

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

DRAFT

TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: Chairman Phil Mendelson
Committee of the Whole

DATE: October 18, 2022

SUBJECT: Report on PR 24-814, “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022”

The Committee of the Whole, to which PR 24-814, “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022” was referred, reports favorably thereon and recommends approval by the Council.

CONTENTS

I.	Background And Need.....	1
II.	Legislative Chronology.....	3
III.	Position Of The Executive.....	3
IV.	Comments Of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions	4
V.	Summary Of Testimony.....	4
VI.	Impact On Existing Law	5
VII.	Fiscal Impact.....	5
VIII.	Section-By-Section Analysis	5
IX.	Committee Action.....	6
X.	Attachments	6

I. BACKGROUND AND NEED

On June 16, 2022, PR 24-814, the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022” was introduced by Councilmember Cheh. The purpose of PR 24-814 is to express the sense of the Council with regard to the commute and feeder pattern for a new Foxhall elementary school, and the future expansion of Stoddert Elementary.

The “Planning Actively for Comprehensive Education Facilities Amendment Act of 2016” (D.C. Law 21-219) requires the Deputy Mayor for Education to prepare a ten-year Master Facilities Plan to anticipate and enable the development of adequate public-school facilities.” Submitted to the Council in March of 2019, the 2018 Master Facilities Plan (MFP) intended to analyze the state of the Districts’ current school facilities and specialized programs, forecasts future enrollment growth, analyzes the gap between enrollment and facility capacity now and in the future, and makes recommendations for efficient and equitable delivery of high quality public school facilities over the next ten years. The plan incorporated information about the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools to better understand the current landscape and future

facility needs. However, the document submitted to the Council over 3 years ago now was substantially deficient as a plan, and the plan was subsequently disapproved by the Council.

Of some great concern in reviewing the MFP was the failure to include recommendations for how the District and schools should address overcrowding and under-enrollment in DCPS school facilities. Schools in Ward 3 are experiencing extreme overcrowding. A report by the Wilson High School Feeder Pattern Community Working Group calls for the next iteration of the MFP to address overcrowding and high utilization at the feeder schools. Total utilization of Jackson-Reed's twelve feeder schools ranges from 82%-123% including both permanent buildings and portable units. However, eight of the schools currently have enrollment that exceeds their permanent capacity, with utilization rates ranging from 101%-137%. Four additional schools are above 90% utilization of their permanent capacity. The report makes several recommendations to address overcrowding. While overcrowding is not unique to the Jackson-Reed High School Feeder Pattern, it is a longstanding and widespread issue that has had a significant effect on each of the affected schools. Again, the MFP failed to recommend or even address any tangible solutions to overcrowding within the feeder pattern.

As of School Year 2021-2022, all elementary schools within the Jackson-Reed High School feeder pattern either have never or have ceased offering pre-k 3 to families and many cannot offer sufficient pre-k 4 seats to meet demand, as space constraints have required schools to convert those classrooms to serve other grades. At Jackson-Reed High School, space limitations prevent seniors from enrolling certain courses. In 2017, DCPS convened a working group to discuss how best to address overcrowding in the Jackson-Reed High School Feeder Pattern. That working group, which included school administrators and teachers, parents of current students, DCPS Central Office staff, the Ward 3 State Board of Education member, Council staff, and community representatives, was tasked with putting forward recommendations to the Chancellor on how best to address overcrowding within the feeder pattern. That group concluded that, due to existing over-enrollment and anticipated enrollment growth in the feeder pattern, there was need for DCPS to build out new capacity; this could be achieved both by creating wholly new facilities and, where feasible, building additions to expand capacity at existing schools.

To realize this, in the FY22 annual budget, Council approved \$45 million to transform the former campus of Georgetown Day School on MacArthur Boulevard NW into a 1000 seat high school to alleviate overcrowding at Jackson-Reed High School, also located in Ward 3. In addition, the budget also included an additional \$22.5 million for Foxhall Elementary School to address overcrowding at Stoddert Elementary, Key Elementary, and Mann Elementary Schools; some of District's most overcrowded schools, with Stoddert's facility capacity currently at 146% and enrollment is steadily growing. Funding for Foxhall was transferred from two other capital projects which would have built additions on Key and Stoddert Elementary Schools. At the time the new school was first proposed, concerns were raised about the accessibility of the new school facility to the Glover Park neighborhood. While Glover Park and the site of the new school in Foxhall Village may appear close to one another, Glover Archbold Park poses a geographic barrier between the two communities. Commuting to the site of the new school in Foxhall Village from Glover Park, whether by personal vehicle, public transit, or on foot, will be quite difficult for current Stoddert families. Also in the FY 2022 budget, the Council approved the reinsertion of funding for

Stoddert's addition in the Capital Improvement Plan and included language that the new addition be built to support the construction of an additional story, should it be necessary in the future.

On June 16, 2022, Councilmember Mary Cheh introduced PR 24-814, "Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022" with calls to establish an appropriate catchment area for the new Foxhall Elementary School that would not lengthen commute times for new Foxhall families and better accommodations for families currently in the Stoddert catchment for whom travel to the new Foxhall school would be trying. It is the Committee's hope that the DME continues to review the catchment area of the new Foxhall school and the commuting patterns of families to ensure that through the provision of new school facilities families are not unintentionally displaced from school communities they have enjoyed.

The Committee hopes that PR 24-814 will push the Executive to better plan for school facilities, and therefore recommends its adoption.

II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

June 16, 2022	PR 24-814, "Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022," is introduced by Councilmember Cheh.
June 28, 2022	PR 24-814 is "read" at a meeting of the Committee of the Whole; on this date the referral of the resolution to the Committee of the Whole is official.
July 1, 2022	Notice of Intent to Act on PR 24-814 is published in the <i>D.C. Register</i> .
August 2, 2022	Notice of a Public Hearing on PR 24-814 is filed in the Office of the Secretary.
September 27, 2022	The Committee of the Whole holds a public roundtable on PR 24-814.
October 18, 2022	The Committee of the Whole marks up PR 24-814.

III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Mr. Ely Ross, Chief Operating Officer for the District of Columbia Public Schools, and Mr. Paul Kihn, the Deputy Mayor for Education, testified on behalf of the Executive on PR 24-814, "Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022". The Executive does not report favorably or unfavorably on PR 24-814 but requests the Council's Both testimonies are summarized in Section V of this report.

IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received no testimony or comments from any Advisory Neighborhood Commission.

V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public hearing on PR 24-814 on September 27, 2022. The testimony from that hearing is summarized below. Copies of written testimony are attached to this report.

Lois Hollan, Public Witness, testified about decision making around school facility locations that is in harmony with the community.

Lauren Welsh, Stoddert Elementary LSAT, testified in support of PR 24-814 and requested the Council pass the resolution.

Jessica Lynch, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814, and urged the Council to make Stoddert Elementary a priority and not split the Glover Park community.

Jeremy Joseph, Chair, Key School LSAT and Vice President, Hardy PTO, testified in support of PR 24-814, and stated that it is paramount for the Council and the Executive to hear from the perspectives of parents and school communities.

Matthew Frumin, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814, and requests to keep the Glover Archibold Park community within the Stoddert boundary and not re-routing families.

Lisa McCluskey, Stoddert Elementary LSAT, testified in support of PR 24-814 and notes that while Foxhall Elementary is a solution to overcrowding at Key and Mann, Foxhall Elementary is not a reasonable solution to alleviate Stoddert's overcrowding.

Valerie Jablow, Public Witness, testified on the funding allocated to expand Ward 3 schools and believes that the capital investments are fiscally disastrous.

Moulin Desai, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814 and encouraged the Council to pass the resolution.

Eric Goulet, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814 and believes that the Stoddert addition should be built to accommodate further enrollment growth in the future instead of splitting the current community to attend Foxhall.

Gupi Howie, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814 and emphasized that any addition to Stoddert Elementary School be constructed in a way that anticipates the inevitable need for greater capacity in the future.

Maggie McCrone, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814. Ms. McCrone testified in support of keeping Glover Park families at Stoddert Elementary instead of being transferred to the new Foxhall school with a difficult commute.

Dustin Push, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814, with worry that the current proposed boundary for the new Foxhall school would displace Glover Park families.

Lindsey Seltzer, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 24-814, with worry that the current proposed boundary for the new Foxhall school would displace Glover Park families.

Ruth Wattenberg, Ward 3 Rep DC State Board of Education, testified in support of PR 24-814. Representative Wattenberg states that Stoddert should be built to accommodate more than its current projected enrollment and that no students or families from Stoddert should be sent to the new Foxhall school.

Ely Ross, Chief Operating Officer, District of Columbia Public Schools, testified on behalf of the Executive. Mr. Ross testified that DCPS is proactively planning for expected changes in population and school enrollment figures and even with the new Foxhall school, Stoddert's enrollment continues to rise and the new Foxhall school will still be needed. DCPS remains confident in their long-term planning to alleviate overcrowding in the Jackson-Reed feeder pattern.

Paul Kihn, Deputy Mayor for Education, testified on behalf of the Executive. Deputy Mayor Kihn testified that the DME will be leading the Master Facilities Plan (MFP) and the boundary study in the coming year, which will be an opportunity to evaluate school capacity and need across the city. "The enrollment picture has shifted due to the pandemic and trends in birth rates, and we will continue to closely review enrollment projections once the detailed census data is released...".

VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

PR 24-814 has no impact on existing law.

VII. FISCAL IMPACT

PR 24-814 will have no fiscal impact on the District of Columbia budget or financial plan.

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 States the short title of PR 24-814.

Section 2 States the Council's findings regarding Stoddert Elementary School and issues of overcrowding in the Jackson-Reed High School feeder pattern.

- Section 3 Expresses the sense of the Council that DCPS should ensure that no family assigned to the new elementary school in Foxhall Village has a longer commute to school than in their current catchment area supports; the new elementary school in Foxhall Village is located such that it cannot accommodate Glover Park families or other families within Stoddert's current catchment area; and the Stoddert addition must be built in such a way that an additional story can be added, when future enrollment requires it.
- Section 4 Requires transmittal of the resolution to the Deputy Mayor, the Chancellor, the State Board, and the Mayor's Agent.
- Section 5 Provides that PR 24-814 take effect upon publication in the *Register*.

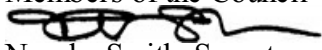
IX. COMMITTEE ACTION

X. ATTACHMENTS

1. PR 24-814 as introduced.
2. Written Testimony.
3. Legal Sufficiency Determination.
4. Committee Print for PR 24-814.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20004

Memorandum

To : Members of the Council
From :  Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council
Date : Thursday, June 23, 2022
Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Thursday, June 16, 2022. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022", PR24-0814

INTRODUCED BY: Councilmember Cheh

The Chairman is referring this legislation to Committee of the Whole.

Attachment
cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services


Councilmember Mary. M Cheh

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the sense of the Council that the District of Columbia Public Schools should ensure that no family assigned to the new elementary school in Foxhall Village has a longer commute to school than in their current catchment area; that the new elementary school in Foxhall Village is located such that it cannot accommodate Glover Park families or other families within Stoddert’s catchment area, as the new school is not reasonably accessible for that community; and, that the Stoddert addition must be built such that an additional story can be added when future enrollment requires it.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022”.

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

(1) For years, public schools within the Jackson-Reed High School Feeder Pattern have faced significant overcrowding due to over-enrollment; prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Deputy Mayor for Education projected that, by School Year 2023-2024, enrollment at all but one school within the feeder pattern would exceed the permanent capacity for the school building. Of note, Stoddert Elementary, which has experienced the most significant overcrowding of schools within the feeder pattern, had a utilization rate of more than 146% of its permanent capacity for School Year 2019-2020. While overcrowding is not unique to the Jackson-Reed High School Feeder Pattern, it is a longstanding and widespread issue that has had a significant effect on each of the affected schools.

