November 9, 2021

Dear George W. F. McMenemy High School Students, Families, and Community,

City Schools is committed to making sure that every school across the city provides our students with high-quality educational experiences that enables students to thrive, supports their learning and encourages their personal growth.

Part of our work in reaching this goal includes an annual review of the district’s schools and programs that looks at a broad range of considerations, including academic performance, school climate, school programming, enrollment trends, conditions of school facilities, the range and balance of school options in different parts of the city, and the 21st Century School Buildings Plan.

As you may know, as a part of this review, in January 2020 the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners approved the closure of George W. F. McMenemy High School when the new facility for the Claremont Middle/High School opens and associated construction completes.

District office staff are in the process of working with the school community to prepare for the transition and will continue to work with each family to find a placement that best fits their students’ educational needs.

As Claremont will move into its new 21st century space on the Patterson High School campus in summer 2022, tonight I am recommending that the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners approve the surplus and return of the George W. F. McMenemy building back to the city of Baltimore in summer 2022.

McMenemy students who still require a separate public day school setting will still have the opportunity to attend Claremont School or William S. Baer School. Both are separate public day schools that serve students with similar needs as McMenemy.

If approved, given the importance of the George W. F. McMenemy school name and desire to maintain the history of schools, staff will work with the school community to find ways to continue to honor his history in the district.

As a member of the George W.F. McMenemy school community, your feedback on this recommendation is critical. A community meeting will take place at your school beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 15, where families and community members can have their questions answered and learn about how to provide feedback for the Board.

For more information on the recommendations, you can view the report that has been provided to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners (“Board”). The report is titled Annual Review of Schools: Review and Recommendations, 2021-22 (“Report”). The Report outlines the recommendations and the factors the Board must consider in this process. The Report is available on the district’s website (www.baltimorecityschools.org) and upon request can be reviewed at your school.

You can provide written feedback to the Board from now through 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 7, 2022. Written comments must include full identification of the sender and should be directed to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, 200 E. North Ave., Room 406, Baltimore, Maryland 21202, or sent by email to portfoliorecommendations@bcps.k12.md.us.
There are two opportunities where you can provide oral commentary to the Board on the recommendations:

- Public hearing: Thursday, December 2, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- Special work session: Wednesday, December 15, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, all Board meetings are being held remotely. Please check the Board calendar or BoardDocs on the City Schools website for call-in information to observe the meetings which can be found here: https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/board-meetings. The opportunity for oral testimony will be closed after completion of the December 15 special session.

After consideration of all of the factors and other information learned through the process including public feedback, the Board will vote on this recommendation at its meeting on Tuesday, January 11, 2022.

Thank you for supporting our schools and students. We look forward to working in partnership with students, families, and school communities to create a district of high-quality school programs that meets the needs of every student in Baltimore.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer