

5120 - ASSIGNMENT WITHIN DISTRICT

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The assignment of students will be pursuant to the following policy.

(1) Guiding Principles of the Student Assignment Plan

The principles of the Student Assignment Plan are aligned to federal and state law, Board policies, and the District Strategic Plan. The guiding principles of the student assignment plan are the following:

- A. predictable feeder patterns;
- B. multiple school options and choices to address individual family circumstances;
- C. zoned schools that are reasonably close to each student's residence;
- D. public school choice programs/schools to increase student access to peers from multiple cultures and diverse backgrounds that possess a broad variety of diverse skills, talents, and abilities, to promote and maintain the educational benefits of a diverse student body;
- E. that transportation issues for parents and families are reduced, along with transportation costs for the District;
- F. a simple enrollment process;
- G. consistency in the application of the Plan;
- H. equitable allocation of funds and resources to schools and programs, meaning that certain schools and programs will receive proportionately higher funding and resources than other schools or programs based upon needs demonstrated through verifiable data. The degree of funding will be determined during the annual budget process; and
- I. school zones are contiguous.

(2) Defining School Zone Capacity

A program capacity will be determined annually for all schools. The following will be taken into consideration when determining capacity for school zones:

- A. density of population;
- B. permanent program capacity of school facilities;
- C. transportation patterns;
- D. educational offerings;
- E. placement of District application programs and schools; and
- F. the guiding principles of the Plan as set forth above.

Program capacity will be controlled through a five (5) year plan just as are construction and capital improvements. Any additional changes to program capacity shall be made between school years unless program needs require an immediate adjustment to be made.

The Board seeks to minimize the rezoning of residential grids to the extent reasonably possible. The aspirational goal is that, unless necessitated by school closings, a student will not be rezoned more than once at each of the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

(3) Process for Determining a Student's Zoned School

The district is divided into grids, which are used to create school zones. The grids are contained in the Grid Atlas that divides the county into 1,123 unique grids. The Grid Atlas, dated March, 15, 2011 and amended December 6, 2011 and xx/xx/xx, which is maintained in the Student Assignment Office, is incorporated herein by reference. From the grids are established 15 high school, 16 middle school, and ~~63-64~~ elementary school zones. Periodically school zone boundaries are redefined, for the purposes set forth above, by the addition or deletion of grids. Upon enrollment and change of residence, a student's

1 address of record is matched to a grid, and the four (4) digit grid number becomes part of the student's
2 record.

3 A student's school zone is determined by associating the student's residential address with a grid, which
4 in turn is associated with a school zone. Parents can identify their child's zoned school by using the Zone
5 School Locator at <https://sap.pinellas.k12.fl.us/PublInfo/> or by contacting the Student Assignment Office
6 at:

7
8 301 4th Street SW
9 Largo, FL 33770
10 727-588-6210

11 12 **Falsification of Residential Address and Address Verification**

13
14 District forms pertaining to residence and household membership shall be verified under penalties of
15 perjury.

16
17 Where there is a reasonable suspicion that a student is not residing at the claimed address, the District
18 may conduct an investigation and require updated information from the parent. If it is determined that the
19 parent submitted fraudulent documents the student shall be withdrawn from the enrolled school and
20 reassigned to the appropriate school. The fraudulent documents may be submitted to the State Attorney's
21 office for prosecution.

22
23 State law provides that whoever knowingly makes a false statement in writing with the intent to mislead a
24 public servant in the performance of his/her official duty commits a misdemeanor of the second degree.
25 Additionally, a person who knowingly makes a false declaration under penalties of perjury commits a
26 felony of the third degree. (F.S. 92.525 and 837.06)

27 28 **Notice of Change of Address**

29
30 Parents are responsible for notifying the school principal via the Student Reservation System if there is a
31 change in residence or custody of the student, even if the parent thinks the student is still in the school's
32 zone. The parent must tell the principal within five (5) days of the change. Failure to give timely notice
33 may result in a reassignment to the student's zoned or a space available school and/or loss of eligibility
34 for athletics and other activities.

35 36 **(4) School Closings and Conversions**

37 Schools will be closed only after careful consideration of such factors as overall student enrollment, class
38 size requirements, demographic trends, and cost of facility maintenance.