1 (2) In the absence of new facility space or other comprehensive interventions, to
2 address over-enrollment, schools with the feeder pattern have been forced to make a number of
3 sacrifices to ensure that there is sufficient classroom space to serve all students. Many of the
4 schools have increased classroom sizes above well above the recommended levels. Others
5 converted non-classroom spaces within the school building, such as related arts classrooms and
6 even in some cases larger closets, to serve as classroom space. As of School Year 2021-2022, all
7 elementary schools within the feeder pattern either have never or have ceased offering pre-k 3 to
8 families and many cannot offer sufficient pre-k 4 seats to meet demand, as space constraints have
9 required schools to convert those classrooms to serve other grades. At Jackson-Reed High School,
10 space limitations prevent seniors from enrolling certain courses. And, overcrowding also puts
11 significant strain on shared spaces: for example, some schools have been forced to schedule very
12 early or late lunch periods for students due to limited cafeteria space.

13 (3) In recognition of this overcrowding, in 2017, DCPS convened a working group
14 to discuss how best to address overcrowding in the Jackson-Reed High School Feeder Pattern.
15 That working group, which included school administrators and teachers, parents of current
16 students, DCPS Central Office staff, the Ward 3 State Board of Education member, Council staff,
17 and community representatives, was tasked with putting forward recommendations to the
18 Chancellor on how best to address overcrowding within the feeder pattern. That group concluded
19 that, due to existing over-enrollment and anticipated enrollment growth in the feeder pattern, there
20 was need for DCPS to build out new capacity; this could be achieved both by creating wholly new
21 facilities and, where feasible, building additions to expand capacity at existing schools.

22 (4) Following the finalization of the working groups' report, in the FY 2021 budget
23 proposal, the Council approved funding for two new schools within the feeder pattern. One of

1 these schools, which will be sited in Foxhall Village at 1500 Foxhall Road, NW., is slated to be an
2 elementary school, and, per DCPS, is intended to help address overcrowding at several DCPS
3 schools in the lower third of the feeder pattern, including Key, Mann, and Stoddert Elementary
4 Schools.

5 (5) Notably, funding for that new school was taken from two other capital projects,
6 which would have built additions on Key and Stoddert Elementary Schools. At the time the new
7 school was first proposed, concerns were raised about the accessibility of this new school facility
8 to the Glover Park neighborhood. While Glover Park and the site of the new school in Foxhall
9 Village may appear close to one another as the crow flies, Glover Archbold Park poses a
10 meaningful geographic barrier between these two communities. Commuting to the site of the new
11 school in Foxhall Village from Glover Park, whether by personal vehicle, public transit, or on foot,
12 is quite difficult. There is no direct way to reach the Foxhall School from Glover Park or any part
13 of Stoddert’s current boundaries, and there are only two routes that wind around the park.
14 Furthermore, if families within the southern part of Stoddert’s boundaries in Glover Park were
15 reassigned to Foxhall, their mean distance to school would increase substantially, and for some
16 families even triple. On the other hand, Stoddert Elementary is easily accessible, including on foot,
17 from points throughout Glover Park. Thus, families of current or future Stoddert students have
18 raised concerns about the meaningful increase in their students’ commute to school if the
19 catchment area of the new elementary school in Foxhall Village were to include portions of
20 southern Glover Park.

21 (6) In recognition of these concerns, in the FY 2022 budget, the Council approved
22 the reinsertion of funding for Stoddert’s addition in the Capital Improvement Plan. In the year
23 following, however, the Council and Glover Park community learned that the funding provided

1 would only allow for the construction of a two-story, 12,000 square foot addition, increasing the
2 school's capacity to 523 students. While this represents an increase of 184 students over the
3 school's current capacity permanent of 339, the increase would fall short of what Stoddert needs
4 to accommodate its projected future enrollment. As of February 2020, Stoddert had an enrollment
5 of 505 students, just 18 fewer students than the maximum capacity *after* the planned addition is
6 completed; and, that count does not factor in Stoddert's hope that the addition would allow for an
7 expansion of its pre-k offerings (Stoddert currently offers only one pre-k 4 class and no pre-k 3).
8 These issues, combined with Stoddert's anticipated enrollment growth and the inaccessibility of
9 the new elementary in Foxhall Village to Glover Park families, makes clear that the new addition
10 falls short of what Stoddert needs to address its overcrowding and future projected growth.

11 (7) In the FY 2023 budget, the Council sought to make two modest changes to the
12 capital project for Stoddert's addition to right-size the new facility to meet actual need. First, the
13 Council included language in the description of the capital project mandating that the design of
14 the new addition include the infrastructure necessary to support the construction of an additional
15 story, should it be necessary in the future; that language was included in the budget as approved
16 by the Council. Second, the Council explored increasing the planned capacity of the addition by
17 another 31 seats for a total capacity of 554 students; this small increase, which was supported by
18 the Stoddert community, would have allowed the addition to more effectively address enrollment
19 growth anticipated for the next several years (after which, if needed, the additional story could be
20 built). Unfortunately, DCPS concluded that accommodating this additional capacity would cost
21 \$1,500,000 or more than amounts budgeted for in the Capital Plan, and the Council was unable to
22 identify the funds to support the expansion at that time.

1 (8) As, at current levels, the new addition will fall short of fully addressing the
2 projected capacity needs at Stoddert, the school community has raised concerns to the Council that
3 DCPS—which has stated it will launch a community working group in the coming months to guide
4 planning for the new elementary school in Foxhall Village— will ultimately draw the catchment
5 area for that new Foxhall elementary school to capture families in southern Glover Park.

6 Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that:

7 (1) When establishing the catchment area for the new elementary school in Foxhall
8 Village, DCPS should endeavor to ensure that no family assigned to the new school has a longer
9 commute to school than they would if remaining in bounds for their current school;

10 (2) The new elementary school in Foxhall Village is located such that it cannot
11 accommodate Glover Park families or other families within Stoddert’s current catchment area, as
12 the new school is not reasonably accessible from Glover Park; and

13 (3) The Stoddert addition must be built in such a way that an additional story can
14 be added, when future enrollment requires it, and DCPS should begin planning for this additional
15 story during the school year in which Stoddert’s enrollment meets or exceeds 85% of its permanent
16 capacity.

17 Sec. 4. The Council shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the Mayor,
18 the Deputy Mayor for Education, the Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools, the
19 State Board of Education, and the Mayor’s Agent.

20 Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
21 the District of Columbia Register.

PREPARED TESTIMONY BY COLLEEN CRINO, HARDY MIDDLE SCHOOL CIVIC LIAISON

TO: COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Committee of the Whole and The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

Dear Chairman Mendelson and Committee of the Whole,

My name is Colleen Crino, and I'm a long-time DCPS parent, and a member of the Hardy Middle School PTO.

Earlier this year, on March 27th, 2022, as part of a hearing related to the new Foxhall and MacArthur schools, I testified in support of a robust process for converting the then-purchased GDS property to a DCPS school in order to support the growing need for upper school resources in Ward 3. I'm now a part of the MacArthur High School community working group, and working with DCPS and various constituents to best facilitate the development of this school to be a strong resource for the community. While there is much work to be done, I believe there is also an opportunity to create a great new school.

On the elementary front, however, I don't believe that the Foxhall plan has merit in the same way that the MacArthur plan did, and I'm glad that the city has this year proceeded with a separate planning process for MacArthur. For one, the Foxhall plan does not enjoy the broad support that the MacArthur plan did, and the schools that would be sharing students with Foxhall are either opposed to doing so (Stoddert) or ambivalent and unaware of the impact to their budgets should they lose students to Foxhall (Key and Mann).

Meanwhile, all three of these schools are feeders to Hardy Middle School, which has seen consistent growth over the past several years due to an increased percentage enrollment from its feeder network, and is now straining with its building at capacity, and classrooms with 30 students or more each. I would suggest, as I did earlier this year, that the funding which has been allocated for Foxhall instead be allocated to Hardy for renovation and expansion in order to allow that facility to best accommodate both current and future need of this same community of families and students. While Foxhall is controversial for a number of different reasons (breaking up feeder communities; damaging budgets of existing schools; and cannibalizing a valued community park whose newly renovated field will actually be needed to support MacArthur High School), renovating Hardy is not controversial in any of these ways, and would in fact be broadly welcomed by all these communities who support Hardy and want it to succeed. This in turn will also contribute to the growth and success of MacArthur High School, both through better athletic resourcing and a healthy middle school feeder. By making this shift in its funding approach, the Council can help to support a stronger and smoothly functioning feeder pattern that families and the community will welcome and value as being responsive to their needs.

For these reasons, I both support Stoddert in its proposed renovation, and do not support the further development of Foxhall, asking instead that the Council seriously consider how these funds could more effectively support this community through redeployment to Hardy Middle School.

Thank you for your time and attention to this issue.

Testimony of Ruth Wattenberg,
W3 Rep, DC State Board of Education
... re: Stoddert, September 27, 2022

Thank you Chairman for holding this hearing and paying attention to Jackson Reed area overcrowding issues. And, many, many thanks to CM Cheh for raising these issues constantly in recent years! Today's discussion is about the addition to Stoddert and implicitly about what enrollment Stoddert should plan for. The current DCPS proposal calls for an addition to basically replace existing trailers, leaving the school with a capacity of 523 students. This is inadequate. Four points:

1. Stoddert should be built with an understanding that it will enroll well more than 523 students, ideally at least 550, with a structure that allows easy enlargement to 600, plus.

Pre-pandemic, Stoddert enrolled 494 students, had been steadily gaining, and was projected to enroll 613 by 2028-29... It's currently down from that high. We don't know when or to what extent school enrollments will completely bounce back, though based on everything I know, I expect it to. What we do know is that even today Stoddert has just one pre-K4 class, with a long waitlist. As with all Ward 3 schools, DCPS offers no pk3, though I gather there may be growing energy to rectify this. If you offered two each of pk 3 and pk 4, you'd immediately have a current enrollment, *even before any enrollment pop-back*, of about 500. Elsewhere, DCPS says it plans to build every new school and addition so that projected enrollment is just 80% of capacity, so they won't quickly overcrowd. If we build only what's proposed (523), we will already be over the 80% capacity, with room for just 16 extra students—even before the addition is built.

At least let's build the addition so a third floor can be built when needed. DCPS says that's their plan. *But, the commitment was left out of the budget document. Minimally, we need a written commitment.*

2. Stoddert is fully capable of being built for more than 523.

Inexplicably, DCPS seems committed to keeping Stoddert small. The reasons have shifted, multiple times. At one meeting, I heard that the trees were old, so they couldn't be touched; I was later told the problem was just one tree that was very old, not the big lot with lots of trees, but I'm not sure. Another time, it was about an agreement with the Rec Center. Another time, where the underground heat pumps were. But let's be clear: The Stoddert campus is huge, the largest elementary campus in Ward 3. I brought over

an architect. Understanding that he doesn't know all the details, and surprises that could be underground, etc., he came up with multiple options for where an adequately sized addition could be built. It seems that DCPS is not being candid on this.

3. No plan should assume that many Stoddert students can easily move to Mann.

There is an idea around that you can substantially lower Stoddert's enrollment by moving the Stoddert students who live closest to Mann to Mann Elementary. You could move a few, but overall this idea does not hold water. The border between the two schools is mainly large apartment buildings. I have surveyed them. Many of the buildings have 0 school-aged children. A few have several. You must get closer to Stoddert and further from Mann, such that the walk basically doubles or more, before you hit a couple of buildings that have more than 10 school-aged students. There just isn't a quantity of students who can easily move to Mann.

