

School Board Policy 6Gx50-5.01

STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

1. General Criteria

- a. All students in Palm Beach County schools shall be assigned annually to the school which they are to attend under the authority of the Board and by direction of the Superintendent.
- b. Students shall be assigned to schools based on the attendance boundaries which have been established by the Board in a manner which maintains a unitary school system.
- c. When attendance boundaries are changed, elementary and secondary students with one (1) year remaining in their present school will have the option of remaining at that school. This shall not automatically entitle the student to district transportation. When considering attendance boundary adjustments, the Board by its own discretion may extend this option to other students with more than one (1) year remaining.
- d. Alternative methods of student assignment, such as choice enrollment, administrative reassignments, and/or program decisions (magnet, gifted, ESE), will supersede provisions for student assignment in this policy to the extent they are inconsistent with the attendance zone criteria.

2. Attendance Zone Criteria

- a. When drawing attendance boundaries, the School Board, Superintendent, District staff and the Advisory Boundary Committee must review the student capacity of each facility for reasonable efforts to achieve optimal utilization. Boundary decisions must consider the District's concurrency policy and the applicable portion of the executed *Interlocal Agreement for Public School Concurrency* recorded on January 25, 2001, ORB 12272, PG 973 for Palm Beach County, as amended from time to time, that pertains to assignment of students. A copy of this agreement is available at Board Minutes.
- b. All boundary recommendations and decisions shall also consider the following criteria:
 - i. Boundaries should promote equitable student assignment as related to transportation time and distance for all racial and ethnic groups of students, as it relates to loading of school centers. The assignment should allow for proper loading of schools.
 - ii. Zone boundaries should be as compact as possible to minimize bus travel time and facilitate student participation in extra-curricular activities. The district will adhere to applicable state and federal laws, including Title 20 United States Code § 1714 and Florida Administrative Code Chapter 6-A, when creating attendance zones.
 - iii. The student capacity of each facility should be considered and initial enrollments set to ensure optimal utilization, while allowing for growth wherever needed.
 - iv. The movement of students from current school attendance zone configurations should be minimized to the greatest extent possible, if not in conflict with other parameters.
 - v. The creation of "islands" or "fingers" that isolate distinctly identifiable ethnic/racial groups shall be avoided.
 - vi. To the maximum extent possible, a feeder system in which two (2) to (three) (3) middle schools "feed" a high school; and two (2) to four (4) elementary schools "feed" a middle school should be created. (The majority of each school's students should come from a minimum number of feeder schools). Feeder systems should be developed on projected

growth patterns, the projected locations of new schools, and the possible abandonment of existing facilities.

- vii. The integrity of subdivisions should be maintained. (NOTE: Developments such as *planned unit* developments (PUDs) may consist of multiple distinct subdivisions.)

3. **Choice Options and Controlled Open Enrollment.**-- The Board recognizes that, within the parameters of applicable choice programs or controlled open enrollment plan, parents may choose to have the student attend a school other than the school that the student would attend under the regular attendance zone assignment.

- a. Choice Programs.-- Various choice-based programs are available in this District, such as magnet schools, career academies, alternative schools, special programs, advanced placement, dual enrollment, and public charter schools, as stated in Fla. Stat. § 1002.31(2), (8).

- b. Controlled Open Enrollment.-- "Controlled open enrollment" means "a public education delivery system that allows school districts to make student school assignments using parents' indicated preferential school choice as a significant factor." Fla. Stat. § 1002.31(1). Such system may be offered in this District, as allowed by Fla. Stat. § 1002.31(2).

- i. Pursuant to Fla. Stat. § 1002.31(2), controlled open enrollment shall be *in addition to* the existing choice programs that are listed in subsection (3)(a).

- ii. Any controlled open enrollment plan offered by the District shall have prior approval of the School Board and shall include the elements required by law, such as: consideration of an application process; a parental-preference declaration process; encouragement of placing siblings in the same school; a lottery-based assignment procedure; an appeals procedure for hardship cases; procedures to maintain socioeconomic, demographic, and racial balance; availability of transportation; parental involvement; and a clearinghouse of information designed to assist parents in making informed choices, pursuant to Fla. Stat. § 1002.31(5).

- iii. If a significant percentage of students assigned to a given school choose to leave that site in favor of another school, the District will seek to determine whether a problem is perceived with the assigned school, and take steps to ameliorate such problems.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: §§ 1001.41(2); 1001.42(22), Fla. Stat.

LAWS IMPLEMENTED: §§ 163.3180(13); 1001.41(6); 1001.42(4)(a); 1002.31, Fla. Stat.

HISTORY: 2/18/72; 4/06/83; 07/09/2001; 10/13/03