39
40 The principal, the area superintendent, and the Director of Student Assignment shall meet with parents
41 and the school community to explain the proposal and to gather input and concerns.

42
43 The Superintendent shall consider all available input before preparing a written recommendation for
44 approval by the Board. Copies of this recommendation shall simultaneously be sent to the school
45 principal(s) and the School Advisory Council(s).

46 47 **(5) Relocatable Classrooms**

48 The District may place relocatable classrooms at a school only as required to meet student station or
49 program capacity requirements and only if the school is able to support them. A school's ability to support
50 relocatables is determined by the size of the dining area, the size of the site, and the number of restrooms
51 at each school.

1 The program capacity of the permanent facilities, plus the program capacity of the relocatables placed
 2 according to the above principles will be the total program capacity for each school. Student assignments
 3 will be made to schools according to the capacity available.
 4

5 **(6) Student Assignment Process**

6 **General**

Students are assigned to schools based upon their acceptance to a District application program, placement in their zoned or space available school, or special program. The timeline for assignments will be announced each year.

7 A. Students in Kindergarten, Grade 6, and Grade 9 shall be assigned to their zoned school.
 8 Students in other grades who are new to the District, as well as those students who have a
 9 change in residence will be assigned to their zoned school based on space availability. If space is
 10 not available at the zoned school, the student will be assigned to another school in the
 11 transportation cluster on a space available basis.
 12

13 Students attending a non-zoned elementary school during the 2011-2012 school year will be
 14 assigned to their zoned school for the 2012-2013 school year, unless covered under (10) Special
 15 Circumstances below.
 16

17 B. Students at any grade level who move out of one zone into another zone during the school year
 18 may remain at their current school for the remainder of the school year, but will not be afforded
 19 transportation. Students will be assigned to their zoned school the following school year.
 20 However, students who move during their eleventh grade school year may remain at their current
 21 school through graduation, but shall also not be afforded transportation.
 22

23 C. Change of Residence

24
 25 If the primary legal residence of the parent, legal guardian, other person with whom the student
 26 primarily resides, or the adult student changes during the school year, parents may choose to
 27 have their child remain in the school for the remainder of the school year, but will not be afforded
 28 transportation. Parents are responsible to ensure timely student arrival and pickup. In the event
 29 of excessive tardies, excessive late pickups, or excessive absences, or in the event of behavioral
 30 issues attributable to the school assignment, the student may be reassigned to the zoned school
 31 or space available school. Students will be assigned to their zoned or space available school for
 32 the following school year.
 33

34 D. Professional Courtesy for Parents Employed by Board

35
 36 Children of full-time Board employees may be assigned to the school site at which their parents
 37 are employed full-time. Children of full-time Board employees may also be granted zoning
 38 exceptions on a space-available basis. These transfers are granted with the understanding that
 39 the arrangement will not interfere with the work hours or the responsibilities of the employee and
 40 that s/he must arrange before and/or after-school care for the child. Students assigned under
 41 professional courtesy may remain at the school as long as the parent/guardian is employed at the
 42 site.
 43

44 E. Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

45
 46 Students who qualify for Exceptional Student Education programs will exercise their options from
 47 among the schools that offer the needed services. These students will not be disadvantaged in
 48 the assignment process.
 49

50 F. Changing Schools During the Year
 51

1 Changing schools during the school year may occur when there is a change of address,
 2 acceptance into a district application program, substantiated hardship, or administrative reason.
 3
 4

5 G. Leaving a District Application Program
 6

7 Students who leave an application program to participate in early admission to college, including
 8 the Early College Program, will not receive a certificate of magnet program completion. These
 9 students will remain assigned to the regular education program at the most recently attended high
 10 school through graduation or until they exit the college program. Students who leave the college
 11 program by choice or for failure to meet the requirements will be assigned to their zoned high
 12 school, or another nearby high school if a zoned seat is not available, to complete their high
 13 school requirements.
 14

15 **(7) Public School of Choice Options**
 16

17 Pinellas County Schools has been declared a Unitary district and the Student Assignment Policy and
 18 Public School of Choice Options are race neutral.