4. No students from Stoddert should be sent to the new Foxhall school.

DCPS has inexplicably left on the table the idea of moving some students from Stoddert to the new Foxhall. That idea, ~~that the new Foxhall school would pull students from Stoddert, Key and Mann,~~ was in written documents last spring, and I don't think anyone has yet ruled it out. This is nuts. It would double, even triple, the commute for even the closest families, adding at least half a mile. It would turn families from walkers to drivers, exactly what we're trying not to do. But DCPS won't take the idea off the table. It's making families very nervous. It makes absolutely no sense. Please, DCPS needs to say: Students won't be pulled from Stoddert to Foxhall.

Thank You.

TO: Council of the District of Columbia Committee of the Whole
FROM: Lindsey Seltzer and Dustin Pusch
RE: Prepared Testimony
PR 24-814 “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022”
DATE: September 27, 2022

My name is Lindsey Seltzer and my husband, Dustin Pusch, and I purchased our first house in 2019 on W Street in Glover Park. We’re here today because we greatly appreciate Council Member Cheh’s resolution (which we understand she more fully articulated during oral testimony in May 2022) and fully endorse that resolution.

A huge part of why we selected Glover Park as our home was the promise of sending our then 1-year-old son to Stoddert Elementary School. We’re huge proponents of the benefits of public school, having both attended and benefited from our own respective public, neighborhood elementary schools growing up. And we’re eager for our son to have the same formative experience.

Having now lived in Glover Park for 3 years—and as we await the birth of our second child, due later this year—we feel even more strongly that Stoddert Elementary School is where our children will be best served over the coming years. Aside from the obvious convenience as working parents (Stoddert is just four blocks from us), we’ve seen firsthand how our friends’ and neighbors’ children have thrived academically, socially, and emotionally at Stoddert. We’d be heartbroken and deeply frustrated to lose access to our top-rated neighborhood school just as our children are ready to attend. And being re-zoned to a school several miles away would significantly complicate our family’s childcare and transportation needs, not to mention the impact it would have on home values for the handful of families who just happen to be on the other side of a single street.

The current proposed boundary as we understand would sharply divide the Glover Park community and literally have children who live directly across the street from one another attending different schools—and in our case, that different school is miles as opposed to blocks away. We have struggled mightily with the idea that DCPS, this Committee, and this Council would choose to divide a neighborhood rather than create boundaries using the obvious natural boundary—the Glover Archbold Park. It’s hard to find a more obvious and clear school zone than the entirety of Glover Park and Stoddert Elementary.

We appreciate and understand the many considerations and competing demands that have gone into this proposal, particularly those related to equity and accessibility and the myriad challenges facing this Council and Committee. Every child in Washington is entitled to attend an excellent public school like Stoddert, and we value the many thoughtful and engaged stakeholders who have offered perspectives on all sides of the issue.

Stoddert is more than an elementary school—it serves as a home base for countless other essential services and programs, a hub for youth sports in the community, and a touchstone for former students and their families as they move through middle and high school. As we work to grow and expand access to such spaces for every child and family across the city, we hope there's a way to preserve those that already exist and draw boundaries for Stoddert that do not sharply divide a community and instead use the obvious and natural boundaries that already exist.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope and trust you will do the right thing.

Lindsey Seltzer and Dustin Pusch
3755 W Street NW
Washington, DC 20007

The image shows two handwritten signatures. The first signature, on the left, is written in red ink and appears to be 'Lj. C. Seltzer'. The second signature, on the right, is written in blue ink and appears to be 'Dustin Pusch'. Both signatures are stylized and cursive.



Committee of the Whole Hearing on
“Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of
2022” Addressing overcrowding and enrolment in Ward 3 DCPS Schools
Tuesday, September 27, 2022
The Ward 3 Education Network

Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022

We appreciate the Council’s willingness to understand and address the long-standing overcrowding in Ward 3 schools. First, we support the spirit of the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022 and agree that increasing capacity on-site should be the primary solution to Stoddert’s overcrowding. This approach acknowledges the geographic realities of Glover Park and the Stoddert Elementary School catchment area and is aligned with the city’s mission to reduce traffic and maintain accessible neighborhood schools in all areas of the city.

The upcoming student assignment and boundary review process should be the appropriate mechanism for any changes to Ward 3 schools’ catchment areas, including Stoddert. Finally, we agree that the Stoddert expansion should be constructed in such a way as to allow future development to meet long-term growth in the community.

Enrollment Trends in Ward 3

As far as enrollment in Ward 3 schools, in preparation for this testimony we attempted to obtain the following information from DCPS:

1. Are schools in Ward 3 meeting their enrollment targets this year?
2. What role are OOB seats playing, if any, in helping schools in the feeder pattern meet their targets?
3. What are the recent enrollment trends (broken down by school)?
4. Where are schools vis a vis MFP enrollment projections for 2023 and 2028?

We do not yet have the information to answer these questions with certainty. It is our general sense that enrollment in the Jackson-Reed feeder pattern is stabilizing after pandemic-related disruptions. Even without growth trend data, it is important to acknowledge that the schools in Ward 3 remain at or over capacity. And there is no question that Jackson-Reed High School is still significantly overcrowded, and growth is continuing.

MacArthur High School

We appreciate the investment in MacArthur High School as much needed relief for the continued overcrowding at Jackson-Reed. As a reminder, when the then Wilson High School was renovated the capacity was 1,600. Almost immediately after renovation, open space was converted into four additional classrooms increasing capacity to 1,700. The physical space has not changed since this time and the school is now educating ~2,100 students.

Overcrowding is driving overly large class sizes and exacerbating security and safety risks. In fact, today, 31 of Jackson-Reed's classes have more than 35 students.

We are actively participating in the community working group for MacArthur HS (CWG) and are looking forward to a new high school that will help alleviate general overcrowding, reduce class sizes and right size Jackson-Reed, by far our largest DCPS high school.

We are also looking forward to the launch of the Foxhall Elementary School community working group to create needed capacity in the feeder pattern at the elementary level.

Finally, we appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on this ward-specific issue, but we would also love to have the opportunity to testify with our colleagues from across the city on an issue that is impacting us all this year - the recruitment, onboarding, support for and retention of high quality teachers in our schools.

Committee of the Whole (Council)

From: Maggie McCrone <maggie.mccrone@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 3:28 PM
To: Committee of the Whole (Council)
Subject: Testimony in Support of PR 24-814, "Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary School Addition Resolution of 2022"

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important matter to our Glover Park community and our children. My name is Maggie McCrone and I am a parent of a current first grader at Stoddert Elementary and three year old, and hopefully a future Stoddert student. Needing more space for our growing family, my husband and I moved from a downtown condo to this neighborhood in 2018 mainly due to the welcoming community, proximity to Glover Archbold park, as well as downtown where our offices were located, and the strong public school in Stoddert Elementary which was in easy walking distance. Rather than move to areas that offered more opportunities for Pre-K3 and 4, we opted to come to Glover Park, realizing we would have to pay for private Pre-K, but we would have access to a successful neighborhood school starting in Kindergarten.

We live at the southern end of the neighborhood in a portion that has been proposed as part of the reassignment and directly across from the Whitehaven Parkway portion of the Glover Park trails, so we are very familiar with the boundaries that it presents as a national park. We are also avid bikers and enjoy being able to commute around the neighborhood by bike with our children in tow to avoid using our family car, so I am very familiar also with the current state of bike lanes and safety issues that biking presents. Indeed, given Glover Park's limited public transportation, biking has become the most reliable way for our family to get around the city. So I can say with full confidence that should my area of the neighborhood be reassigned, every family would have to drive to the Foxhall Elementary location. I have biked with my children in a trailer to Hardy Recreation Playground in the Palisades numerous times for events and soccer practices and even with my electric bike, I feel unsafe on Reservoir Road during even low-traffic weekend periods, due to parking taking up one lane of the road and the traffic that Georgetown hospital creates. Indeed even the sidewalk is narrow and taken up with pedestrians so does not present a safe alternative. In fact, I have begun driving to that area rather than bike. Considering the planned addition of MacArthur High School and 800+ high schoolers and teachers, this issue surely will not improve, but will only get worse. However, at least older high schoolers are able to make this walk, bike, or bus ride on their own unlike the 90-some ex-Stoddert parents driving to and from in cars, adding traffic headaches and pollution on already-swamped 37th Street, Foxhall, and Reservoir Roads.

My daughter has blossomed at Stoddert Elementary since joining after private pre-K. She has met many new friends that live close to our home, joined the Stoddert Daisy troop of Girl Scouts and attends many birthday parties and events at Stoddert which truly serves as a hub for our neighborhood. We also live in close proximity to Hyde-Addison's boundary and my younger son has several friends from his nearby pre-K that will be zoned for that elementary school, as they live a few blocks away in Burleith neighborhood. Jumping their boundary for a car commute past Hyde-Addison, down Reservoir to Foxhall seems unduly burdensome and unnecessary when Stoddert families simply ask for capacity and funding to keep our beloved neighborhood school whole and able to meet future needs. My daughter rides her bike to school or walks every day. She is very much looking forward to the day she can do this alone and walk her brother to school. Every day we see and greet friends along the way and enjoy what we've dubbed "Glover Park rush hour" which is simply the crowded side walks as you approach school with everyone on foot. When my husband is traveling for work, I know trusted neighbors that she can walk with if need be. Simply none of this is possible should we be reassigned to Foxhall and it would fundamentally alter the Glover Park community. So I thank Chairman Mendelson for the opportunity to speak on this and Councilwoman Cheh for introducing this resolution and for the Stoddert parents and community members who have championed our school and neighborhood.

Thank-you.

Maggie McCrone

Prepared Testimony
Lisa McCluskey

Stoddert Elementary School Teacher
and Glover Park Citizens' Association President

TO: Council of the District of Columbia
Committee of the Whole
RE: PR 24-814

"Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022"

September 27, 2022

Thank you, Chairman Mendelson and DC Council Members for making the time for today's important hearing.

My name is Lisa McCluskey, and I am writing to you as a teacher and as the president of the Glover Park Citizens' Association. I am voicing my strong support for the resolution under consideration today.

Support for Resolution

First, on behalf of Stoddert Elementary and our neighborhood, I'd like to thank Council Member Cheh and her staff for drafting this resolution, which reflects the position articulated on May 2022 and seeks to establish into the written record the following:

1. That Stoddert Elementary remains overcrowded;
2. That the proposed Foxhall School is not a reasonable alternative to accommodate Stoddert's overcrowding, and;
3. That the Stoddert addition must be built in such a way so as to structurally support an additional floor if and when enrollment requires it.

Our community is grateful that Stoddert's renovation budget of \$20.5 million dollars was restored in the Mayor's 2022 budget. We acknowledge and appreciate the Council's support to get the funding for the Stoddert project restored. We are especially grateful for the restoration of resources essential to addressing long-standing space constraints through an expansion on site. The importance of addressing Stoddert's enrollment needs through an expansion on site is a position that has received broad support from the community and education leaders in the

Ward, including ANC 3B, State Board of Education Representative Ruth Wattenberg, the Glover Park Citizens' Association and the Ward 3 EdNet.

1 <https://anc3b.org/wp-content/uploads/ANC3B-Resolution-on-Foxhall-School-5-13-21.pdf>

History of Foxhall and the CWG Recommendations

As the resolution states, in an effort to address overcrowding in Ward 3, DCPS is planning to build a new elementary school on Foxhall. According to a March 2022 letter from Chancellor Ferebee, the proposed Foxhall School "will require redrawing a new boundary that re-assigns a portion of the Key, Mann and Stoddert Boundaries."

This version of the DCPS plan runs counter to the wishes of the residents of Glover Park and members of the Stoddert community. A petition against reassigning Stoddert families to Foxhall gained 500 signatures, underscoring the concerns.

The DCPS plan ignores the recommendations of the Foxhall and MacArthur Community Working Group convened by DCPS in 2021, in which the Stoddert community provided heart-felt comments, and data driven points to explain opposition to having a portion of its boundaries re-assigned to Foxhall. Including an unnatural boundary line, having to traverse through at least one other school boundary to attend Foxhall and lack of walkability.

