

Druid Hills Cluster Elementary Redistricting Community Feedback

Meeting 2 Online Survey

Additional Comments

Comment

Our neighborhood, Springdale Heights, is a small, tight-knit community and we all want to stay in the Laurel Ridge zone.

Lower utilization/enrollment at all schools involved is fair to all. Having one school benefit (BriarVista) at the expense of the others is just wrong.

I made the above selection for Option #2 ONLY on the contingency that this is a flawed recommendation. It is a starting point, however I would like to recommend the following adjustments:

In the area labeled "B" (Medlock Park neighborhood) the District has overstepped a natural border (S. Peachtree Fork Creek) which was the original (yes...ORIGINAL, circa 1950s/60s) dividing line for what was Medlock Elementary School and Laurel Ridge Elementary School boundaries. I would recommend this proposal encompass the original boundaries of Medlock Elementary being redistricted into Fernbank Elementary School. In 2010 when the consulting firm of the moment recommended closing Medlock ES and Fernbank ES was subsequently granted an opportunity to receive the new 900+ capacity building, an unwritten agreement was told to the Medlock ES attendance zone families that the increased capacity created at Fernbank ES would accommodate the entire attendance zone of (what had been) Medlock ES. Fernbank ES would also request the Briar Vista ES students who are physically located in the Briarwood Hills area (south of Emory University/east of City of Atlanta) be redistricted to Fernbank ES. This area is and has historically been, "cut off" from the physical building and the community of Briar Vista ES courtesy of Emory University. This is the area of Dekalb County which has been street by street requested to be annexed in to APS.

Option #2 should also be adjusted as to not send the area labeled "C": 46 students from McLendon ES to Fernbank ES. The suggestion to move this area of the residential assigned students from McLendon to another elementary school reeks of political influence and is a complete dis-service to McLendon ES. McLendon ES was low on enrollment a few years back and a decision was made to fill the available seats by expanding programs for Special Education and Special Needs students. That move was successful in filling seats, but at the cost of residential attendance zone families seeking to move their children into school choice programs or into private education. Any suggestion to now redistrict a large portion of residential attendance zone students to another elementary school in the district will be at the detriment of McLendon ES and appears flush with political agendas.

As our entire cluster grows, I believe it would be most beneficial to keep neighborhoods together.

1. If we want to have a early learning center for the DH cluster, it should be in a new building and not be situated in one of our existing schools since they are already overcrowded.
2. The early learning center should be centrally located in the cluster so that all families in the cluster would have equal access and traffic will be kept at a minimum.
3. Option 2 keeps neighborhoods together and limits traffic which is a huge plus.
4. Option 1 increases traffic in the cluster and gives students and their families excessive commuting issues which will impact parental involvement and the ability for children to participate in after school activities.

This option doesn't max out our neighborhood schools by closing a school off to resident attendees. Many children currently in Montessori program at BVES may decide to come to Fernbank ES when their transportation option is taken away. This would put Fernbank ES over capacity instantly.

Proposal 2 gets rid of all the portables which is best for all students in the cluster

We live in Lindmoor Woods, and I'm a proud Shamrock High School graduate (now known as druid hills middle) which was converted to that school the year after I graduated in 1997. I saw first hand what redistricting did to the communities then, and it tore them apart. People are still bitter over it. We are very glad our neighborhood is not affected by either of these 2 options, and truly hope nothing changes in that regard! (Especially having just bought our home 3 years ago to specifically be in the laurel ridge district) That being said, I hope DeKalb county can make the wisest decision going forward in the best interest of the children here, since that's really what it should be all about. We know some great families in Medlock, and it hurts to know we'll be separated due to this change. Option 2 seems the better option, as it will keep that neighborhood school intact for the kids, and not add a significant traffic/ transportation burden to those areas.

The second option - keeping neighborhoods together - gives all of the schools in the cluster some "buffer" for new students, since we know that the ALT metro is going to continue to build more and more densely packed housing.

I feel like keeping neighborhoods together is important.

I think the first plan would be a mistake - especially for traffic! I also do not think it does enough to allow for growth and get rid of portables.

