

## Penrose Survey on the Career Center Site

**Results: April 16, 2018**

There were n=211 Penrose residents who completed the survey. More than half of all respondents were female (63%). Almost half (45%) either have no children (28%) or no children currently living at home (17%). Among the remainder (55%) with children, most common were elementary age children (30%), followed by children not yet in school (23%), middle school age children (11%), and high school age children (5%).

By a 2:1 ratio, Penrose residents supported building a comprehensive neighborhood high school on the Career Center site vs. a STEM or other focused high school (59% vs. 29%, with 11% undecided). Two-thirds (67%) also support considering moving some of the existing Career Center programs to another APS location.

About half of respondents prefer to cap the number of high school students on the site at around 2,000 students, while the other half are willing to consider a larger high school with 31% supporting a high school of 2,400-2,800 students while 20% support a high school of 2,800-3,500 students.

Almost all respondents (82%) would like to see transportation studies for the site. Likewise, over three-quarters (77%) would like Arlington County and APS to investigate options to purchase more land to expand the site. Most (59%) respondents would like to see the entire site used for a high school.

Residents were strongly in favor (76%) of creating underground parking on the site, with the majority (72%) believing APS should build sufficient parking capacity to reduce the overflow parking burden on the surrounding neighborhoods. Few thought parking should cost money for faculty and students (13%), or for the public outside of school hours (16%).

Residents indicated their support for various amenities on the site including a school library (72%), auditorium (61%), full size gymnasium (59%), outdoor track (57%), indoor swimming pool (55%), and theater (50%).

Most respondents (72%) indicated they support outdoor activities on the site ending by 10 pm (vs. earlier) to comply with existing county noise ordinances. Most (55%) would like to see dark sky lighting used to reduce light pollution, and there was also strong support (75%) for special landscaping to reduce noise.

Regarding the existing county library on the site, almost half (47%) are in favor of moving the library to Columbia Pike at S. Highland Street (an additional 8% would consider another location within the neighborhood), while 41% would like it to stay in its existing location. Almost all (96%) want the library to stay within the neighborhood.

Consistent with the overall survey results, open-ended comments primarily supported the idea of building a fourth comprehensive high school on the site, although several comments mentioned specific concerns related to how such a school should be built. About a fifth of the open-ended comments strongly opposed the building of a high school on the site. Complete open-ended comments are in the Appendix.

Finally, on a related matter, almost all respondents (80%) were in favor of keeping all current planning units for Patrick Henry reassigned to the Fleet Elementary School, which will open in September 2019.

## APPENDIX: Open-Ended Survey Comments

### Comments in favor of a comprehensive fourth high school:

1. A real school would be good for the neighborhood. The county should purchase additional land and do it right the first time. Our taxes are high and we should see more return for Arlington's kids.
2. Arlington needs more high school seats. I fully support a 4th comprehensive high on the site, equivalent to the other three high schools in town.
3. Building a comprehensive high school is absolutely necessary, otherwise we're punting the problem to a few short years from now and have wasted a lot of money.
4. Columbia Pike community needs and deserves a comprehensive high school and a nice public library. Let's not pass up this chance to build something great.
5. I think it will be great to have a high school in Penrose!
6. I would be fine with light and noise past 10pm for high school programs. This seems like a great boost for local businesses along the pike.
7. In case I missed any check-list item, I believe in a comprehensive HS with amenities equal to the other 3 high schools. (My children will be graduate by this time, but I strongly believe in EQUITY for all HS students. It should be a HS like Wakefield, our current neighborhood school.)
8. It is imperative to have a 4th high school and it is meaningful to keep the career center at its current location. We need to combine both at this location. The Columbia Pike Library should move to Columbia Pike. If it means moving the elementary/Montessori program then so be it. Use the entire space for a high school. There are thousands of residents across the United States that have fields in their backyard with stadium lights. Better that than another high rise building.
9. Love the idea of a Neighborhood high school!
10. Thanks for this survey. A new HS is needed for the future.
11. The high school at the career center MUST be a comprehensive high school. There should be equitable treatment for all residents of Arlington and south Arlington should not have less than north Arlington
12. The library is a great amenity for the neighborhood, as would a track or athletic field that could be used by the neighborhood on the weekends like the baseball field and parks are now. If we are going to get the seats, then let's make sure we get the benefits of having a high school in the neighborhood with the ability of Penrose kids to walk to school, and for amenities to be shared by the residents nearby. Also having things go a little late occasionally is perfectly fine, ending by 8 pm is not realistic.
13. This should be an urban high school, but with many educational and recreational opportunities for students and the community. This site is 12 acres, and, if used efficiently, it could satisfy various needs.
14. Very very strongly in favor of a 4th Comprehensive High School on the site. Very opposed to a specialty program that the community would not benefit from or a limited program that wastes construction costs without doing anything to alleviate over-crowding.
15. We fully support a fourth comprehensive high school given the needs of the county and all the school age children in Penrose and surrounding neighborhoods.
16. We need a 4th comprehensive high school badly in South Arlington. The County has failed on planning for the population explosion. The new high school should have good extracurricular