19 A. District Application Programs
 20

21 District application programs are ones to which students must apply for admission. These
 22 programs include fundamental programs, magnets, and career and technical programs. District
 23 Application Programs are often strategically located in schools in need of a more diverse
 24 population accomplished through targeted recruitment of under-represented populations of
 25 students.
 26

27 The purpose of these programs is to provide choice opportunities and promote diversity for the
 28 students of Pinellas County while voluntarily desegregating schools. A school is considered
 29 diverse when the demographics of the enrolled population more closely mirror the demographics
 30 of the students residing in the school's attendance zone. In schools where the zoned
 31 population's demographics are not diverse, increasing diversity will be defined as increasing the
 32 enrollment of students of races other than the majority race. To accomplish these ends, the
 33 district establishes application areas or applicant pools that are significantly more diverse than the
 34 attendance zone and employs a variety of targeted marketing and recruitment efforts to increase
 35 the number of students making application from the application area/pool.
 36

37 All students enter District Application Programs through the application process. A computer
 38 random selection process is used if the number of applications exceeds the number of seats
 39 available for students. The number of seats available is based on the staffing model and the
 40 school capacity. The number of openings determines the number of invitations. The computer
 41 assigns all applicants a random number. The completed process yields one randomly numbered
 42 list of applicants. No applicant's random number will be released prior to the designated
 43 notification date on the Magnet, Fundamental and Career Academy timeline.
 44

45 B. Special Assignment Request
 46

47 Parents may make a special assignment request for their children to attend a non-zoned school.
 48 Parents must make such a request in accordance with a timeline and procedures that are
 49 published annually on the District's website. Parents will be notified of the decision prior to the
 50 end of the school year. Requests will not be granted unless there is space available. All such
 51 assignments are valid for one school year only. Parents wishing to remain at the assigned school
 52 must re-apply each year.
 53

54 Special assignment requests shall be received during the published time period. After the end of
 55 the request period, all requests shall be assigned a computer-generated random number. Sibling

1 requests shall be assigned first, starting with the lowest random numbered request. Students
 2 who had been in attendance at the requested school the prior year are assigned next, starting
 3 with the lowest random number request. After sibling and previously attending student requests
 4 are addressed, remaining requests will be assigned starting with the lowest numbered request.

5
 6 Students will not lose their current seat assignment until parents accept the special assignment.

7 **(8) Zoning Exceptions**

8 Whenever possible, zoning exceptions shall be requested by June 30th prior to the start of the academic
 9 year. Parents may request individual assignment exceptions for the following reasons:

10 A. Medical Condition

11 A request may be made if the student has a medical condition that requires attendance at a
 12 different school from the one assigned. A written order from a licensed physician documenting
 13 one of the following medical conditions is required for a transfer based on medical condition.

- 14 1. Tube feeding
- 15 2. Catheterization
- 16 3. Colostomy care
- 17 4. Tracheostomy care
- 18 5. Required insulin injections when the student cannot self inject

19
 20 The order must include:

- 21 1. a description of the student's condition;
- 22 2. the reason this condition requires the removal of the student from his/her zoned school;
- 23 3. the reason this condition requires the enrollment of the student in the requested school;
- 24 4. the duration of time for which the zoning exception is needed.

25 B. Homeless Students

26 The District is sensitive to the fact that there are homeless students who are sharing the housing
 27 of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in
 28 motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate
 29 accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or
 30 are awaiting foster care placement. The students have special rights and protections under
 31 Federal and State law and Board policy. See paragraph (10)B.1. and School Board Policy
 32 5111.01 — Homeless Students.

33 C. Students Residing in Another County

34 If a parent, legal guardian, other person with primary legal custody, or an adult student has
 35 his/her primary legal residence in a county other than this county, s/he may apply for an
 36 exception.

37 If approved for school attendance in the District, the student will be assigned to the requested
 38 school, provided the school has available space and it is the best interest of the educational
 39 program at the school. All such assignments are valid for one school year only. Parents wishing
 40 to remain at the assigned school must re-apply each year.

41 A student on suspension or who has been expelled cannot be approved for transfer to the
 42 District. To receive final approval, an out-of-county student may be required to provide a written
 43 release from the home district's school board.

1 D. Temporary Supervision within the County

2 A student who lives within the District but whose parent, legal guardian, or other person with
3 primary legal custody lives outside the county may be enrolled if, in accordance with applicable
4 law, a relative or other responsible adult accepts in writing the temporary supervision.

5 E. Siblings of ESE Students

6 If an ESE student is assigned to a non-zoned school for ESE services, his/her siblings may be
7 considered for assignment to the same school on a space available basis. The student may
8 remain in the school until the ESE sibling has completed the highest grade.

9 F. Hardship

10 If the student's attendance in the assigned school creates substantial and undue hardship for the
11 family, a request for a hardship exception will be considered. The hardship must be based upon
12 unusual facts and circumstances applicable to the individual parent, legal guardian, other legal
13 custodian, or adult student in question. Hardship exceptions shall be granted based upon a case-
14 by-case analysis by the Student Assignment Department of such facts and circumstances.

15 G. Administrative Placement

16 Unanticipated attendance issues that arise due to custody issues, legal situations, and
17 administrative circumstances.

18 H. Middle and High School Students Affected by 2011-2012 Zoning Changes

19 Parents of students in grades 7, 10, and 11 during the 2011-12 school year whose address was
20 rezoned to a different school for the 2011-12 school year may remain at the current school
21 through the highest grade.

22 **(9) Zoning Exception Rules**

23 The following provisions apply to all zoning exceptions:

24 A. The student's behavior and school attendance may be considered when reviewing requests for
25 assignment exceptions.

26 B. A student's zoning exception may be revoked by the Area Superintendent if the student has
27 multiple unexcused absences, excessive disciplinary referrals, or is not making sufficient
28 academic progress.

29 C. The Board provides transportation to students with zoning exceptions on an individual basis.

30 D. In reviewing requests for hardship zoning exceptions, consideration shall be given to whether the
31 requested school has sufficient space available for the student and is projected to have sufficient
32 space for the student in the future.

33 **(10) Special Circumstances**

1 A. Certain students, identified below, may stay at their current 2011-12 school through the highest
2 grade provided that parents of these students (1) declare their intent to remain in that school for
3 the 2012-13 school year by January 31, 2012, and (2) assume responsibility for transportation.

4
5 The affected students are:

- 6 1. all students in the 4th grade during the 2011-2012 school year,
7
8 2. those students in Kindergarten during the 2008-09 school year who were assigned through
9 Open Enrollment,
10 3. those students in grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade were not assigned to their zoned
11 school due to a lack of available space, or
12 4. were assigned under a zoning exception, as defined above in section (8) Zoning Exceptions

13 Students who are assigned as a result of NCLB Choice or Opportunity Scholarship Choice may
14 remain at their school of choice in accordance with Federal and State laws and regulations.

15
16 B. The Student Assignment Department staff will assist in the assignment process of:

- 17
18 1. homeless students as defined in Board Policy 5111.01;
19 2. students in foster care;
20 3. full-time school based employees who request for their children to attend the school
21 where the employee works full-time;

22
23 Staff will make reasonable efforts to provide an assignment that is appropriate for the individual
24 circumstances.

25
26 Parents will visit a school to initiate the registration and assignment process. All assignments are based
27 upon available space at schools, except for Kindergarten, Grade 6, and Grade 9.

28
29 **(11) Eligibility for Extra-Curricular Activities for Home Education, Charter School, and Private**
30 **School Students**

31 Home education, charter school, and private school students are eligible to participate in extracurricular
32 activities at their zoned school in accordance with State law, Federal law, and District policies, as well as
33 rules and regulations of any governing body recognized by the Board.

34
35 **(12) Private School and Home Education Students**

36
37 Services shall be provided to private school and home education students with disabilities or who are
38 gifted at their zoned school or at such other location as required by applicable law and Board policy.

39 Home education students who desire to enroll in public school courses shall be assigned on a space
40 available basis to their zoned school or to the school where the course or courses are offered

41
42 **(13) Appeals**

43 Parents who believe the established procedures regarding the assignment process have not been
44 followed as written may appeal to the Director of Student Assignment, who will determine whether the
45 assignment process has been followed and whether reconsideration of assignment is appropriate.
46 Parents who wish to appeal the decision of the Director of Student Assignment must do so within five (5)
47 working days of the date of receipt of the Director's decision. The appeal shall be in writing and directed
48 to the Deputy Superintendent, who shall render a decision within five (5) working days. The Deputy

