact on "permeability" (how much water will run-off rather than be absorbed) and storm-water management.

8. How many of the five modular units will be used for classrooms? Is there the potential these classrooms can be used for other uses (ie, resources)?

The classroom additions are being designed to provide maximum flexibility in their use, just as existing classrooms may be used for multiple purposes. The classrooms are a permanent addition to the school and are designed to have a 75 to 100 year life span. Because they are constructed using modular techniques, they can be relocated if necessary. Additional information on modular construction was provided to the School Board and is shown in Attachment E.

9. When will redirected students begin to enroll at Barrett?

It will depend on the enrollment patterns at neighboring schools. Our current projections indicate that most of the space needs are at west end schools next school year (SY 2010-11). Students from those schools will most likely be directed to Patrick Henry or James Polk. These schools are also proposed to receive additional classrooms that will be constructed using modular techniques.

10. How many redirected students can Barrett expect to receive?

We estimate about 25 in FY 2012, 30 in FY 2013, 12 in FY 2014 and 19 in FY 2015 if current projections hold true.

11. What neighborhoods do we expect the redirected students to come from?

Most likely it will be students from the George Mason or Douglas MacArthur attendance zones.

12. What about students who opt out of schools that offer school choice due to No Child Left Behind (schools not making AYP)? Will those students come to Barrett as well?

Our legal responsibility is to offer those students a transfer to the closest school with space. If Barrett is the closest school to their neighborhood and has space, children will continue to be placed.

- 13. What will happen if redirected students begin school at Barrett, but space opens up at their home schools after the school year has started? If space opens up in their grade level at their home school, they will be allowed to transfer out of Barrett immediately (regardless of whether it's 2 weeks, 4 months, or 8 months into the school year) or stay at Barrett for as long as they choose? Why not require that MOE students complete the school year before transferring back to their home school?**

The choice will be given to the student's parents or guardians whether to return to the "neighborhood" school. Our experience the past several years with students who have been redirected from Samuel Tucker is that once they are settled in their new school, they stay. By April 1 of each school year, the student's parent or guardian will be notified if space is available the following school year in the neighborhood school and will be given the choice to return. However, because parents would retain the right to return to their home school when space becomes available, we are not recommending that the policy require students to stay for a full school year.

- 14. If Barrett failed to make AYP and became a 'failing' school, where would overflow be directed? How would school choice be accommodated for families wishing to take advantage of transfer policies?**

Barrett has always made AYP, and would offer choice only after not making AYP two years in a row, according to NCLB regulations. If that happens, students can choose to transfer to the closest school with space available that is making AYP.

- 15. How long do we expect Modified Open Enrollment to last?**

About four years, beginning this fall, assuming the ACPS' requests for additional funding for school construction is approved by City Council.

- 16. Will class sizes at Barrett increase?**

Class sizes will be capped the same way at all schools: 20 for Kindergarten, 22 for grades 1-2, and 24 for grades 3-5. Depending on current and future enrollment patterns, this may be a decrease for some classes and an increase for others throughout the division.

- 17. What additional resources will Barrett receive due to increased enrollment? Would ELL, counselors, encore instructors, etc. be increased? How and when will those be provided? Does ACPS have a formula that is used to determine staff-to-student ratios for support services?**

It depends on the needs of the students. Additional homeroom teachers will be provided when more classes are added. Art, music, and physical education staffing is provided based on a formula that includes the number of homeroom teachers. Special education and ELL teachers are provided based on a division-wide formula based on student enrollment and needs. Additional support staffing is also considered on a school-by-school basis, for example, schools without assistant principals are receiving support from administrative interns. An additional administrative intern for elementary schools is included in the ACPS budget request for FY 2011.

18. When do we expect the five modular units to be full (in other words, how many years will it take to fill the five classrooms with students)? Would new schools and redistricting result in their removal?

If current projections are accurate, the classroom addition would be used to house five classes in FY 2012, plus provide space for additional art and music rooms. Not all classes would contain the maximum number of students proposed as caps – 20 for kindergarten; 22 for grades 1-2, and 24 for grades 3-5. In addition, the principal might choose to organize the school in a way that would use some of this class space for resource use and put homeroom classrooms elsewhere in the school building.

19. What is the projected timeline for new schools? Has land for new schools been identified? Has funding been appropriated?

ACPS has requested funding to build and open a new school (tentatively proposed for the Patrick Henry site) by FY 2014 (SY 2013-14) and for a second new school (tentatively proposed for the Cora Kelly site) by FY 2015 (SY 2014-15). This is dependent on approval of funding by the City Council.

20. Why not bus west end students to east end schools with space? Could space in one of the underutilized schools be used to create a new and separate school (much like GW 1&2) to handle overflow?

It's important to keep students as close to their home schools as possible. It increases family involvement and decreases transportation costs. There are space limitations at almost all ACPS schools. Creating a second school-within-a-school in already small elementary schools is not cost-effective, particularly compared to modified open enrollment.

21. Will all information and data that was utilized by the ACPS staff and School Board to develop this proposal be made available to the public in advance of final approval?

Absolutely, and this package will also be made available to the School Board and the community on the ACPS website.

22. What are next steps?

The School Board's policy committee will meet in early February (Feb. 4, 7 p.m., 2000 N. Beauregard St.) to develop a proposed policy and will bring it to the full Board in February. The School Board must vote on the policy prior to approving the operating budget. The budget vote is slated for Feb. 22.

23. Barrett's enrollment in Sept. 2010 is projected to increase from 289 to 320. Yet, your budget reduces Barrett's ELL staff and cuts our reading specialists by 50%. Why have you proposed cutting these support staff when it is clear our need for them will increase next year?

This is a separate, budget related question and needs to be answered in the context of total budget proposals for the division.