Plan 6 Rationale

Plan 6 is a strategic plan that prioritizes enrollment balance, stability, cluster alignment, and flexibility in the out-years to address the enormous growth in the Dulles South schools. In two cases, an elementary school split feed creates a potential for a splinter:

- DS13.5 residence have spoken overwhelmingly in favor of continuing the splinter from their Buffalo Trail- Mercer feeder. They currently attend Lunsford/Freedom, and will continue to do so under plan 6.
- DS17.6 is a potential splinter from Pinebrook, leaving 20% of their students in Mercer while the other 80% move to Willard. DS17.6 is a walk zone to Mercer whose students prefer to stay in their current cluster (Mercer/Champe) as well.

The desire to pull the East Gate Community into Lunsford and Freedom would require us to move out an equivalent number of students currently in the Lunsford/Freedom cluster. Following the enrollment drops projected to start in 2021 in Lunsford, the expectation is clear that Freedom will experience the same reduction, beginning in 2024. However, an attempt to add more Freedom/Lunsford students to plan 6 in 2020 would result in Freedom facing enrollments above 110%, sustained for several years, and further burdening a school whose core facilities are built for 1660 students:

- With a core facility size built for 1660 students, adding more students to plan 6 would result in an enrollment 30% over the facility core capacity.
- The cafeteria, for instance, seats 412 students. There are 4 lunch periods, so students are taking their lunch into the halls, and the media center has been opened for students to eat during lunch.
- There is no additional capacity for laboratory science rooms, as the rooms have specialty configurations. Biology classes are unable to add any more sections.

Excess Capacity in 2020 is high in the west, where all of the growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future, but low in the east. Plan 6 optimizes the space to facilitate the growth.