

**CLINTONVILLE AREA COMMISSION  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT OF  
COLUMBUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DECEMBER 6, 2005**

The Clintonville Area Commission Education committee was formed to promote community involvement in the renovations to our neighborhood Columbus Public Schools (CPS) and promote the CPS system in our area. Although charter schools are primarily blamed for CPS lower enrollment, it is part of a larger issue. Many Clintonville families witness neighbors with preschool children who move as soon as their children reach school age. The next major exodus is at middle school. According to a study by kidsOhio.org, very few Clintonville students attend charter schools; so why are they leaving? They are leaving for the same reason some parents place their kids in charter schools-they do not see CPS as a viable option.

CPS has neighborhood and alternative schools that rival any suburban school in performance. Columbus Public Schools receive higher state test scores than almost all area charter schools. The new school renovations will create state-of-the-art schools that will generate even more school pride and be exciting places to learn and teach. Instead of just reacting to the hemorrhaging of students to charter schools by making unpopular choices that force more parents to leave the district, CPS needs to take more proactive measures to encourage more families to send their children to CPS. Fewer families moving, means more revenue for the District.

Last month, the Education Committee met with the leaders of the neighborhood schools and civic organizations in the Clintonville area to discuss and present to you, with one voice, the following proactive measures we would like to see addressed by the Columbus School Board to keep and attract families. Last Thursday, the Clintonville Area Commission unanimously voted to support this proposal that we submit to you today.

1. CPS Middle Schools

We would like CPS to improve the CPS middle school situation. In Clintonville, this can be achieved by making Crestview Middle

School a 100% lottery alternative school, with a focus on college prep.

Rationale:

- There are a large number of Clintonville students who attend alternative schools; however none are located in Clintonville.
- The Innovative Schools Task force has recommended the addition or expansion of several types of 100% lottery alternative middle schools in the CPS system. The establishment of a college preparatory school middle school would be attractive to many families.
- Creating another attractive middle school option would create an incentive for more families to attend/stay in Columbus Schools.

## 2. Dominion MS Boundaries:

The Dominion MS boundaries need to be redrawn so that all Clintonville neighborhood elementary schools feed into the same middle school. These elementary schools include Salem ES, Indian Springs ES, Colerain ES and Clinton ES. This will allow all 5th grade students at Clinton Elementary to move as a peer unit to Dominion Middle School and develop a true K-12 network of neighborhood schools that will serve all children within the area's boundaries.

Rationale:

- Research shows that students entering middle school fare better when moving with a peer group. Their greater sense of connectedness and belonging promotes academic and personal success.
- Clinton ES is one of only five CPS elementary schools whose 5<sup>th</sup> grade population is assigned to two different middle schools. All CPS elementary school students attending these schools should be assigned to the same middle school as their peers.

- According to CPS data from the 2003-04 school year, this would affect less than one classroom of 5<sup>th</sup> grade Clinton students.
- Data show that those families that live in Clintonville and are assigned to Crestview, do not attend school there because the school is in Academic Emergency. Therefore, we are at a large risk of losing more families next year.
- Clintonville does not have a neighborhood middle school because the Clinton ES students are assigned to both Dominion and Crestview middle school. During the 2003-04 school year, only 46% of Dominion's students came from the 43202 and 43214 zip codes. Adjusting the Dominion MS boundaries to include Clinton, Indian Springs, Colerain and Salem ES allows all the elementary schools in Clintonville to feed into the same middle school.

### 3. Staff Transfer Policy

We ask for revision of the staff transfer policy so that all staff changes take place midsummer to allow adequate time for affected schools to adjust and to allow staff an opportunity to find new employment.

Rationale:

- The current policy poses a threat to the community's trust and confidence in the district.
- Transferring after the start of the school year is counterproductive: Though it may appear to cut expenses, ultimately it decreases revenue due to flight of families.
- Late staff transfers create inconsistency for children, impeding their ability to learn. Stable, predictable staffing allows for cohesive and consistent planning in schools.

### 4. Improve the Lottery Process

We propose that the district review the lottery and school choice policy to make it more efficient and expedite the acceptance of students into lottery schools by midsummer.

Rationale:

- This would give families and schools the ability to plan for the school year and make alternative plans, if necessary.
- It would add stability to the process and school system.

#### 5. High School Schedule

We ask that you maintain a schedule with an 8 or 9 period day at high schools that provides a well-rounded education.

Rationale:

- It has been proven that any scheduling structure of fewer than 8 periods per day results in insignificant participation in arts and other electives. Students completing the state requirements and the foreign language requirement for application to universities would be left with as few as 2 periods for electives in their entire 4 year stay, if they chose to eat lunch.
- Electives allow students to participate in a curriculum that meets their personal needs and learning styles. Removing this choice will result in less desirable course offerings for all current and potential students for CPS.
- Students and families that are seeking a well-rounded curriculum will most certainly look to charter schools and suburban options if Columbus Public eliminates their opportunity for a rounded education. Parents are very concerned about the impact this will have on their children's high school careers. CPS will lose bright pupils from many high schools.

#### 6. Class Size

Although we understand the current budget restraints the CPS faces, please do not overcrowd classrooms and keep class sizes as small as possible.