I think that some iteration of "Keep Neighborhoods Together" will work great, if you make some small adjustments. I think we really have to keep some buffer for new construction and think the numbers might be underestimated here.

While we don't love the idea of having to switch from Laurel Ridge, we much prefer option 2 (keeping all of Medlock Park together) over option 1. Option 1 also influences MORE students and MORE families. So logistically, we think option 2 makes more sense for the county.

Option 1 seems the most disruptive to students, short sighted, and doesn't alleviate the need for portable classrooms. Losing a neighborhood school and 200+ K-5 seats when the whole process is supposed to address overcrowding in those grades makes NO sense. Option 2 keeps the BV area mostly intact, the Medlock neighborhood intact, and seems to make sense for those school communities while alleviating the need for portables. Neither of these options address growth we are seeing and are going to be experiencing in 2-3 years and that feels very shortsighted.

This is also better for the kids, so that there is not so much busing on inadequate road. Rather than separating neighborhoods and adding more traffic time, we should keep neighborhoods together and promote community.

Of the two proposed options, the 2nd "keep neighborhoods together" seems more consistent with the highest priority criteria and other criteria - geographic proximity, instructional capacity, traffic and safety patterns, and intact neighborhoods. The first option "converting Briar Vista..." may be more consistent with efficient and economical operations if the district saves money on BV conversion. Such conversion, however,

creates the greatest disruption to geographic proximity as many in the current BV zone would attend a school (FB) much further away,

pushes FB enrollment beyond its desired enrollment for efficient operation (whereas option 2 is best for all schools' enrollments),

brings new school choice traffic into the BV attendance zone, and fragments a large, cohesive Medlock neighborhood.

Based on the current criteria, "keeping neighborhoods together" is the better plan.

Outside the scope of hard and fast redistricting lines is the impact on current students. Irrespective of where the final lines are drawn, options to stay with a current elementary school for those who wish to remain in their current environment should be considered.

Option 1- closing BVE and converting to full Montessori- would put my children a very far distance from the new "neighborhood" school, which would be Fernbank. We can walk to Briar Vista, and putting my children on a bus to Fernbank is an unacceptable distance for me. Driving this route, should we use personal transportation instead of the bus, would also place us in significant traffic in the morning. Keeping neighborhoods together seems to be a better fit from a proximity to school standpoint.

Option 2 meets all 3 of the primary criteria (geographical proximity, instructional capacity, and projected enrollment) and allows for growth within each school long-term, and it keeps Medlock Park and other neighborhoods in-tact. Option 1 makes absolutely no sense and reduces overall capacity in the cluster by approx. 200 seats. If overcrowding is an issue currently and will be in the future with all the new developments, Option 1 is an absurd proposal. "Balancing of special programs" such as early learning or Montessori is not even in the list of primary criteria and falls third in the list of secondary criteria. Option 2 is the best option for balancing enrollment within the cluster and reducing the likelihood of another redistricting in a very short time period.

Both are great propositions. However, the Briar Vista Montessori option appears to consolidate all of the local school pre-k programs there. That would be a pain in the rear to drop off multiple kids (1 at BV for pre-k and then the other(s) at your local elementary) with start times that are probably close together. Another concern for far away clusters is traffic for bringing their pre-k kids to Briar Vista. I live near Briarcliff and Emory Rd and found it very challenging to drive to Druid Hills Middle School for some of our community redistricting sessions (in fact I'm shocked there isn't a Middle School close enough for kids to ride bikes to). Traffic was awful. I can't imagine Avondale or Laurel Ridge Families wanting to drive all the way to Briar Vista. That's probably a 20-30 minute commute during rush hour.

One other thing to consider is the amount of traffic that will flow through Emory on Clifton Road where Briar Vista families would likely come through to get to Fernbank. I believe (not sure) that hospital shifts are frequently up at 7am. I could see potentially being a bottle neck (though just a guess- I haven't witnessed traffic on Clifton during shift changes).

Thank you! Sorry if the above sounded negative. I think both are great ideas. But above are the potential flaws i see in the Briar Vista Montessori plan.

I feel that option 1 does not address the overcrowding at Laurel Ridge in a meaningful way. If you account for all of the development happening in North Decatur and Avondale it would be smart to allow for growth at both Laurel Ridge and Avondale. Option 1 adds almost 50 more students to Avondale and keeps Laurel Ridge at capacity with a few portable classrooms. It seems shortsighted, I would advise not adding any more students to Avondale and keep Laurel Ridge well under capacity.

Option 2 is the better option if reducing overcrowding and allowing for potential growth is a priority. Given that our small neighborhood (Manor Walk) borders Decatur city schools we've always identified as part of Medlock Park. Keeping our whole neighborhood intact and part of Medlock Park would be my priority therefore I feel strongly that option 2 is the best choice for both the cluster and our neighborhood.

Option 2 best serves students in the Druid Hills cluster. It keeps neighborhoods together and provides the schools with more space to accommodate new students in the coming years, particularly Laurel Ridge and Fernbank. Below, I give details about issues associated with option 1.

Converting Briar Vista (BV) to a Montessori and Early Learning Center is not a viable option for three main reasons. First, this option will not provide the Laurel Ridge and Fernbank schools with much room for continued student growth in the area, nor will it eliminate trailers. With all of the growth occurring along the Scott Blvd corridor, Laurel Ridge and Fernbank will be overcrowded or at capacity again in 1-2 years if Dekalb chooses option 1. Second, option 1 will create extremely long commute times for parents of traditional students living in the northern area of the current BV district. Traffic would be a nightmare for these students who were moved to Fernbank, making it difficult for parents to take their kids to after school events. Third, the first option will not leave neighborhoods intact. This will result in several BV students not attending their neighborhood school and it will continue splitting the Medlock Park neighborhood. This leads to a loss of community and cohesiveness among neighbors.

The option to keep neighborhoods together (Option #2 on the handouts we received) a) has less kids moving schools, minimizing disruption; b) keeps a neighborhood school option for the Briar Vista area, thus reducing traffic to Fernbank area; c) removes the current portables, and d) PUTS ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AT A LOWER UTILIZATION, allowing for future growth.

I think it is important for the children in my neighborhood to attend Fernbank, and later Druid Hills High School

Briarwood Hills is currently in the BriarVista district. We are outliers to Briarvista and should be in Fernbank. This would keep us in the community we are closest to.

We live Brairwood Hills neighborhood. Our neighborhood is an outlier that is geographically separated from the rest of the Briar Vista district. The option that places our neighborhood in the Fernbank District while leaving the rest of Briar Vista district intact is more consistent with keeping neighborhoods together and allowing children to go to school with children in nearby neighborhoods who they also socialize and engage in outside activities with.

I have lived here since 1971 and was a Briar Vista/DHHS parent from 1979 to 1991. I was also a PTA board member for 7 years and co-president for 2 of those years. For all those years I petitioned for our address to be districted to Fernbank to match our DHHS assignment...to no avail! It's important now more than ever as my neighbors increasingly petition to become accepted into APS, and are taking their tax dollars for their new McMansions with them. Hopefully now this appeal will become reality.

It keeps the Medlock community together - one which has been very active in advocating for Laurel Ridge. Thank you for keeping us as an intact community.

I see a lot of value in Briar Vista's Montessori program and I know it is very popular. My major concern is that if it is not a DH-cluster-only program then we will end up with overcrowding problems again and no way to alleviate them. Keeping all of our remaining seats in-cluster makes the most sense. Also, I do not live in the Medlock Park community, but my impression is that they would prefer to move as an intact neighborhood, which would best serve their interests.

The idea of keeping neighborhoods together makes the most sense to me. Our neighborhood is surrounded by the Fernbank district, so it would most certainly create more of a neighborhood feeling and sense of community to have the neighboring students in the same school, rather than the current division that doesn't align with the geography.

The idea of turning Briar Vista into a Montessori doesn't appeal to me, as that is a specific type of learning environment that is desirable to a limited few and wouldn't benefit the surrounding neighborhood, it would just displace the majority of students Briar Vista currently serves.

I think creating boundaries that geographically make sense will create a more holistic neighborhood and community for our students.

keeping our neighborhoods together benefits everyone.

All students, but especially those at this age, deserve a stable school environment. Option One would be disruptive for the majority of the Briar Vista community while putting students at greater risk traveling lengthy distances to their zoned school. It also assumes all Montessori students will remain at the Briar Vista location, which is unlikely without transportation. It would seem, since Briar Vista has a comparatively low enrollment, all current students should be able to remain. The portion of Option One that would benefit the entire community is expanding Pre-K services. If funds are available for additional programming, Pre-K classes could be added at the schools with capacity (Avondale, Briar Vista, and Fernbank). Regarding Option Two, it seems clear that Laurel Ridge would like to maintain as many of their students as possible. It is also clear that a number of students need to be transferred to Fernbank to mitigate overcrowding. It would seem that moving a smaller number of students (less than the suggested 172) from areas contiguous to the current Fernbank zone would be least disruptive and impactful on students, traffic, and neighborhoods. If there are additional seats to be filled at Fernbank (keeping in mind that to maintain current programming the functional maximum capacity is 850) school choice could be expanded to include siblings, which would positively impact traffic by reducing the number of schools where families are driving.

It is critical for their emotional, cognitive, and social development that our children be allowed to be in a school environment with as many of their close friends (and support groups) as possible, especially during this time of significant upheaval—being forced into a new school environment is never easy, and having a strong, significant group of peers who they know and trust will be vital to their well-being in early months. Splitting the Laurel Ridge students between Avondale and Fernbank will NOT be in their long-term best interests.

Given the large Fernbank expansion, the best use of those facilities is to expand to the east and keep neighborhoods together. Option 1 reduces the overall number of elementary seats dedicated to our fast-growing cluster, forces difficult driving patterns across the Clifton Corridor, separates the Medlock Park neighborhood, and pulls off the families near Emory-Dekalb Medical. Option 2 on the other hand, reduces the traffic burden through the Clifton Corridor, keeps neighborhoods together, balances capacity across the schools, keeps the much needed elementary slots for our cluster, and continues bus service to the Briar Vista neighborhood option for Montessori.

Keeping friends and neighbors together is important for big changes, like switching schools, but also for the long term sense of community in the new school.

It's important to us that we keep our community together!

I want my kids to live close to the children they will attend school with so it is easy to get together and regularly see one another in the community.

our children know the the children in the medlock area, if they are not moved with the medlock children they will not only be losing the school they love but also so many friends

Converting the BVE to a Montessori & ELC does not have a transportation option and will increase traffic in an already congested area.

The 2nd option with Keep Neighborhoods Together does a good job of evenly dispersing children into schools within their proximity and this also keeps the utilization of the schools at a lower percentage. This will help keep the schools from having to redistrict again as the number of residential units in our area increases.

Our neighborhood has always been highly involved with Medlock and should be moving forward.

In my opinion converting BV to a full Montessori and Early childhood center, will not solve any of the over crowding issues other schools are facing.

The conversion of Briar Vista will lead to far too many kids at Fernbank.

Having children attend their nearby schools could assist in easing potential traffic associated with shorter commute along with building stronger neighborhoods. Attending neighborhood schools would also benefit children in participating in after school programs.

option 2 is best as I currently don't drive and if the my kids get move to Fernbank I will have to ride in uber or taxi

We are very tightly linked to the Medlock park neighborhood, both in community involvement and shared friends for our daughters. While moving schools in the 3rd grade from Laurel Ridge our be disruptive, a larger issue would be to separate Brooklyn (or 7 yr/old) from the rest of her friends who she has been learning from all these years.

I want my neighborhood to stay together at LRE. We moved here for this school before our kids were even born.

It is hard to answer this with the information given. The numbers presented by word and by paper did not match, there are inconsistencies in the numbers presented in various handouts, and the capacity numbers for the school I know (Fernbank) seems too high given programming at that school.

Keeping neighborhoods together is best for everyone. My main concern with both plans is that they would put Fernbank at or even over our true instructional capacity (which seems to be more like 800 students). We are bursting at the seams given our special needs and other similar programs, which require a much lower student:teacher ratio in many rooms.

I am also concerned about unrealistically low student population growth estimates. Expanding Fernbank's zone contiguously makes perfect sense, and I don't feel strongly about where to actually draw the lines, but the District needs to leave room for expected further population growth in the Fernbank zone (especially if we expand past Medlock Park with all those new apartment buildings going up, and I would also expect a higher percentage of neighborhood families to send their kids to Fernbank now that our school enrollment won't be in flux anymore).

Number one redistricting priority for everyone in the district should be keeping neighborhoods together (along with ensuring a quality education for everyone, of course).

Option 1 does not achieve the stated primary goal of alleviating the overcrowding issues at McLendon and Laurel Ridge. Both schools would remain at near capacity in the short run and face certain overcrowding issues again in the near future. For instance, the option 1 projected utilization rate raises red flags of inadequate space as Briar Vistas™ rate would be 98%, with 3 other schools almost at 95%.

Option 2 addresses the overcrowding concerns in the short run and makes accommodations for the tremendous growth in the North Decatur area. Option 2 has a much more desirable utilization rate allowing room for future growth and school choice. Option 2 would also allow room to add or expand Pre-K in existing schools while addressing transportation concerns by modifying existing bus routes. Option 1 does not allow for school transportation. Adding almost 500 kids dependent on car transportation would put additional stress on an already taxed infrastructure.

We identify with Medlock not Avondale. We have many friends and in the Medlock neighborhoods many of whom our neighborhood kids currently go to school with. Option 1 would mean complete severing from friends and families we are close to. Option 2 would mean we can remain in the same school with friends and families in Medlock.

Our neighborhood is currently blossoming with many young families who bought into the neighborhood specifically for the quality of the elementary schools. Being redistricted to Avondale could result in an exodus of these families from the neighborhood.

Option 2 also means will mean less students transplanted and therefore less disruption of having to start new relationships with teachers and students and existing school programs. Only 231 students will be transplanted in Option 2 only 357 in Option 1 (over 50% more!)

I think Early Learning Centers are a wonderful idea - my son had a great experience with preschool at Coralwood five years ago. However, I do not think that reducing overall capacity for the cluster by turning one school into a specialty school is the best use of space for this cluster. I also think it will make it more difficult to make projections for enrollment. Montessori is a very specific educational philosophy that does not work for every child and limits attendance. I also think it is something that can be hard to do well.

posting the info about each option prior to asking which is the preferred makes a better survey.

So I fully support keeping neighborhoods together (and reducing student transportation time) and think this should be a priority for DCSD, but I don't think that Option 2 actually keeps neighborhoods together (eg, McLendon is split) and there are still a lot of students traveling a long way (eg Fernbank/BV areas to DHMS; Avondale to DHHS). I think DCSD should consider both Lakeside and DH clusters in this planning since they are interwoven and the clustering doesn't appear logical in terms of transport and capacity. Western Sagamore travels a huge distance to Henderson MS and several schools in the Lakeside cluster are under/over-capacity -- surely it makes sense to look at all of the districting here at the same time? I think that building 900-seat elementary schools is not conducive to keeping neighborhoods together (unless we make them K-8 schools -- which seems a good option here) because as K-5 schools they require a huge attendance zone that spans several neighborhoods and inevitably results in large transportation distances.

Option B is far superior: Moving fewer students and reducing to load on each school is a better; longer sustained plan and better for the district as a whole. Reducing the need for portables is also positive.

Negatives for option A: Traffic: According to the National Statistics on School Transportation a study performed in 2014 found 48% of parents drive their students in grades K-5th grade. Creating a school designation in Fernbank than places unneeded burden on an already congested Clifton Corridor. By allowing schools to be in the mid-90s in attendance rather than 80s is not beneficial to the communities involved and unduly stress communities by forcing redistricting or a return to overcapacity schools. With how quickly the communities in this district are growing Option A would result in a quick return to over capacity.