Despite this, the Stoddert community has been told directly on numerous occasions by DCPS that they plan to address overcrowding at Stoddert by re-assigning Stoddert families to Foxhall, rather than right-sizing our addition to meet the community's needs.

Our community supports Foxhall School as a solution to overcrowding at Key and Mann, however, Foxhall is not a reasonable solution to alleviate Stoddert's overcrowding.

Why isn't it a reasonable solution?

For those not familiar with the neighborhood, I will provide my personal experience. My three children and myself have been walking to Stoddert for many years. Re-assigning Stoddert families such as mine to Foxhall would be an undue burden. Like many families south of Stoddert, we would need to drive as there is no bus to take unless we backtrack and spend a large amount of time. Walking to school would no longer be an option for my current student

or the numerous neighbors that do not have access to vehicles. Many families specifically purchased their homes due to the walkability to a neighborhood school.

1. As a teacher I see the benefits of ease in transportation and walkability to school. Ease of getting to school greatly affects student success. Schools stress the need for students to get to school and class on time and with good reason. Studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education on truancy, which is connected with tardiness, show that school attendance is a major factor when it comes to school success and student behavior. The most crucial learning hours of a school day are the morning hours, because they are when students are most attentive. Students who are tardy miss the beginning of their morning classes, and they also cause a distraction when they arrive late to class.

Students who are frequently tardy have lower GPAs, lower scores on standardized assessments, and lower graduation rates. Chronic tardiness in elementary and middle school is also linked to failure in high school.

In the National Center for Education Statistics 2007 Indicators of School Crime and Safety, teachers surveyed reported that students who are frequently tardy have higher rates of suspension and other disciplinary measures. Tardiness causes students to feel disconnected with school, leading to behavior problems and dropouts.

2. A large swath of National Park land; Glover Archbold Park and Whitehaven Parkway pose a huge geographic barrier between these two areas. There is no direct way to reach Foxhall from any part of Stoddert's boundary.

3. According to our survey last year at least 70% of Stoddert families walk to school. Forcing families to now drive to school is not inline with city-wide green initiatives. It is also not feasible to ask families with multiple young children to bike on heavily trafficked surfaces carrying book bags and various items. Re-assigning families to the new Foxhall School from anywhere within Stoddert's boundaries would exceed the DME's guidelines for walkability, making this a move in the wrong direction.

4. According to DCPS' own data as presented in the CWG, the commute would increase for 100% of re-assigned students from Stoddert. To my knowledge Stoddert is the only school in the DCPS plan that would be impacted in an exclusively negative way, with ALL Stoddert families seeing an increase in commute and decrease in walkability. This will negatively affect their ability to arrive to school on time and ready to learn.

5. Last, this move from Stoddert to Foxhall would require families who are reassigned to cross over neighborhoods currently zoned to Hyde Addison – this would potentially isolate those students from their neighbors potentially to the north and south who they share a natural community with.

There are very solid reasons why this is an important issue to the Stoddert and Glover Park community. And that is why we strongly support this resolution, which reflects our concerns over the issue.

The guidelines from the Deputy Mayor for Education suggest a “comfortable walking distance” for children in grade preK-2 nd grade is .5 miles; if Stoddert students were reassigned to Foxhall, they would need to walk two-to-three times that recommended distance.

Stoddert’s Capital Improvement Project

Stoddert is slated to begin a capital improvement project that will increase Stoddert’s permanent capacity to 523 students. We are grateful this capital improvement project will allow us to address our near-term enrollment needs on site.

However, as the resolution accurately notes, the capital improvement project will fall short of addressing our long-term enrollment projections- something that has been shortsighted in the past as well. An expansion to 523 students does not meet the enrollment projections from DC’s Office of Planning, and does not allow for Stoddert to offer more than one pre-K4 class, despite our larger size and in-boundary demand for affordable and additional preK4 seats. Therefore, it is critical that the addition today be built in such a way that it could accommodate an additional floor, if and when enrollment requires it down the road.

We appreciate the resolution highlighting the importance of building the addition in such a way so as to allow for future growth to meet the needs of our community.

This recommendation should not be contentious. DCPS and DGS agreed to build Stoddert’s addition so that it could structurally accommodate an eventual third floor if enrollment required it. So, on this issue, the Council would be in support of something that DCPS has already agreed to. The requirement to build the addition so as to structurally support an additional floor was accidentally omitted from the RFP language for Stoddert’s renovation, so as a community we believe it is important to have it included in this Sense of the Council

resolution. We ask for Council's support to remind DCPS to keep an eye toward the future as it plans for Stoddert's renovation.

On behalf of Stoddert and the Glover Park Community I respectfully ask the Council to lend support to Councilmember Cheh's resolution, and vote to pass this Sense of the Council Resolution concerning Stoddert Elementary.

Thank you again for your time.

Lisa McCluskey

I want to thank Chairman Mendelson for holding this hearing and thank you to Council Member Cheh for introducing the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022”.

I am Jessica Lynch, a Washington, DC resident of Glover Park and a current Stoddert parent.

Glover Park is a walkable, urban community. At the heart of this community is Stoddert. Like many of our neighbors, my husband and I moved to this neighborhood because of Stoddert. The school connects our community in a fundamental way. I urge the council to understand and appreciate how dedicated Glover Park residents are to this special neighborhood and how central Stoddert is to Glover Park.

As you know, Stoddert is currently overcrowded, and enrollment is projected to continue to grow. The main reason for the overcrowding is density. The housing immediately surrounding the school is a lovely mix of rowhomes, high-rise apartment buildings, garden-style apartments, and condo buildings. As such, there are a lot of families that live in a 2 to 3 block radius of Stoddert. And because Stoddert is a high-performing school, many in-boundary families enroll their children there.

For years, the Glover Park community has asked for an expansion to the Stoddert building to support all of our students. The funding appropriated by DC Council to build an addition to Stoddert is very much appreciated. DC’s investment in Stoddert is well worthwhile and the extension should be fully funded to meet the current and future needs of the Glover Park community.

DCPS has plans for a new elementary school to be built on Foxhall Road, NW.

DCPS maintains that the purpose of this new school is to alleviate overcrowding at Stoddert, Key and Mann Elementary Schools.

Last year, I participated in several of the DCPS community outreach meetings regarding this school, and I know that DCPS heard many concerns from the Glover Park community about this plan.

I am telling you, as a parent and resident of Glover Park, the Foxhall School is not a solution for Stoddert families – it is only causing more problems.

As the resolution notes, the school building site on Foxhall Road, is in an area not accessible by walking or public transport from Glover Park. Even commuting with a car would be a challenge.

For the Glover Park families who get caught in the catchment area for the new school, this will be an untenable financial and logistical burden.

DCPS points to an overall school boundary redistricting plan and tells us not to worry. However, it seems to me that DCPS will have to pull students from Glover Park in order to fill the seats at the new Foxhall school, and so I do remain concerned.

This resolution is needed to amplify our voices and ensure that DCPS hears us and does not split apart Glover Park.

Stoddert Elementary School is a success story for DC!

I urge the Council to build on this success by making Stoddert a priority.

I urge you to adopt this resolution.

Thank you.

Testimony by Jeremy Joseph re PR 24-814, “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022”/Addressing overcrowding and enrollment in Ward 3 DCPS Schools

September 27, 2022

My name is Jeremy Joseph, and I am a parent of two DCPS children and an active member of the DCPS stakeholder community. I serve as the LSAT chair for Key Elementary, I am on the PTO of Hardy Middle, I am a member of the Community Working group for MacArthur High School.

Related to the Sense of the Council, it is paramount for the Council and the Executive to listen to and hear the critical, on-the-ground – and easily overlooked – perspectives of parents and school communities. The Stoddert Community knows what is best for their community and for their school, and I applaud the Council for helping elevate their voices. Of course, community views must also be considered in the broader context. In this case, promoting walkable elementary schools (without having to transect the difficult-to-cross Glover Archibald Park) and thoughtful construction projects that create future optionality in fast-growing communities on the Wisconsin Ave corridor seem like sensible goals.

My testimony seeks to provide a similar on-the-ground perspective as to how the opening of Foxhall will affect Key ES, and potentially Foxhall ES in turn. My testimony is entirely neutral to the Foxhall school, and proceeds under the assumption that it will open as forecast.

KEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

For reference, Key’s enrollment today is about 360, down from a mid-2010s peak of about 420 and a pre-pandemic enrollment of 382, but up from last year’s 319. The capacity of the permanent building is 336 under current standards, up from a capacity of 320 a decade ago due to a change in methodology and the closure of Fillmore. Key also has trailers with a capacity of an additional 150 students.

Smaller schools are more expensive to run well than big schools, but this fact is not fully compensated in the DCPS budget model. This will impact both Key school and the new Foxhall school, both which will likely be small (sub-300 schools).

Under the DCPS budget model, there are a few factors that will cause potentially severe financial hardship to Key ES in the coming years, which will only be exacerbated by the opening of the Foxhall ES and the resulting loss of about 20-30% of Key’s enrollment.

The DCPS budget model today, and increasingly in the coming years, disadvantages smaller elementary schools in the following ways:

- According to analysis done by the Ward 3 Education Network on the DCPS budget forecast for next year, the DCPS budget model categorically shifts funding away from elementary schools city-wide in the amount of 6% excluding one-time stability funds.

- Due to the loss of so-called one-time funds, Key is anticipated to lose 14% of its funding next year (or in 5% increments over time, which does not account for the loss of buying power with existing inflation rates) assuming no loss of enrollment.
- Funding decreases under the DCPS budget model appear to be disproportionately greater than the decline in enrollment.
- The opening of Foxhall may cut an additional 20-30% of Key's enrollment.

At Key ES in the late 2010s, enrollment was over 400 (on a permanent building capacity of 320), the school was able to offer more programming, like more science classes and Spanish. Yet that came with major trade-offs like silent lunches so the kids could eat with military efficiency to accommodate the next wave of students, and a playground that looked as crowded at recess as Times Square on New Years' Eve. On balance, it seems that increasing school enrollment to expand programming is the lesser of two evils.

As enrollment has decreased to approximately 360 today, the school lost funding at a disproportionate rate. While the DCPS budget model supports some personnel costs needed regardless of the size of the school, the top-down, enrollment-based model does not consider -- or even acknowledge -- what is happening on the ground. Since no one from the Chancellor down can actually explain how DCPS funds its schools and there's no opportunity for meaningful discussion around an appropriate budget, this causes considerable concern for Key families.

How will this affect Key? Elementary schools are no longer run like a series of one-room schoolhouses.

Over the last several years, the Key Admin team has developed and expanded their model of having using classroom teachers as interventionists and coaches – more than is provided for under the standard DCPS budget framework. These senior teachers provide fundamental and necessary augmentation to each classroom teacher – they are critical force multipliers, not extravagances, that can target interventions on the children that are falling behind and target efforts to help keep all kids challenged! The data shows that this approach boosts outcomes!

Yet funding for such creative approaches will likely be eliminated due to disproportionate budget cuts when enrollment decreases with the opening of Foxhall ES. If Key loses an estimated 75-100 students (about 25% of its enrollment) to the planned Foxhall ES, under the current budget model, it would force Key to cut staff and would likely eviscerate this thoughtfully constructive program. And basically turn Key into a series of one-room schoolhouses.

To the extent Foxhall remains relatively small too, which seems likely as it will split enrollment with Key under current boundaries, it would face these same challenges of a small elementary school under the DCPS model.

The Council should:

- 1) Restore funding to DCPS to avert the forecast fiscal cliff due to the loss of so-called one-time funds and rampant inflation despite schools like Key that have rebounding enrollment. The sooner Council can signal this restoration, the sooner parent and teachers will stop actively searching for alternatives within or outside of the city.
- 2) Ensure elementary schools city wide are not given a 6% cut under the current budget model.
- 3) Ensure DCPS allocate supplemental funding to Key and Foxhall – and all similarly situated small elementary schools across the city – to offset this small school penalty. This is the same problem as when a charter school opens close by to an existing DCPS school and enrollment at both schools is compromised.
- 4) Help ensure DCPS engages with the Key community to determine what is the appropriate level of funding to run a successful school as Foxhall comes online. The solution would be that in years with large enrollment declines due to exogenous factors like the opening of a new school, for the school, the LSAT, and DCPS central office to discuss what actually makes the most sense for the school to maintain a solid program rather than anchor some arbitrary enrollment number that let dust settle over a few years as funding drops by the maximum amount of 5% a year for several years. Opening new schools requires additional investment in existing schools, and transparency in decision-making and dialogue with those affected communities.

MACARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL

A second point about Ward 3 overcrowding relates to the open of the new MacArthur High School, which is slated to open in August, and is looking to have about 800 enrolled students once it is fully up and running.

Alleviating the acute overcrowding at Jackson-Reed requires students being able to access the new high school by bus.

MacArthur HS will not achieve its targeted enrollment without the city funding additional buses to get kids to and from the school from within the designated feeder pattern. Currently, there is one bus line (the D6) that accesses MacArthur HS, which runs east/west along MacArthur. The headways on that route are insufficient for an 800-student school. On a given day, there is only one (sometimes two) buses that could get kids to or from school during the appropriate times in the morning or afternoon. There is no north/south bus access between the northern reaches of the feeder pattern to MacArthur. DCPS says this is a DDOT and WMATA issue that is out of their hands. There are many solutions, from additional Metro buses at the start and end of the school day, to shuttle buses between fixed points to access other transportation, and the like. This requires funding and execution.

Accordingly, the Council needs to please fund Metro buses or shuttle buses – and ensure that the Mayor coordinates -- the necessary bus access to ensure kids can reach MacArthur.

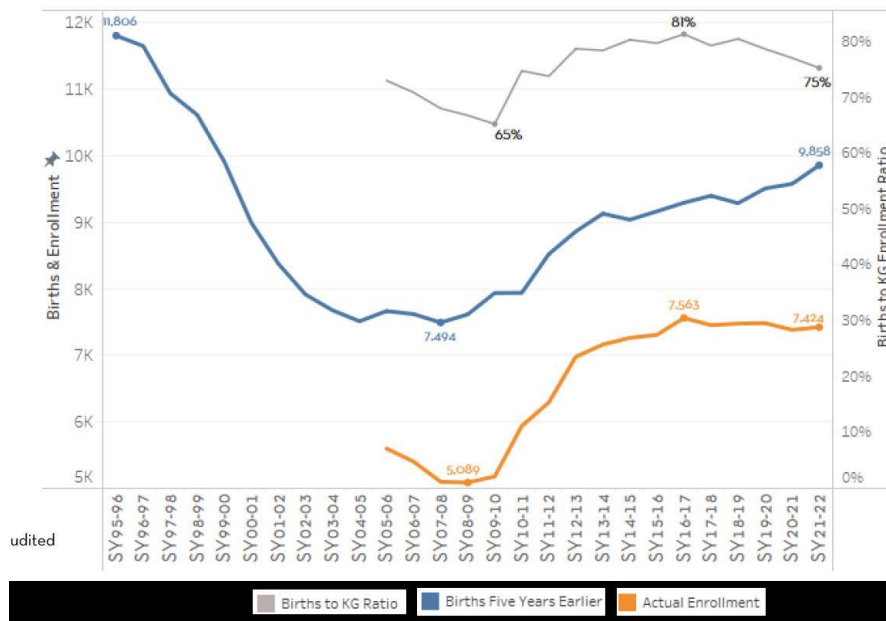
Thank you.

I am Valerie Jablow, and as a DCPS parent for the last 17 years, I appreciate any hearing to address the >\$100 million allocated to expand Ward 3 schools.

Specifically, in addition to expanding Stoddert, that capital investment includes the purchase and renovation of the former GDS building for a new Ward 3 high school (with half its seats out of bounds) and planning for a new Foxhall Elementary—all of which appears to have been planned and/or executed outside the law governing DCPS modernizations (PACE Act).

This capital investment is fiscally disastrous—and this resolution and DCPS’s testimony promulgate misinformation about it.¹

For one, in the wake of increasing school seats, DC’s births and kindergarten enrollment have decreased since 2016, with 2021 births the lowest since 2006:²



Copyright Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education 2022

D.C. resident births (calendar year)	Births	% change from 2011	% change from 2016	
2011	9289			
2012	9370	0.9%		
2013	9264	-0.3%		
2014	9509	2.4%		
2015	9578	3.1%		
2016	9858	6.1%		Largest number of births in recent years
2017	9560	2.9%	-3.0%	
2018	9212	-0.8%	-6.6%	
2019	9079	-2.3%	-7.9%	
2020	8874	-4.5%	-10.0%	
2021	8644	-6.9%	-12.3%	

Just in the last 3 years, the number of elementary students in Jackson-Reed feeder schools have decreased by more than 300:³

School Name	SY19-20 Enrollment	SY20-21 Enrollment	SY21-22 Enrollment	SY21-22 % OOB	Capacity Permanent SY21-22	Capacity Portable SY21-22	SY21-22 Utilization	SY21-22 In-Bound Utilization
Bancroft ES	616	627	676	30%	743	0	91%	63%
Eaton ES	467	429	423	29%	550	0	77%	55%
Hearst ES	340	346	334	24%	344	138	69%	52%
Hyde-Addison ES	376	386	374	71%	406	0	92%	27%
Janney ES	752	681	672	7%	772	0	87%	81%
Key ES	382	346	319	18%	336	150	66%	54%
Lafayette ES	940	902	860	12%	873	0	99%	87%
Mann ES	426	394	366	23%	428	0	86%	66%
Murch ES	623	597	601	12%	708	0	85%	75%
Oyster-Adams EC (ES)	519	527	528	44%	500		106%	59%
Shepherd ES	371	372	367	38%	398	0	92%	57%
Stoddert ES	494	428	445	16%	339	150	91%	77%
Deal MS	1458	1463	1396	23%	1570	0	89%	69%
Hardy MS	474	500	531	44%	829	0	64%	36%
Oyster-Adams EC (MS)	212	210	212	57%	204		104%	45%
Jackson-Reed HS	1872	1951	2062	37%	1840	0	112%	70%
Feeder shed (MS)	2144	2173	2139	31%	2602.5	0	82%	56%
Feeder shed (ES)	6306	6035	5965	25%	6396.5	438	87%	66%

Yet while ignoring all of this, the resolution bases its analysis on inaccurate 2016 population projections. For instance, the planning office’s low value (724,303) was too high (and a 4.8% overestimation), while its high value (731,233) was more than 41,000 higher than the actual census number.

These downward trends in enrollment and births started before the pandemic. Some of us even warned you about them [years ago](#). Now, even the deputy mayor for education (DME) acknowledges the decreases in both births as well as enrollment (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

For another, Stoddert elementary’s enrollment has historically been below its current total capacity (489)—even with 84% in bounds enrollment. DCPS’s proposed increase in Stoddert’s capacity (523) is not only well above its enrollment in SY21-22 (445) as well as the two school years before that (494, SY19-20; 428, SY20-21), but likely well above any future enrollment given the decrease in enrollment and births citywide.

And because the entire Jackson-Reed feeder shed mirrors Stoddert’s enrollment and capacity numbers, little if no additional capacity in Ward 3 is warranted.

For instance, in SY21-22 no school in the Jackson-Reed feeder shed had 100% enrollment from only in-bound students. The highest was at Janney (93%) with a low (30%) at Hyde-Adison. Jackson-Reed itself enrolled over 37% of its students out of boundary in SY21-22.

That means that Jackson-Reed's 766 out-of-bound students that year constituted more than the total enrollment of all but 3 DCPS high schools (Columbia Heights, Roosevelt, Eastern) and one charter high school (KIPP College Prep).

At the same time, Jackson-Reed feeder elementary schools had 1,243 students from out of bounds—several elementaries' worth. The DME has often spoken of “unintentionally small” schools amid concerns over their fiscal sustainability within DCPS. Yet the sheer numbers of out of bounds elementary students in the Jackson-Reed feeder shed could FILL 3-4 DCPS elementaries without any concern over those schools being too small!

This is one of the reasons why DCPS schools—particularly east of the Anacostia—are losing population. In fact, the DME right now has enough data to justify many closures there.

This is happening at the same time that capacities in the Jackson-Reed feed shed are not exceeded. For instance, only two schools (Jackson-Reed and Oyster-Adams) exceeded 100% of their capacity in SY21-22.

Looking at only in boundary students, however, only 1 school (Lafayette) exceeded 85% of its capacity, the nominal definition of fully utilized.⁴

Thus, any overcrowding in Ward 3 schools, however it is defined, is not due to in-bounds students.

Yet Chancellor Ferebee testified to this body that expanding capacity in Ward 3--in lieu of redoing boundaries, feeders, and out of bounds slots for \$0--was to ensure “diversity.”

So let us consider some prices of this plan:

--Right now, some neighborhoods in DC have NO school of right. That is due to closures from low enrollments. Here's a partial list: River Terrace, Kenilworth, Fort Lincoln, Rosedale, Woodridge.

What do you think will happen now by increasing capacity with a not-growing student population, 35,000 unfilled seats, and a charter growth ceiling of infinity? The DME right now has data to support closures outside Ward 3 and appears poised to do so but for the optics of this expansion.⁵

--The resolution expresses concern for current Stoddert students having to commute to a new Foxhall school, yet shows no concern for horrible commutes elsewhere caused by school closures in the last two decades.

Consider that if you live on the 3300 block of Baker St. NE, in River Terrace (which once had its own elementary), your in boundary elementary is Thomas, at 650 Anacostia Ave. NE. That school is separated from your house by an EIGHT lane, high-

speed commuter road (Benning Road), a large Pepco plant on one side, and the Kenilworth Avenue expressway on another. The shortest walking route per google maps is 25 minutes one way, part of which is along high-speed Benning Road, which lacks substantial (or in some places, any) pedestrian protections.

Or consider if you live in the 3800 block of 25th Place NE in Woodridge. Your in boundary elementary is Burroughs—which is per google maps a 14-minute one-way walk outside your neighborhood across the 4 lane, high speed commuter byway South Dakota Avenue. (And no, they have no flags to wave to get drivers to slow down like they have had up in Ward 3.)

To be sure, that's all much better than the situation for kids in Fort Lincoln, whose elementary school doesn't even exist anymore. If you live in the 3600 block of Jamison Street NE, for instance, your in bounds elementary is Langdon, which is either a 38-minute walk per google maps along Bladensburg Road (6 lane commuter byway) or a 43-minute walk along Rhode Island Avenue (another 6 lane commuter byway). All one way.

And that's not even counting existing school zones with odd geographic bifurcations, like Garfield elementary (Suitland Parkway—another commuter byway!) and Langdon elementary (railway), which students must negotiate every day to avail themselves of the seats they have a right to.

--The resolution expresses concern for course limitations at Jackson-Reed as a result of space constraints without noting that very few DCPS high schools offer all the foreign languages and math classes that Jackson-Reed does. That's not because of space constraints, but because of course limitations that NO ONE appears concerned with.

I can attest that at no time in my tenure as a DCPS parent did DCPS ever engage with me, the schools my children attended, or the wards those schools are in, like they have with this Ward 3 expansion effort.

Perhaps the decoupling of this plan from demographic facts, fiscal sense, and equity arises from a sincere belief that Ward 3 schools should not be denied to those outside Ward 3—or that this is a way to strengthen DCPS.

If that is indeed true, then why are we not expanding Ward 3 schools to accommodate ALL DC students, not just those who get lucky on the lottery or have the means to commute (which is, like it or not, an issue of equity)?

