Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the board about the boundary study. I am coming to you as a parent of two elementary school children in the Seneca Valley High School cluster. The racial and socio-economic diversity of students is one of the things I appreciate about our schools in Germantown. But I have concerns about the current academic quality of SVHS and how the boundary options will improve or worsen this. These concerns are shared by many of my parent friends.

I'm an educator myself and I'm familiar with research about the academic achievement of students from low income families. While there are always exceptions, overall these students do tend to underperform compared to students from families in higher income brackets. But research also suggests students from low income backgrounds have better academic achievement when they are in classes with students from higher income brackets. For example, a 2012 study published in the *American Economic Journal* found that students who were displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita from low performing schools into high performing schools showed significant long-term improvements in test scores. And these improvements were concentrated in the lowest percentile of test scores.¹ These students did better just by virtue of being in a better academic environment. Socio-economic diversity *matters* for academic achievement. Thus, I strongly oppose any of the boundary options that maintain or increase the number of FARM students in the SVHS cluster. Boundary options 11a and the Superintendent’s recommendation, which do more to equalize the distribution FARM students across the three high school clusters, will serve all students in these clusters better. Thank you.

---