Additionally, a Montessori School and Early Learning Center seem like a good idea, but they would be limited value to the district due to access and overburden the other schools in the district to create this specialized school in the district.

A note about a specific community. Springdale Heights. Option 2 would be our choice. We are currently districted for Laurel Ridge and identify with that community. We would be the only neighborhood other than apartment complexes moving to Avondale. Option 1 in its current form would isolate our community from the rest of the designated Avondale neighborhoods; the area for almost a mile between us and Avondale ES is filled with businesses.

Keeping Valley Brook Estates and Lindmoor Woods in the LRE zone makes the most sense to me, aligning at least with the primary issue of proximity and secondary issue of neighborhood integrity. This plan also seems to be the most prudent, leveling enrollment projections across the schools.

Option 1 has significantly more traffic pattern concerns a) getting students from 85 to Fernbank and b) adding carpool traffic for resident Montessori families that lose the bus. Option 1 also splits the Medlock neighborhood into 3 schools. Option 2 keeps Medlock neighborhoods together.

A big negative of the Montessori/Early Learning Center option is the proposed discontinuation of bus service for Montessori students, forcing those in the BVE zone who rely on this service to go to a school which is farther away. Any solution should retain the option of bus service for students living in the Briar Vista district. An option that deserves further exploration is one discussed at the BVE Principal Advisory Council meeting on October 30: Gradually transition to a full Montessori school with 579 seats by expanding the number of seats available for Montessori through school choice and no longer accepting new traditional students in the Kindergarten classes. This would allow all current traditional students to finish their elementary years at BVE while the Montessori program builds from the lower grades upwards.

!- The student capacity number given for Fernbank is too high, given the programming that we currently run (e.g., self-contained special education classes have much lower class-sizes than a grade-level class).
- The District has not communicated an acceptable plan to accommodate teachers coming to Fernbank with students from other schools without disrupting current Fernbank teachers who wish to remain at Fernbank.
- There is concern that both options bisect existing neighborhoods: Medlock and Springdale Heights in Option 1 and McLendon in Option 2
- DCSD should allow sibling preference in the IB School Choice program to ease carpool burdens for families and schools.

With keeping them together you can have parent involvement, transportation won't be an issue, and the community and school can grow together, if kids attend the school temporarily then return to their home school the children can't form life long bonds with friends. The school needs to have kids that live within a close proximity to their community.

Option #2, but with modifications. No need to redistrict student from McLendon to Fernbank. That is the opposite of keeping neighborhoods intact. McLendon was asked to fill empty seats via special programs & choice. Rather than taking residential students from the school, if needing to adjust #s for capacity, reduce openings for choice and special programs for non residential students. Likewise, the line for Laurel Ridge students to be redistributed to Fernbank should follow the original attendance lines of Medlock Elementary, along the creek. Or another option: less LRE students, more BVE students, but not an attendance zone all the way to I-85. Too far, too much traffic through the Clifton Corridor. And Option 1 was a miss for actually expanding Montessori at BVE.

For Springdale Heights community (next to Emory Decatur hospital), please consider keeping the few students in this community at LRES. If we are unable to stay at LRES, please keep us together with other LRES students in moving to Fernbank.

Option 1 misses the boat. BVE has advocated for and repeatedly requested support to expand their Montessori program. While Option 1 takes the traditional students out of BVE, it doesn't do anything to expand the Montessori program. They already have 250 students in Montessori.

Kudos to DeKalb for considering another Early Learning Academy, but this is probably not the physical location which could most benefit from having an Early Learning Academy. Without transportation, it's not open to the families and students who need it and can benefit from it the most.

Also, when we are in the midst of a discussion around overcrowding in the elementary schools of a particular cluster, to remove one of the elementary schools completely from the picture seems extremely short sighted. Another short sighted issue residing in the Druid Hills Cluster are the 2 art schools who collectively sit on over 1,000 empty seats of available capacity while there is overcrowding at DHMS and 2 of the 5 elementary schools in the cluster. Not to mention the grotesque overcrowding issue in the Clarkston community, specifically Indian Creek, less than 2 miles from DeKalb Elementary School of the Arts. This issue & concern was brought up in the last round of redistricting. A reminder that the voters and tax payers supported ESPLOST to pay for the previous and current construction of the new elementary school buildings and the various other school improvements predicated ONE comprehensive Arts campus.