1 Superintendent's decision shall be final. The student shall remain in the assigned school during the
2 appeal process.

3
4 **(14) Obtaining Information about the Student Assignment Plan**

5 **Introduction**

6 The student assignment plan needs to be effectively communicated throughout the community. Parents
7 needing information should go to any school or visit the District's website (www.pcsb.org). Resources at
8 the school shall include but not be limited to:

- 9 A. school options
- 10 B. specific information about available schools
- 11 C. directions for selecting a school
- 12 D. transportation information
- 13 E. Exceptional Student Education information
- 14 F. assistance for parents who do not speak English or with limited literacy skills
- 15 G. Public School Choice options and charter school opportunities

16 **Parent Outreach**

17 District staff members will employ various outreach strategies, including, but not limited to, visiting
18 libraries, day care centers and community centers, and speaking to parent groups about the registration
19 process, the academic programs and opportunities for parental involvement in their public school. There
20 will be an aggressive marketing plan directed to the economically and educationally disadvantaged
21 populations to inform and educate them about special programs in the District on an annual basis.

22 **(15) Superintendent's Authority**

23 The Superintendent may assign or reassign a student to any school or program in the District if in the
24 judgment of the Superintendent, such assignment or reassignment is in the best interest of the student,
25 another student, staff, or the District in general.

26 **(16) Annual Review**

27 The Superintendent shall conduct an annual review of the Student Assignment Plan to determine if any
28 improvements are necessary or appropriate. The Superintendent shall be authorized to retain the
29 services of an outside evaluation contractor to examine the effectiveness of the Plan in attaining the
30 stated guiding principles. The contract amount shall be subject to Board approval if beyond the
31 Superintendent's delegated authority. The annual review will include, but not be limited to, consideration
32 of the Plan's effectiveness in creating schools zones, creating predictable feeder patterns, providing
33 multiple school options, and to the extent possible creating opportunities for students to attend diverse
34 school assignments. The Superintendent or designee shall include the results of the review and any
35 recommended changes to the Plan in the Superintendent's annual report to the District Monitoring and
36 Advisory Committee (DMAC) made pursuant to Board Policy 2130.

37 Thereafter, the Superintendent shall present such results and recommendations, together with any
38 recommendations DMAC deems appropriate, to the Board for consideration and appropriate action.

39 **(17) Glossary of Terms**

40 **Appeals Process.** The process that outlines the steps a parent may take when s/he feels the rules or
41 procedures of the Student Assignment Plan were not followed.

42 **Assignment Process.** The process used to fill the student spaces at a school using the provisions of the
43 student assignment plan.

1
2 **Zoned School.** The designated school for each student in the District determined by consideration and
3 weighing of factors including, without limitation, proximity, keeping neighborhood students together to the
4 extent practicable, program capacity, and feeder patterns from one (1) school level to the next.

5 **Equitable Funding.** Allocation of funds and resources meaning that certain schools and programs will
6 receive proportionately higher funding and resources than other schools or programs based upon needs
7 demonstrated through verifiable data

8 **Program Capacity.** The number of spaces available at a given school based upon State and District
9 guidelines for room usage, staffing model, and class size amendment rules.

10 **Proximity.** The distance a student lives from the school. All proximity distances will be computed to the
11 nearest hundredth of a mile.

12 **Hardship.** The student's attendance in the assigned school creates substantial and undue hardship for
13 the family. The hardship must be based upon unusual facts and circumstances applicable to the
14 individual parent, legal guardian, other legal custodian, or adult student in question. Hardship exceptions
15 shall be granted based upon a case-by-case analysis of such facts and circumstances.
16

17 **Public School of Choice.** A school or programs that provides students options to choose a school other
18 than their zoned school or space available school.
19

20 **School Diversity.** A school is considered diverse when the demographics of the enrolled population
21 more closely mirrors the demographics of the students residing in the school's attendance zone. In
22 schools where the zoned population's demographics are not diverse, increasing diversity will be defined
23 as increasing the enrollment of students of races other than the majority race.
24

25 F.S. 1000.05, 1001.41, 1002.20, 1002.31
26 Adopted 12/9/09; Revised 12/7/10, 3/15/11, 12/6/11, 9/24/13, 11/17/15, xx/xx/xx

27 Approved as to form and legality:
28
29

30 
31 _____
32 School Board Attorney
33