The ugly unspoken reality in this expansion plan is that it was construed first and foremost as a benefit to Ward 3 by way of students attending Ward 3 schools out of bounds.

Even if one accepts the proposition that the subset of DC students who 1. apply in the lottery for a Ward 3 out of bounds seat; 2. get a lottery slot; 3. accept the lottery slot;

and 4. have reliable transportation to get to Ward 3 schools (all of which is the very definition of chance) are getting something better than they would otherwise, what about the REST of DC's students? Do they not count?

Overwhelmingly those students are not only Black, but also poor and attend schools of right whose facilities are more than likely to not have been touched by any renovation and whose programming is more than likely to have been cut or unpleasantly altered because of budget shortfalls.

This reality has been for too long attributed to school choice.

The only "choice" here, however, is that of city leaders looking the other way as vast inequities have been promulgated in the name of "choice."

Think about it this way:

If a family in bounds for, say, Moten, chooses it, what is DC doing to support that choice? What is DC doing to support the choice of families at Sousa? Kramer?

Or are those families just choosing the wrong schools? All of those schools may be up for closure or co-location by the end of 2022.

More to the point:

If diversity is the goal in a city with notably not diverse schools, why not randomly assign then bus the numerically smallest demographic group--White students? Or just put the names of all our students in a hat, assign them randomly, make all schools follow the same rules, institute bussing, and call it a day?

If any of these proposals are funny or distasteful to you, you just identified the problem with this plan:

Right now, DCPS schools outside Ward 3 face severe problems that TRULY deny opportunity, including programming cuts, delayed modernizations, and enrollment loss and closure. That \$100 MILLION being spent to increase capacity needlessly could be deployed outside Ward 3 to

- renovate schools;
- stop proliferation;
- support and increase programming;
- ensure diversity; and
- decrease dangerous commutes.

You can change the course of this right now. Really. It just takes courage. Thank you.

¹ Among the misrepresentations is the resolution's citation of 29 schools in the Jackson-Reed feeder shed. There are literally these **15** schools in it:

Bancroft
Eaton
Hearst
Hyde-Addison
Janney
Key
Lafayette
Mann
Murch
Oyster-Adams
Shepherd
Stoddert
Deal
Hardy
Jackson-Reed

That said, since students attending Jackson-Reed live in bounds to all eight DCPS boundary-defined high schools, one could state that the Jackson-Reed feeder shed is functionally the entire city! As it is, the current Jackson-Reed physical boundary comprises about 40% of the entire land mass of DC.

Unfortunately, this expansion of Ward 3 school capacity precludes any discussion of new boundaries for Ward 3 schools, because once this extra capacity is built, no one will want to undo the feeders into it.

That will then ensure that the ONLY boundary discussion that will take place elsewhere is to accommodate the closures that will result from the depopulation of existing schools.

(NB: As a matter of editing, I used "Ward 3" to stand in for this expansion of capacity west of Rock Creek Park, as the expansion is mainly geared toward people who in fact live in Ward 3, even if the proposed Foxhall school itself is not in Ward 3.)

² The first table here is from a presentation by Jennifer Comey in the DME's office for C4DC on March 14, 2022, available here:

<https://educationdc.files.wordpress.com/2022/03/citywide-needs-analysis-march-14-2022.pdf>

Sources of numbers in the second table are from CDC reports, including these for the last 3 years:

2019: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr70/nvsr70-02-508.pdf>

2020: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr70/nvsr70-17.pdf>

2021: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr020.pdf>

³ Audited enrollment data in this table is from here: osse.dc.gov/enrollment

Boundary enrollment data is from here: dme.dc.gov/page/sy2021-22-public-school-enrollments-dcps-boundary

Capacity numbers are from DME EdScape Chapter 3, Public School Facilities, available here: <https://edscape.dc.gov/node/1363696>

⁴ This is another area where the resolution and DCPS testimony both promulgate misinformation.

Consider that in SY21-22 Stoddert's utilization was 91%, which included portables.

But the resolution says Stoddert's utilization that year was 146%, based ONLY on its permanent capacity (i.e., the primary building).

Stoddert's total capacity (including portables) in SY21-22 was for 489 students, of which 339 was the capacity of the building itself, with portables accommodating another 150 students.

That year, 71 Stoddert students (about 16%) were from out of bounds, which meant that of the school's audited enrollment of 445, 374 students were in bounds and had a right to attend it.

If we just look at these students Stoddert had a legal obligation to accommodate, the school's utilization would have been 77%, below the 85% threshold for full utilization. And because the permanent structure capacity is 339, the school would have needed portables that year only for an additional **35** students ($339 + 35 = 374$)—again, provided it enrolled only those students it had a legal obligation to accommodate.

So here's the question:

With a decreasing student population, why build a large addition at Stoddert?

There is no legal obligation or need to fill seats at the school with out of bounds students. The proffering of those out of bounds seats is a CHOICE of Ward 3 schools that NO ONE in DC outside of those schools has any choice about.

⁵ The 35,000 unfilled seats is an updated number from the DME's publication here: <https://edscape.dc.gov/page/facilities-unfilled-seats>

The charter board is allowed to approve up to 10 NEW charter schools every year—but there are no such limits on expansion of existing schools, hence a ceiling of infinity.

If what is happening now in DC schools remains unchecked by policymakers, eventually charters will overtake DCPS everywhere except Ward 3—which for all I know may be the mayor’s plan, which would enable lots of DCPS school buildings to be used for charters. As it is, charter seats and schools outnumber DCPS seats right now in Ward 5 and are not far behind in wards 7 and 8.

It is VITAL for you to understand that what this is NOT school choice or the choice of DC taxpayers, most of whom have wanted a strong system of by right, municipally operated public schools.

Rather, this is the choice of DC policymakers and charter operators and lobbyists.

From: Gupi Dhillon Howie
Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 12:28 PM
To: Committee of the Whole (Council) <COW@dccouncil.gov>
Subject: Public Testimony PR 24-814 Stoddert

Good Afternoon,

My name is Gupi Howie, mom to a 3rd and 4th grader at Stoddert. Glover Park is unique for several reasons. One, it is a high density population neighborhood with a mix of row homes, condos, and high rise apartment buildings in a relatively small area. Another unique feature of Glover Park is its natural boundary to the south and west by Glover Archbold Park. The proposed Foxhall School is not a reasonable alternative to address overcrowding at Stoddert.

The council approved reallocating funding for Stodderts addition. This funding allows for Stodderts permanent capacity to increase from 339 to 523 students. As of Feb 2020, we already reached an enrollment of 505 students. The current addition is only adding 18 more seats to Stoddert.

Any addition to Stoddert should be constructed in a way that anticipates the inevitable need for greater capacity in the future. The best solution to overcrowding at Stoddert is to increase capacity.

Respectfully,
Gupi Howie

Selecting School Sites: A new decision-making process is needed

Good morning, Chairman Mendelson, and Council Members:

I live in the Georgetown Reservoir Neighborhood, adjacent to the MacArthur school site, one block from the Hardy School.

Today I wish to speak about decision-making. Over the last 2-3 years of the Jackson-Reed overcrowding debate, I have seen doubt, distress, and more disharmony within this community than I've never seen in more than 25 years I've lived in the Palisades. I've examined the root cause for this, and I believe it lies in the decision-making process, itself.

It is flawed.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning stated the following when it overhauled its public-school decision-making process:

"The process of determining where to build a new school is influenced by a number of factors but typically lacks a rigorous planning process considering a multitude of factors to determine the optimal location for a new public school. In fact, size, footprint, location, accessibility, walkability, etc. often take a back seat to finding a location that is the most cost effective and that offers the least amount of obstacles prior to development."

In DC, we make the mistake of leaving these decisions to our hard-working educators and politicians. However, the professionals who should be more involved are urban planners, logistics and population specialists, architects and environment professionals, and economic developers.

My message to you is clear today: Faulty decision-making only allows--as it did with the Wilson / Jackson-Reed problem--years of delay and missteps that result in Future Shock, that is, the system finds itself in unnecessary distress because the problem is moving faster than the solutions.

I recommend the following:

1. Develop and publish a decision-making process for school selection, much like Chicago and the state of California.
2. Require decisions to be data-driven and multi-disciplinary.
3. Publish results, directly to the public, on outcomes. *This is not publishing what the DCPS believes, wants, or hopes for.*
4. Hire a non-political, Decision Engineer--with authority--to lead the process when major decisions are anticipated and needed.
5. Commit funds to improving decision-making. Paying to optimize decisions is much more effective than paying to fix mistakes.

Transforming the decision-making process for selection of school locations will result in better outcomes, most importantly for our students. Any parent of an 8th grader needs only visit the MacArthur site TODAY--and I encourage them to do so--to consider whether this school promises to deliver a full, educational experience less than one year from today, to students on a short path to college entry testing or competing for a technical career job.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

PUBLIC HEARING

**PR 24-814, “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary School
Addition Resolution of 2022”
Addressing overcrowding and enrollment in Ward 3 DCPS Schools**

**Before the Committee of the Whole
Chairman Phil Mendelson**

**Tuesday, September 27, 2022, 1:00 PM
Virtual Hearing via Zoom
Testimony of Eric Goulet**

Good afternoon, Chairman Mendelson, Councilmembers _____, and Council staff. My name is Eric Goulet, DC resident and candidate for the Ward 3 seat on the District of Columbia State Board of Education. I am delighted to join you at today’s public hearing to provide testimony on PR 24-814, the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary School Addition Resolution of 2022” and the issue of addressing overcrowding in Ward 3 DCPS schools. I would like to note for the record that I am testifying in my individual capacity as a DC resident and not in my professional capacity as Special Counsel to the DC Council Committee on Health. Further, I am taking annual leave to testify at today’s public hearing.

I would like to begin by commending Councilmember Cheh for introducing this important Sense of the Council Resolution and for your leadership in holding today's hearing, Chairman Mendelson.

When I ran for the Ward 3 Council seat, the issue of school overcrowding was mentioned frequently as a top concern in Ward 3, second only to public safety concerns. While many schools throughout the District of Columbia remain underenrolled, school overcrowding is a unique challenge here in Ward 3. Ward 3 school overcrowding has increased class sizes, particularly at the junior high and high school level. Overcrowded classrooms adversely impact both students and teachers, by reducing individual attention for each student and contributing to teacher burnout and retention challenges.

School overcrowding has prevented Ward 3 for experiencing the full benefit of universal pre-kindergarten. Due to school overcrowding, Ward 3 elementary schools have no pre-K for three-year-olds anywhere in the ward, and in some schools pre-K 4 is available only through a lottery system. To put this in perspective, only two by-right neighborhood elementary schools in the entire

city, outside of Ward 3, do not have pre-K 3, and those are Ross Elementary School in Ward 2 and Lafayette Elementary School in Ward 4. Through proper planning and new school construction, we must make pre-K 3 available for all Ward 3 families.

I would like to commend you Mr. Chairman for adding \$850,000 to the Fiscal Year 2023 budget for an Attendance Zone Boundary Study. We have the opportunity to address the issue of Ward 3 school overcrowding through this study if we make feeder pattern decisions based upon the data, build for projected population growth, and reflect the need for additional or expanded Ward 3 schools in the District's capital budget. During the 2014-2015 boundary study, all of the data projections predicted the overcapacity at Deal and Jackson Reed. The initial study recommended that the District either make Shepherd and Bancroft feeders for Wells and MacFarland, instead of Deal; that Ward 3 elementary schools stop filling empty classroom slots with out-of-boundary placements; or that the District needed to build new middle and high school capacity into Ward 3. District leadership chose to do none of the proposed solutions, and thus, the overcrowding at Deal and Jackson Reed worsened

exactly how it was predicted in 2014. We cannot choose to ignore Ward 3 school overcrowding data again, which will require District leaders to make hard choices through Attendance Zone Boundary Study.