Keeping neighborhoods together should be less damaging to already congested traffic patterns. This plan also allows for a small buffer for future growth as more families with elementary school students move into the district.

In Option 1, taking away an elementary school does not seem like a good long term solution for the Druid Hills cluster, if several schools are already over capacity. Option 2 keeps Lindmoor Woods, Valley Brook, and Laurel Ridge neighborhoods at the same school, which is important to the feel of community. While moving Medlock Park neighborhood to Fernbank would disrupt the current balance at LRES, it would maintain the cohesiveness of that neighborhood.

The first option addresses the enrollment numbers at the school and disrupts less children and families by moving schools and having to transition to a completely different school environment and culture. Given the current and future enrollment needs of the DeKalb elementary students, it seems short-sighted to even consider an option that wouldn't decrease the enrollment well under the capacity AND get rid of all portable units. While I love the idea of having an early learning Center, I wonder how else this can be achieved without uprooting more families from the school they have grown and learned at.

We believe that moving Briar Vista to Montessori and ELC will fragment the current neighborhoods even more than it is currently. It will also worsen the traffic patterns and make many folks have to commute further.

I completely support the district in expanding early childhood education offerings but I would like to see this supported in a separate location - we know that elementary seats in Region 2 are filling quickly due to the growth in housing stock, and given the intensity of current development (and coming development), this will only continue at an exponential pace. For this reason, the timing is all wrong for diversion of available elementary (K-5) seats in an existing elementary school building to early childhood programs.

My son previously attended BVE Montessori and I think expanding this program as well as much needed Early learning center is importantbut at what cost to the existing staff and students ? Not to mention distance and terrible traffic from Briarcliff to fernbank

Keeping neighborhoods together is the best of the two options for this question. I know that Medlock Park doesn't want to leave Laurel Ridge, but, if they have to, I think moving all of Medlock is better than splitting it up.

Ultimately if a redistricting is inevitable then I prefer to keep Medlock Park intact. I do worry that we will be in the same situation in a few years due to our geographical location of the neighborhood and as the surrounding areas continue to develop. I am afraid that this might a short term fix with so much unknown about the growth of the area and how many students it actually might yield.

More personally, I hope the school board will consider to allow children who currently have IEPs at Laurel Ridge and who affected by the redistricting, have the option to stay at Laurel Ridge. For our family in particular, we have one child who has been at LR for 7 years and is moving on to Druid Hills in the fall. Our youngest is in his third year and struggles with an articulation disorder. I am deeply concerned how a transition would impact the great progress he has made at Laurel Ridge. Every day is a struggle for him, as it has taken a long while for him to feel a sense of belonging and open up and be an engaged member of his class. He tends to shy away from conversations knowing that he can be hard to understand. He feels a sense of community at Laurel Ridge and a sense of acceptance. I would hate for him to have to start all over again in a school that is twice the size and that undoubtedly will have him struggle with making friends and feeling comfortable enough to engage. I hope the board and district would consider allowing a child with an IEP stay at Laurel Ridge without the option for transportation.

If we are currently over capacity with the current public schools (except FB), it makes no sense to take away more in order to make BV a Charter school. If you want a Montessori school, use one of the empty school buildings. We need BV to stay a public school. While we are seeing what's going on right now, why don't we talk about the 2-5 year plan and get the ball rolling on a larger middle and high school instead of waiting last minute. Better schools=more students. That's a simple equation. LR became a better school and it is now packed. It feels like an elementary school and not a giant factory. You aren't forced to attend events just so you can meet families. I just wish that when Medlock closed 8 years ago, Medlock was sent to Fernbank. It makes complete sense now. Let's learn from this stress.

I don't particularly like either option but think that the Neighborhood option is the least disruptive option.