amenities: sports fields, track, theater, music facilities. Many kids thrive on all of these, being more or as important than the academic program itself. One needs to develop the whole person!

### Comments supporting a high school but with concerns/requests:

1. Adequate parking MUST BE provided at the site so that cars from the school don't spill into neighborhoods. This may mean that minimal fees must be charged for weekend community users AND if absolutely needed for faculty/students, as well.
2. Any high school should have all the extracurricular activities other Arlington high schools have, ie sports, theater, etc...
3. APS should buy/use the BM Smith building at 9th and Wayne for Career Center / Arlington Tech and/or the library. Additionally, APS MUST build adequate parking at the career center site - it is already over capacity now - as a Henry parent I cannot find parking when I go to pick my kids up to go to the doc or to attend evening/after school events. Parking has to be underground. There is SO MUCH overflow parking in our neighborhood already APS must provide this and put it underground.
4. Depending on what is happening with the fields and tennis courts at TJ the new high school could share these resources.
5. High school students should have access to basic sport facilities (track, gymnasium) but should utilize other community resources to conserve space. For sufficient space to be allocated for a high school will likely need to move most career center courses elsewhere - perhaps DHS.
6. I believe a new hs in our neighborhood should have certain requirements which need to be met, not only from a state educational requirement perspective, but also from the perspective of parents who would otherwise opt to transfer their students to another school with better amenities. I ask that you require any expanded high school facility at the Career Center to include the following (in no particular order) on-site amenities: Underground/structured parking Outdoor plaza/recreation space Full-size gymnasium Full-service cafeteria/commons Music and art rooms Full-size auditorium/performance theatre Swimming pool Track and re-configurable, multi-sport athletic fields to support all/most traditional Arlington high school field sports, incl. at least a practice football/soccer/lacrosse field (stadium could be located off-site) Library, incl. possible integration/resource-sharing with the existing Columbia Pike Branch Library Our children and neighborhood require and deserve a comparable Hs to others in the area. Why should we settle for less? Respectfully yours, Penrose parent and Resident
7. I found some of these question a bit misleading and without all of the actual choices/options that can be discussed and trying to lead to votes for smaller school with less traffic impact. This should be an urban school site maximizing the space and providing all the appropriate athletic needs on site by using tall buildings with fields/courts on top of underground/structured parking. This will help preserve our community over the long term as these needs will not have to be placed on other sites or other public spaces within Penrose or surrounding areas.
8. I support an urban high school on this site, but would like to see the entire site used for this purpose. I want it to be a neighborhood school with Career Center programs and Arlington Tech embedded.