The Boundary Study also gives the District the opportunity to identify schools that need additional modernization funding. One clear example of where this is needed is Stoddert Elementary. I have spoken with many Stoddert families who are extremely concerned about the District's proposal to split the Stoddert School Community. Glover Park is the epitome of a livable-walkable community. Many residents spoke about how they moved to Glover Park, specifically so they didn't need a car. They could walk their children to Stoddert and then take the bus or bike to work. Splitting up the cohesive Stoddert community to shift a portion of students across Glover Archbold Park to the non-walkable proposed new Foxhall Elementary School does not make sense.

I believe that rather than simply build structural capacity to add another floor to Stoddert later, the District should add the additional story to the budget of the current modernization. Adding this story now be more cost effective than

coming back and building it later; it will eliminate the need to split the Glover Park school community; and it will accommodate projected growth in the neighborhood -- and if any additional classroom space still exists on this additional floor, then it can be used for swing space for Ward 3 pre-K 3 classrooms until pre-K 3 capacity can be built out at all Ward 3 Elementary Schools.

That concludes my oral testimony. I am happy to answer any questions that you or your colleagues have.

Testimony of Matt Frumin

Addressing overcrowding in Ward 3 schools is a critical priority for the Ward and city. Thank you Chairman Mendelson for holding this hearing.

As we increase capacity, we must be mindful to place it where it can best serve natural communities.

An early place this question comes up is in the planned addition for Stoddert Elementary in Glover Park.

There had been talk of taking a significant portion of the Stoddert boundary – blocks from the school – and moving it to the boundary for the planned Foxhall Elementary on the other side of Glover Archbold Park. I have been on this merry-go-round. Ten years ago, over the objection of many in the Stoddert community, while serving on the Student Assignment Committee, I supported taking areas in Burleith out of the Stoddert boundary and after the completion of the Hyde-Addison modernization moving them into that school precisely because it was on the same side of Glover Archbold Park as their homes. The same logic that supported that decision to reassign a portion of the Stoddert boundary then applies with even greater force to keeping Glover Archbold Park the boundary for Stoddert now.

That means building Stoddert an addition that can fully serve its natural community.

Stoddert's enrollment today is 450.

But, with 4 Kindergarten classes, it has 1 PK4. If it fully served its PK4 demand that would add 60 students taking it to 510.

DCPS likes to see at least 10% excess capacity in elementary schools which would point to a building capacity of 561.

Meanwhile, in recent years, Russian and Chinese diplomats have taken their children out of the school, somewhere between 30 and 50 students, but there is every possibility they will return.

Now you are at 605.

And, of course, there is the need to provide PK3.

Meeting that need which clearly should be met, would require a school with capacity well into the 600's.

It is possible that there will be other changes to the Stoddert boundary through the upcoming boundary review, but even if there were some changes, there is every reason to believe that Stoddert will need far more capacity than the 523 currently proposed. Indeed, the 554 that had previously been the number proposed was at least more realistic.

Whether the ultimate interim target is 523 or 554 or some higher number, it is imperative that any addition be built in a way that fully anticipates the need for considerably greater capacity in the future, and maybe soon which is the crux of the resolution. I urge you to support that goal through the resolution and in the consideration of the capital budget going forward.

It should be noted that at 550 or even up into the 600's, while Stoddert would be a big school, it would still be significantly smaller than a number of very successful schools that fully serve their communities. Glover Park deserves no less.

My name is Helen Dooley. I am a 25-year resident of the District, and I live with my husband and our children in Ward 3. I am here to testify in support of Bill 24-665, "Access to Advanced Placement Exams Amendment Act of 2022."

Many thanks to the Council and Committee for considering the bill, and Councilmember Cheh and Chairman Mendleson for introducing it.

I have been homeschooling in the District for eleven years. My oldest child is a homeschooled high school junior, and has been directly impacted by lack of access to Advanced Placement exams for homeschoolers in the District.

In order to take an AP exam a homeschooled student must be registered with the College Board through a school that offers that exam. Homeschoolers are not permitted to register for an exam on their own. The College Board provides a list of which schools offer which AP courses (and thus AP exams). The homeschooling family then contacts the applicable school or schools to request permission for the homeschooled student to take the applicable AP exam or exams.

Last year my daughter needed to be registered for two different AP exams, both of which were offered by our local public high school, Jackson Reid (then Wilson). We reached out to the AP Coordinator at Jackson Reid, and asked that my daughter be registered to take the exams. We made clear we were willing to pay the exam fees.

The AP Coordinator was happy to accommodate my daughter, but DCPS would not allow it. DCPS said that the cost of AP exams are covered centrally for DCPS students, and there was no mechanism to collect payment from homeschool families (and no mechanism could be created, including writing a check made out to the school).

DC regulations governing homeschoolers state that homeschooled students "may participate free of charge in the regularly scheduled standardized testing programs that are administered in the public school the child is eligible to attend." (5209.1) DCPS's position was that "regularly scheduled standardized testing programs" do not include AP exams, and refused to allow my daughter to take any AP exam at any DCPS school, even if we paid the exam fees.

I spent most of the fall of 2021 going back and forth with DCPS and OSSE on this matter. In the meantime, I was scrambling to find a school that would allow my daughter to take her exams. While we eventually found one, the entire process was very time consuming and caused unnecessary anxiety, particularly for my daughter, who worked very hard in her AP classes and was eager to take the exams.

In my experience, DC private and charter schools are not willing to accommodate homeschoolers for AP exams. The logical place for a DC homeschooled student to take an AP exam is at the local public high school, if that school offers the exam, or at another DCPS school that offers the exam.

Over this past year I learned that Maryland public schools make this process very easy for homeschoolers. Homeschoolers in Maryland need only contact the AP Coordinator at their local public school. If the school offers the requested class (and thus the requested exam), the homeschool family simply pays the required exam fee (in a check made payable to the school), and the student is registered to take the exam. Bill 24-665 would make the process similarly easy for homeschooling families in DC.

Homeschooling families in DC appreciate the city's efforts to provide equitable access to city services available to all District students, such as the Kids Ride Free program. In the same spirit, we ask that the Council pass Bill 24-665, to allow homeschooled students to take AP exams at DC public schools. Thank you.

Committee of the Whole (Council)

From: Moulin Desai <desai.moulin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 26, 2022 9:58 PM
To: Committee of the Whole (Council)
Subject: Copy of Testimony On PR 24-814 (Stoddert)

My name is Moulin Desai. I'm a parent of 2 current Stoddert students, a first-grader and a third-grader, and the parent of a 3 year-old who we hope will begin at Stoddert in Fall 2023. I'm a member of the Stoddert PTO Advocacy Team.

I encourage the Council to pass this resolution for three reasons.

First, the text of this resolution and the principles behind it are in the mainstream of Ward 3 educational policy discussions. Consider a June 16, 2021 Ward 3 EdNet letter to the Council, Mayor, Deputy Mayor for Education and Chancellor. A letter which was signed by the 3 Co-chairs of Ward 3 EdNet, our Ward 3 SBOE representative, a representative from Key, a representative from Mann and a representative from Stoddert. The letter reads, in part, "We support the Stoddert Elementary School community's desire to meet its enrollment needs on site. We urge DCPS to fully explore the possibility of an expansion of Stoddert ES that would fully accommodate the school's enrollment projections."

Second, as this hearing focuses on long-term growth in Ward 3, meeting the needs of Stoddert is meeting the needs of broader Ward 3. ANC 3B, which includes Glover Park and Stoddert, is the fastest growing ANC in Ward 3 - experiencing a 12% increase in population between 2010 and 2020. And, importantly, 12% is double what the population growth rate was in the previous decade (6%). The attractiveness of Stoddert and the availability of more housing, particularly multifamily housing, are accelerating our growth. Right-sizing Stoddert is smart policy.

Third, you need not wonder how parents feel about this. In May a petition supporting the principles in this resolution was circulated; within 10 days, 500+ Glover Park residents had signed it. In 2021 a letter urging DCPS officials to not divide our community was written by a Glover Park mother of a future Stoddert student; within days, 80+ Glover Park parents of future Stoddert students had signed it. And consider the results of the Ward 3 Democratic primary in June. In an election in which there were 9 candidates on the ballot, the candidate who was the most outspoken in his support for the principles in this resolution, Matt Frumin, won 50.4% of the votes in Glover Park (Precinct 11). In fact, Glover Park is one of only 3 precincts in which Matt exceeded 50% and one of only 5 precincts in which Matt's vote total was greater than 600.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm happy to answer questions.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR EDUCATION**



Public Hearing on

PR 24-0814, the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition
Resolution of 2022”

Testimony of
Paul Kihn
Deputy Mayor for Education

Submitted to the
Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia

The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman

September 27, 2022
1:00 PM
Virtual Meeting Platform

Introduction

Good afternoon, Chairman Mendelson, members of the Committee of the Whole, staff, and members of the public. My name is Paul Kihn, and I am honored to serve as the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) for the District of Columbia. Thank you for the opportunity to testify at today's public hearing on PR 24-814, the "Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022."

Comprehensive and city-wide public school planning is one of the DME's core functions. Our team works hard to ensure that decisions around public school openings, expansions, replications, and closures are data-driven and in the best interests of our residents and our city.

Our planning and analysis work is designed to provide key facts, increase transparency for the public, and equip leaders with strong data and analytic tools to drive decision making. DME makes publicly available key education data and trends in DC through multiple avenues, including our Edsight and EdScape analyses and our Master Facility Plan reports and supplements. To date, DME has released 25 Edsights, providing easy-to-understand information on some of our education system's most pressing issues, including enrollment trends and school facilities. EdScape is our foundational information updated annually, providing interactive visualizations and downloadable datasets on facilities, school quality, and student demand to inform school planning. These publications are all available on the DME website.

In decisions about new schools and program expansions, we look at a number of factors included in EdScape, including population and birth trends, feeder enrollment, capture rates, school quality, school programming, capacity, utilization, housing development impacts, and the systemic consequences of the decisions. We consistently collect and review data and trends and adapt, based on changing conditions, and we revisit our decisions as new information emerges and based on community input.

For nearly a decade, DME and our partners at DCPS have analyzed data, engaged community members, and developed solutions for growing enrollment and overcrowding in Ward 3, specifically in the Jackson Reed feeder pattern. In 2021, following several years of community engagement, the District purchased the former Georgetown Day School in order to establish MacArthur High School, scheduled to open in SY 23-24. This school seeks to relieve overcrowding at Jackson Reed High School, which remained over capacity even in the pandemic, and to provide another high-quality secondary option for District students. The new MacArthur school will act as the high school feeder school for students from Hardy Middle School, whose enrollment continues to rise.

At the elementary level, to address the projected overcrowding at Key, Mann, and Stoddert, the District committed to building a new elementary school—Foxhall Elementary School—scheduled

to open in SY 25-26. At the same time, we expanded capacity at Key, Stoddert, and Hyde-Addison Elementary Schools. We recognize that the enrollment picture has shifted due to the pandemic and trends in birth rates, and we will continue to closely review enrollment projections once the detailed census data is released this coming spring and Office of Planning forecasts are released thereafter.

The Master Facilities Plan (MFP) and the Boundary Study, important studies the DME is leading in the coming year, provide key opportunities to evaluate school capacity and need across the city and specifically in the Jackson Reed feeder pattern and its southern section in particular.

As we conduct this work and our ongoing citywide planning and analysis, we will continue our commitment to data-driven decision making based on the best available fact base and analysis as well as incorporation of input from impacted communities. The MFP and Boundary Study will also provide us ample opportunities for community engagement.

Thank you for your engagement on this issue, and I look forward to answering your questions.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)**



Public Hearing on

**[PR24-0814](#), the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition
Resolution of 2022”**

**Testimony of
Ely S. Ross
Chief Operating Officer**

Before the
Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman

September 27, 2022
1:00 PM
Via Zoom teleconference



Good afternoon, Chairman Mendelson, members of the Council, and staff. I am Ely S. Ross, Chief Operating Officer for DC Public Schools (DCPS), and, on behalf of Mayor Bowser, I am honored to testify before you today on PR24-814, the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition Resolution of 2022” (“Stoddert Resolution”). I am also pleased to provide testimony on Ward 3 school enrollment and planning more broadly.

