



Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Michael L. Heim
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September 17, 2024

Good evening,

My name is Mike Heim. I am the Chief of Operations and Supporting Services for Charles County Public Schools (CCPS). I am here to express our support for the amendment to change the location for the future school site for Middle School # 10 from the Wooded Glenn neighborhood to the Piney Reach neighborhood. CCPS staff has had numerous meetings with the developer of St. Charles over the last several years about the location for the remaining school sites per Docket 90.

The current master plan has both Margaret Jamieson Thornton Elementary School and Middle School #10 sharing a campus. Construction began on Margaret Jamieson Thornton Elementary School, our 23rd elementary school, during the summer of 2023 in the Wooded Glenn neighborhood with an anticipated opening for the start of SY 2025-2026. There is not enough land for building two schools on the property as currently proposed. Typically, our elementary schools are built on sites between 20 - 25 acres to afford enough land to provide adequate parking, playgrounds, stormwater management areas, and athletic fields. As CCPS builds new schools that are more environmentally friendly using geothermal systems for heating and cooling the building, more land is needed for the geothermal wells. The area above the fields is not typically developed in case of an issue with one or more of the wells.

Ideally, CCPS prefers to build middle schools on sites with a minimum of thirty acres, preferably forty acres, to afford enough land for parking, athletic fields, stormwater management areas, and an area for geothermal fields. Each of the current eight middle schools also serve as community centers operated by Charles County Parks and Recreation staff during non-school hours so sites have athletic fields located on the campuses utilized by community organizations on evenings and weekends. It is anticipated that MS #10 would also be a community center operated by Parks and Recreation staff during the evening and weekend hours.

The proposed new site for Middle School # 10 is within the PFA (Priority Funded Area). Being within a PFA is something the State (IAC) considers when approving a school site for construction to ensure the school has readily available access to public water and sewage. CCPS cannot move forward with construction before the State approves the site for Middle School # 10.



CHARLES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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CCPS supports the proposed new location for Middle School # 10. It is vital for the Middle School #10 to have a designated, approved site for the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) to consider when CCPS submits the project for planning and construction funding approval. Delays with designating a site will delay when construction can begin and the opening of the school.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Heim
Chief of Operations and Supporting Services
Charles County Public Schools

Steven M. Andritz
Director of Planning & Construction

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Director of Transportation

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