

Proposed Attendance Area Boundary Maps
Community Feedback
Updated October 13, 2009



Seattle Public Schools has a new student assignment plan that is equitable, predictable, and understandable. As the next important step in implementing this plan, we presented proposed attendance area boundary maps for community review. To date, hundreds of people have attended community meetings, sent e-mail, and submitted comment cards. We welcome all comments and are working diligently to review and summarize those we have received. In most cases, we are able to quickly provide an answer from one of our frequently asked question (FAQs). We are noting all comments and requests for changes to the proposed maps or aspects of the assignment plan itself. After we hear from communities all over the city, we will evaluate needed changes and share a set of recommended maps with the community on November 3, 2009.

What follows is a list of general topics as well as some specific areas of feedback that have emerged from comments so far. We will update this summary in the weeks ahead. Answers to many of the questions posed below can be found in our FAQs at www.seattleschools.org/newassign, which we will also update as new information becomes available.

Key Topics

Three key topics have emerged from comments thus far. In alphabetical order they are:

Grandfathering. We have received questions and feedback about how the transition plan will address the issue of grandfathering younger siblings into the attendance area schools of their older siblings.

Predictability. We have received expressions of appreciation and support for the idea of predictable assignments and for attendance area boundaries tied to particular neighborhoods.

Walking To School. We have received questions and feedback about why some students, who once walked to their reference schools, would ride a bus to their attendance area schools.

Specific Areas of Feedback

Academic Performance. We have received feedback regarding the academic performance of some attendance area schools and the need for excellence in all Seattle Public Schools.

Assignments – Current Students. We have received feedback and questions regarding the assignment of currently enrolled students, including whether they will be assigned to their proposed attendance area school in the 2010—11 year.

Boundaries - General. We have received general questions and comments about boundaries, including:

- Whether proposed boundaries include one or both sides of a street;
- why some proposed attendance areas vary in size from others in their service areas;
- The need for additional map labels to read boundary street names; and,
- The extent to which transportation time played a role in developing the proposed boundaries.

Boundaries - Specific. We have received questions and comments about the rationale for particular proposed boundaries, including:

- An approximately three-block westward shift near the southwest edge of the Whittier attendance area and the use of NW 70th Street along its southern border;
- The use of NE 70th Street as a boundary between portions of the Wedgewood and Bryant attendance areas;
- The use of 130th as the boundary between portions of the Olympic Hills and John Rogers attendance areas; and,
- The alignment of boundaries among Alki, Lafayette, and Schmitz Park.

Choice. We have received questions and comments regarding how families can apply to an attendance area school other than the one to which they would be assigned under the proposed boundaries; and comments about preserving the current choice system.

Diversity. We have received feedback regarding how schools will reflect the diversity of Seattle under the proposed attendance area boundaries.

Grandfathering. In addition to the topic of the grandfathering of younger siblings, we have received comments and feedback as to whether changing addresses affects the grandfathered status of currently enrolled students.

Implementation. We have received questions and feedback regarding the proposed implementation of the plan for entry-grade students (usually those in kindergarten, and 6th and 9th grades) in 2010-11; whether there will be enough room at attendance area schools for incoming entry-grade students; and whether students would lose their initial attendance area assignments if they apply unsuccessfully to a different school.

International Schools. We have received feedback and questions regarding whether some buildings proposed for reopening could become international schools; how children already at an international middle school, but who have not had language-immersion experience in elementary school, will receive instruction; the availability of continuing international language instruction at the high-school level; and making international schools and specialized programs available to students from across the city.

Neighborhood Division. We have received feedback about how the proposed boundaries could divide some neighborhoods in different ways, such as those for Coe and Hay.

Middle-to-High School Continuity. We have received feedback about the flow of students from specific attendance area middle schools to specific attendance area high schools under the proposed boundaries, including Denny to West Seattle and Eckstein to Ballard, Nathan Hale, and Roosevelt; and the lack feeder patterns into attendance area high schools.

Montessori Schools. We have received questions about why some Montessori programs are designated as attendance area schools, such as Daniel Bagley, Graham Hill, and Leschi, and others as option schools, such as Old Hay.

Open Choice Seats. We have received questions about Open Choice seats, including whether the number of available seats will be reduced if there are more students than expected inside an attendance area—or by the siblings of those attending the schools.

Option Schools. We have received questions about the application process for option schools; their specific geographic zones, including the one for Salmon Bay and Orca; whether high schools have linked option schools; and whether there is enough time to properly plan the transition of Cleveland High school to be a Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) school.

Programs. We have received questions and comments about specialized programs, including the desire to expand music and orchestra programs in south end schools; a suggestion that students performing well in middle-school academic or arts programs receive a tiebreaker to get into those programs at the high school level; and making International Baccalaureate programs more widely accessible.

Reopening Buildings. We have received feedback and questions regarding where students will attend if a building is not opened immediately; how the openings will be funded; and how to get more information about the buildings themselves.

School Choice. We have received questions regarding the way that applications will be processed for attending an attendance area school other than one that is assigned initially.

Tiebreakers. We have received questions about tiebreakers, including the proposed geographic tiebreakers for option schools.

Transportation. We have received questions and comments regarding the transportation, including whether students who attend option schools outside their current service area will receive transportation; the elimination of the distance tiebreaker; the transfer requirements for high school students riding Metro buses; and the distances to be traveled for families in certain proposed attendance areas, including Sanislo Elementary school.

We welcome your comments!

There are several ways to provide feedback about the proposed attendance area boundaries:

- Attend a community meeting. For a complete schedule, visit:
<http://www.seattleschools.org/area/newassign/communitymeetings.html>.
- Send e-mail to newassign@seattleschools.org
- Send postal mail to: Seattle School Board · P.O. Box 34165 · MS 11-010 · Seattle, WA · 98124-1165