Stoddert Resolution

The purpose of the Stoddert Resolution, among other things, is to declare the sense of the Council that DCPS should work to ensure that the commuting patterns among Stoddert families are not disrupted with the addition of a new elementary school in the feeder pattern. DCPS appreciates the Council’s commitment, which we share, to alleviating the long-standing overcrowding in the Jackson-Reed feeder pattern. We also appreciate Council’s recognition that in February 2019, DCPS’ Wilson Feeder Pattern Community Working Group recommended that DCPS alleviate overcrowding by expanding physical capacity by acquiring new facilities and modernizing where possible. Mayor Bowser’s acquisition of the MacArthur building and construction of the new Foxhall Elementary School reflect these recommendations.

DCPS is proactively planning for expected changes in population and school enrollment figures. Plans for an elementary school at the Foxhall site, which were informed by the Foxhall and MacArthur Community Working Group, are based on School Year (SY) 2028-29 enrollment projections in the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education’s (DME) 2018 Master Facilities Plan (MFP) and a 2019 supplement. Based on those enrollment projections, significant increased capacity is needed to ensure these schools can maintain 90% building utilization. Using those SY28-29 projections, DCPS determined that Key ES would be “over-enrolled” by 145 students and Stoddert ES would be “over-enrolled” by 142 students, even after their planned addition to achieve a building capacity of 523.

These projections were developed by DME in 2018 and 2019 using population forecasts from the DC Office of Planning, which predicted continued population increases. Since the 2018 MFP and 2019 supplement, we know that trends have shifted—specifically, we know that population growth slowed at the end of the decade and the pandemic had further negative impacts on enrollment. DME will update SY28-29 enrollment projections as part of the MFP 2023 refresh.

As you are aware, DME will conduct a school boundaries and student assignment policies study in 2023 that will take the Foxhall ES boundary into account. As previously noted, the boundary study will take travel times into consideration when adjusting or creating any new school boundaries. Notably, however, the language in the resolution of not allowing for a “longer commute” time is vague and may be overly restrictive and unfeasible. As the boundary process will look at boundaries and student assignment citywide, we do not recommend prescribing solutions ahead of that process or legislating requirements for one catchment area of the city.

Additionally, DCPS and our partners at DGS have committed to building the addition at Stoddert Elementary School to accommodate 184 more students, and to do so in a way to accommodate a third floor should the need arise.



Foxhall Elementary School

Ward 3 schools have seen significant growth in enrollment over the past 10 years, largely from increased in-boundary participation and increased enrollment from feeder schools. Since 2012, enrollment has grown as follows:

- Stoddert ES by 21% from 368 in SY 12-13 to 445 in SY21-22
- Mann ES by 28% from 286 in SY 12-13 to 366 in SY21-22;
- Deal MS by 20% from 1,165 in SY12-13 to 1,396 in SY21-22;
- Hardy MS by 31% from 404 in SY12-13 to 531 in SY21-22; and
- Jackson-Reed HS by 30% from 1,713 in SY12-13 to 2,062 in SY21-22.

Stoddert's enrollment also continues to rise and based on the enrollment projections we have currently from DME, even with the planned building addition, the new Foxhall school will still be needed. Stoddert's current capacity is 339, and the current addition will be able to accommodate 184 more students for a total permanent capacity of 523. Projected enrollment for the area based on SY28-29 projections is 554. A new school building allows DCPS to accommodate the growth in Ward 3 rather than waiting for enrollment to exceed space. The Foxhall school building will accommodate 484 students and projected enrollment is currently 450 students. The goal of Foxhall is to address help overcrowding and maintain DCPS' efforts to keep class sizes to a minimum to align with our negotiated teacher collective bargaining agreement and to enhance classroom learning with smaller teacher to student ratios.

In closing, DCPS is confident in our long-term planning to alleviate overcrowding in the Jackson-Reed feeder pattern, and we are committed to our principles of equity for all our students and families. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.



7 A RESOLUTION
8
9

10 24-814
11
12

13 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
14
15

16 To declare the sense of the Council that the District of Columbia Public Schools should ensure that
17 no family assigned to the new elementary school in Foxhall Village has a longer commute
18 to school than in their current catchment area; that the new elementary school in Foxhall
19 Village is located such that it cannot accommodate Glover Park families or other families
20 within Stoddert’s catchment area, as the new school is not reasonably accessible for that
21 community; and, that the Stoddert addition must be built such that an additional story can
22 be added when future enrollment requires it.
23

24 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
25 resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council on the Stoddert Elementary Addition
26 Resolution of 2022”.

27 Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

28 (1) For years, public schools within the Jackson-Reed High School Feeder Pattern
29 have faced significant overcrowding due to over-enrollment; prior to the start of the COVID-19
30 pandemic, the Deputy Mayor for Education projected that, by School Year 2023-2024, enrollment
31 at all but one school within the feeder pattern would exceed the permanent capacity for the school
32 building. Of note, Stoddert Elementary, which has experienced the most significant overcrowding
33 of schools within the feeder pattern, had a utilization rate of more than 146% of its permanent
34 capacity for School Year 2019-2020. While overcrowding is not unique to the Jackson-Reed High

1 School Feeder Pattern, it is a longstanding and widespread issue that has had a significant effect
2 on each of the affected schools.

3 (2) In the absence of new facility space or other comprehensive interventions, to
4 address over-enrollment, schools with the feeder pattern have been forced to make a number of
5 sacrifices to ensure that there is sufficient classroom space to serve all students. Many of the
6 schools have increased classroom sizes above well above the recommended levels. Others
7 converted non-classroom spaces within the school building, such as related arts classrooms and
8 even in some cases larger closets, to serve as classroom space. As of School Year 2021-2022, all
9 elementary schools within the feeder pattern either have never or have ceased offering pre-k 3 to
10 families and many cannot offer sufficient pre-k 4 seats to meet demand, as space constraints have
11 required schools to convert those classrooms to serve other grades. At Jackson-Reed High School,
12 space limitations prevent seniors from enrolling certain courses. And, overcrowding also puts
13 significant strain on shared spaces: for example, some schools have been forced to schedule very
14 early or late lunch periods for students due to limited cafeteria space.

15 (3) In recognition of this overcrowding, in 2017, DCPS convened a working group
16 to discuss how best to address overcrowding in the Jackson-Reed High School Feeder Pattern.
17 That working group, which included school administrators and teachers, parents of current
18 students, DCPS Central Office staff, the Ward 3 State Board of Education member, Council staff,
19 and community representatives, was tasked with putting forward recommendations to the
20 Chancellor on how best to address overcrowding within the feeder pattern. That group concluded
21 that, due to existing over-enrollment and anticipated enrollment growth in the feeder pattern, there
22 was need for DCPS to build out new capacity; this could be achieved both by creating wholly new
23 facilities and, where feasible, building additions to expand capacity at existing schools.

1 (4) Following the finalization of the working groups' report, in the FY 2021 budget
2 proposal, the Council approved funding for two new schools within the feeder pattern. One of
3 these schools, which will be sited in Foxhall Village at 1500 Foxhall Road, NW., is slated to be an
4 elementary school, and, per DCPS, is intended to help address overcrowding at several DCPS
5 schools in the lower third of the feeder pattern, including Key, Mann, and Stoddert Elementary
6 Schools.

7 (5) Notably, funding for that new school was taken from two other capital projects,
8 which would have built additions on Key and Stoddert Elementary Schools. At the time the new
9 school was first proposed, concerns were raised about the accessibility of this new school facility
10 to the Glover Park neighborhood. While Glover Park and the site of the new school in Foxhall
11 Village may appear close to one another as the crow flies, Glover Archbold Park poses a
12 meaningful geographic barrier between these two communities. Commuting to the site of the new
13 school in Foxhall Village from Glover Park, whether by personal vehicle, public transit, or on foot,
14 is quite difficult. There is no direct way to reach the Foxhall School from Glover Park or any part
15 of Stoddert's current boundaries, and there are only two routes that wind around the park.
16 Furthermore, if families within the southern part of Stoddert's boundaries in Glover Park were
17 reassigned to Foxhall, their mean distance to school would increase substantially, and for some
18 families even triple. On the other hand, Stoddert Elementary is easily accessible, including on foot,
19 from points throughout Glover Park. Thus, families of current or future Stoddert students have
20 raised concerns about the meaningful increase in their students' commute to school if the
21 catchment area of the new elementary school in Foxhall Village were to include portions of
22 southern Glover Park.

1 (6) In recognition of these concerns, in the FY 2022 budget, the Council approved
2 the reinsertion of funding for Stoddert's addition in the Capital Improvement Plan. In the year
3 following, however, the Council and Glover Park community learned that the funding provided
4 would only allow for the construction of a two-story, 12,000 square foot addition, increasing the
5 school's capacity to 523 students. While this represents an increase of 184 students over the
6 school's current capacity permanent of 339, the increase would fall short of what Stoddert needs
7 to accommodate its projected future enrollment. As of February 2020, Stoddert had an enrollment
8 of 505 students, just 18 fewer students than the maximum capacity *after* the planned addition is
9 completed; and, that count does not factor in Stoddert's hope that the addition would allow for an
10 expansion of its pre-k offerings (Stoddert currently offers only one pre-k 4 class and no pre-k 3).
11 These issues, combined with Stoddert's anticipated enrollment growth and the inaccessibility of
12 the new elementary in Foxhall Village to Glover Park families, makes clear that the new addition
13 falls short of what Stoddert needs to address its overcrowding and future projected growth.

14 (7) In the FY 2023 budget, the Council sought to make two modest changes to the
15 capital project for Stoddert's addition to right-size the new facility to meet actual need. First, the
16 Council included language in the description of the capital project mandating that the design of
17 the new addition include the infrastructure necessary to support the construction of an additional
18 story, should it be necessary in the future; that language was included in the budget as approved
19 by the Council. Second, the Council explored increasing the planned capacity of the addition by
20 another 31 seats for a total capacity of 554 students; this small increase, which was supported by
21 the Stoddert community, would have allowed the addition to more effectively address enrollment
22 growth anticipated for the next several years (after which, if needed, the additional story could be
23 built). Unfortunately, DCPS concluded that accommodating this additional capacity would cost

1 \$1,500,000 or more than amounts budgeted for in the Capital Plan, and the Council was unable to
2 identify the funds to support the expansion at that time.

3 (8) As, at current levels, the new addition will fall short of fully addressing the
4 projected capacity needs at Stoddert, the school community has raised concerns to the Council that
5 DCPS—which has stated it will launch a community working group in the coming months to guide
6 planning for the new elementary school in Foxhall Village— will ultimately draw the catchment
7 area for that new Foxhall elementary school to capture families in southern Glover Park.

8 Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that:

9 (1) When establishing the catchment area for the new elementary school in Foxhall
10 Village, DCPS should endeavor to ensure that no family assigned to the new school has a longer
11 commute to school than they would if remaining in bounds for their current school;

12 (2) The new elementary school in Foxhall Village is located such that it cannot
13 accommodate Glover Park families or other families within Stoddert’s current catchment area, as
14 the new school is not reasonably accessible from Glover Park; and

15 (3) The Stoddert addition must be built in such a way that an additional story can
16 be added, when future enrollment requires it, and DCPS should begin planning for this additional
17 story during the school year in which Stoddert’s enrollment meets or exceeds 85% of its permanent
18 capacity.

19 Sec. 4. The Council shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the Mayor,
20 the Deputy Mayor for Education, the Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools, the
21 State Board of Education, and the Mayor’s Agent.

22 Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
23 the District of Columbia Register.