

Folger McKinsey Citizen Advisory Committee
Thurman Reynolds, Chairman
293 Tolstoy Lane
Severna Park, MD 21146

Mr. Alex Szachnowicz
Chief Operating Officer
Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Carol Parham Building
2644 Riva Road
Annapolis, MD 21401

July 2, 2010

Re: Transportation Concerns Related to Folger McKinsey's Relocation to Chesapeake Bay Middle School

Dear Mr. Szachnowicz,

I would like to begin by thanking you and your staff for the efforts that have led to the revitalization of Folger Mc Kinsey Elementary School. We are excited to see the daily progress in preparation for the construction phase. The "Folger Family" is truly grateful for what should be a superb revitalization serving our students for years to come.

As the Folger CAC Chairman, I am writing to relay the concerns expressed by the Folger parents regarding the school day time change and the related transportation issues. As you are aware, the scope of Folger's revitalization necessitated the temporary relocation of its student to Chesapeake Bay Middle School (CBMS) until the project completion. Although we were aware that the relocation would require that all our students be bused to CBMS and that the school day start and end times would most likely be affected, we were hoping that the new times would be closer to the current school schedule. At our most recent CAC meeting, the school starting and ending times for the 2010/11 school year were discussed. The one-hour shift from the current routine that is planned for Folger's students (9:45 AM to 4:05 PM) was met with great concern by most of the 70 parents in attendance.

Chris Carter, Supervisor of Transportation, addressed the reasoning behind the time change at our June CAC meeting. Mr. Carter explained why the later times were necessary due to the constraints of the number of buses available, the transportation schedule of the Severna Park feeder system and the operating budget for transportation. Mr. Carter explained that the revised bus schedule would be released to parents in early August and that he would do his best to release Folger's schedule earlier to allow parents more time to prepare for this change.

Parents raised several concerns to Mr. Carter and the CAC Board during the meeting. The key areas of concern voiced by parents included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Bus Safety:
 - Procedures insuring the health and safety of younger children for routes finishing after dark during the winter months.
 - Routes that may approach one hour in length.
 - Procedures for monitoring children during longer rides with fuller buses.
- Bus Routes and Scheduling:
 - Insuring that all efforts were employed to maximize the efficiency of route scheduling to minimize school schedule change. This included a review of the before and after-care buses and their schedules.
 - Exploring whether any excess funds from the construction budgets could be steered toward additional buses and, again, reduce the impact on the school day.
- Student Performance:
 - Concerns that the later start and end times may impact the study habits of Folger's students.

As a result of these concerns, the Folger McKinsey CAC respectfully requests the following actions from the AACPS Operations Office:

1. Re-examining the utilization of buses and bus routes to decrease the shift to later start and end times.
2. Where practical, utilize savings from construction budgets (funding saved from bids received below budgeted levels) and allocate them to transportation during the relocation period. Let me stress that we would not, in any way, wish to change the scope of the Folger project to free up funds; simply transfer savings from the construction side to the transportation side if available.
3. Review and clarify the plans and procedures for safely transporting our children to and from CBMS.
4. A breakdown of the costs associated with adding buses to Folger.

While we understand that flexibility on everyone's part is required to make the revitalization of Folger McKinsey a reality, we would greatly appreciate any efforts that would lead to Folger's school day being closer to the historical norm. We believe that, with some creativity and "tweaking" of the transportation plan, start and end times could be adjusted to satisfy the needs of Folger's students and parents without negatively impacting their education during their relocation period.

Thank you for your efforts of behalf of our children. I am available to provide any assistance you may require and I look forward to your thoughts on these issues.

Best regards,

Thurman Reynolds

Thurman Reynolds
Chairman, Folger McKinsey CAC

cc: Susan Bachmann, Folger McKinsey Elementary School