9. If high school students are coming to the site, we \*must\* have associated facilities and amenities. Our neighborhood should not carry the entire burden of increased traffic, noise, and disruption without some offsetting benefits.
10. If we get a neighborhood high school, it should be of similar enrollment, facilities and programs as the other three, not just the facilities, but the capacity and opportunities for student outcomes
11. Library can move. Space should be used for a 4th high school ONLY if our neighborhood kids can go there. Site should host Montessori and a high school with space bought from ecdc and built UP! fields playgrounds and auditoriums with a public library nearby please! Go late, but keep lights respectful
12. Please advocate for south Arlington and our neighborhood so we don't get a second rate facility made piecemeal.
13. Please consider investing in the schools of South Arlington - including zoning for school selection by neighborhood vs gerrymandering - the way you have done so in North Arlington. Now is the Board's chance to repair the disparity and favor that prior Boards have given to the upper half of the county.
14. Purchase/trade ECDC facility. County should offer trade for other facility/location in county or Fairfax County. Would help immensely with noise and parking complaints in Arl Heights neighborhood AND give larger lot. Col Pike Library could be ON the Pike - accessible and visible. We have smallest footprint, yet apparently largest numbers of high school students. Show the acreage and school enrollment rates for ALL school facilities, especially HS. Get rid of Montessori - it will greatly increase traffic on site. Other counties have parents pay for the special Montessori programs. Put them in vacant commercial space with park nearby where they can walk. Career Center has great programs. move, but do not destroy, the flexible programs to help spread benefit of vo-tech and hands on learning to multiple school sites. This will free up space for comprehensive HS for neighborhood kids.
15. Thanks has some facilities. Could those be improved and provide a shared use sports facility for hs, ms, and community
16. The project should include additional signalized pedestrian crossings and protected bike infrastructure, in addition to other traffic calming measures, on Walter Reed Drive. The site's neighborhood location has potential for high use of alternative transportation that would minimize parking needs, but bike and pedestrian connections need to be considered and improved for critical streets such as S. Fillmore St. between Arlington Boulevard and 5th Street S.
17. This Arlington HS project in particular deserves equal amenities as Wakefield, Yorktown and Washington Lee. Do not shortchange our community, children and neighborhood. We deserve the much needed space and improvements that I fully support as a parent and taxpayer in the Penrose neighborhood.
18. Wholeheartedly support a STEM School. The major concern is that the facility be designed to accommodate (parking and other logistics) the faculty and student population of the school.

### Comments opposed to a high school:

1. Any new high school should follow the APS template used at the other high schools which would indicate that there is not enough land for a 2,000 seat high school, plus fields and pool. Better to

add an addition to Wakefield where there is land. This entire process has been rushed and pushed on neighborhoods with only a few cheerleaders with children supporting it.

2. APS should not cram more students on this site when full size HS like Wakefield have 38 acres of land and would have less students than is being proposed here. Traffic studies should be done before any decision about enrollment is made. My take is Penrose is being short-changed by APS yet again
3. Build new career center on Wakefield Site as it has most space in County.
4. DO NOT CONVERT THIS AREA TO SCHOOL USE, PERIOD. LEAVE IT ALONE AND LOOK ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTY WHERE THE ATTENDING POPULATION LIVE!!! THIS IS AN OLDER ESTABLISHED RESIDENCE OF OLDER FAMILIES. LEAVE IT ALONE!!!
5. Don't build a high school on this site. Look for other sites elsewhere in Arlington County if another high school is absolutely necessary.
6. I strongly oppose a high headcount facility at this location. The neighborhood facilities, streets and culture do not support a high population school.
7. I think it's a bad idea. We don't need another school. The neighborhood cannot support 2500-3000 students. I do not support more infrastructure in the Penrose neighborhood, at all.
8. Less than 2,000 students should be allowed since parking will not be ample for the school and residents. Also worried about traffic, light, noise, and parking.
9. Plans of having the largest school in county on the smallest plot of land, near a high traffic area seems a bit foolish. While I support the location of this school, it is necessary for all the high schools to absorb costs and do their part to satisfy the county's capacity needs. In the end this is about making the experience better for all students, not just keeping the status quo at the existing three and figure out what to do with our kids in central Arlington. Thanks.
10. The site is really unsuitable for having a large high school
11. This is a ridiculous Plan...Another attempt on Our Illegal Government insinuating Itself on It's Citizens. You Can't Put 2 pounds of Anything in a one pound Bag.....Stop Wasting Time and Money on Stupid Studies!
12. This process has been very opaque. I am disappointed Arlington would consider a major change to the neighborhood without more input from the neighborhood. The library is a vital part of this community and must stay in the neighborhood.
13. This space is entirely inappropriate for a high density high school. It would be a nightmare logistically. Just because the land is already owned doesn't mean it would make a good site. DON'T DO IT!!! Buy new land more to the north/east side of the pike!!
14. Why would an inherently inferior site be considered to be an equitable solution? Would this be proposed in North Arlington? No. The Kenmore site is the only existing parcel with sufficient average to create a comparable high school.

### Comments on the library on site:

1. Library must remain in this community. If must be moved, move it to Penrose.
2. Library should stay but needs to be updated
3. The public library should be built within the new building and make it school and public library.
4. If library stays, parking should be free for library patrons.
5. Important to keep library either on current site or nearby. It's a vital resource for the neighborhood and this part of Arlington.

6. In favor of decoupling the Columbia Pike Library from the school property, but keeping it in our neighborhood
7. The public library needs to be close, and having it jointly used can be a security issue with public/students together. But walking access from school and community should be a consideration thru the campus to the library from the East/north
8. I'm not certain what I think about the location of the library, but I don't want to see it moved out of the neighborhood. I have questions about parking and accessibility if the Career Center is expanded. If the library were moved to Columbia Pike it would be along a major transportation line, improving accessibility by public transportation. I wonder about parking at that site for folks who would be driving.

### Comments about parking and traffic:

1. Is there some way to encourage faculty and students to use public transportation? County could pay for metro/bus passes for all and give monthly bonuses to faculty.
2. Keep residential parking zones in place.
3. I am very concerned about the prospect of overflow parking in the neighborhoods. APS probably doesn't realize that eliminating Zoned parking would mean patrons and employees of Giant, the yoga studio, etc. would once again be parked in front of my house in a daily basis. Add hundreds of students' cars to what was already a bad situation before zoning was introduced and you have total neighborhood gridlock. Zoned parking is not a 'nice to have' now, and lifting those restrictions would inflict a double burden on residents. APS needs to find another way (and the money!!) to fully solve that problem (e.g. Underground parking).
4. There needs to be more clarity and work do to address concerns around pedestrian safety. The crossing of Walter reed at 9th St is dangerous and needs to be looked at now.
5. We are concerned about speeding on Wayne Street. Suggest creating speed bumps along Wayne.

### Additional comments:

1. I appreciate the time you took to create this survey to inform your advocacy for the neighborhood. In future surveys of this type, please include 'I have no opinion' options on all questions. In this process, I have not heard a bad proposal, and I have no strong preference for one of these proposals over another.
2. I chose that the career center programs should be dispersed throughout the county so as to make the accessible, visible, and utilized by as many students as possible.
3. I don't know if there is a plan to buy that eyesore General Dynamics building on 9th & Walter Reed but it would be good to tear that down and replace it with something useful.
4. Name the school after someone from the revolutionary era with connection to Arlington or Virginia. Patrick Henry, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Mason or to Arlington (specifically the Penrose neighborhood) George S. Patton was the commander of Fort Myers and a native Virginian, John Pershing also associated with Fort Myers, Fort Craig was the civil war fort part of the defenses of Washington that was located in the Penrose neighborhood (a good way of commemorating local civil war history without taking sides)
5. Not sure which school Fleet is and I see no mention of Patrick Henry.

6. Some questions on this survey constrain my response, so they were answered as closely as possible to my opinion.
7. Try to save money any way you can. The Million dollar bus stop at Columbia Pike and Walter Reed is a prime example of out-of-control spending in Arlington. The street car would have been a debacle.
8. We need price tags for each choice so that property owners who pay the bulk of taxes are fully informed before any decision is made. Are there alternative sites and can we just expand existing high schools for the overflow.
9. We're all in this together