

Student Assignment Plan Summary

The new student assignment plan is interrelated with the BTA III and BEX IV levy initiatives to provide for future student and facility needs. Implementation of the new assignment plan will require a transition period. It will take several years for the plan to be fully implemented. The shift to automatic assignment to attendance area schools will be determined by the transition plan. Therefore, current students are not guaranteed immediate assignment to their new attendance area school. There will **not** be mandatory District-wide reassignment of students from their current school assignments. Grandfathering of incoming kindergarten siblings is not part of the student assignment plan, but will be managed as an implementation issue.

Types of Schools in the new plan

Attendance area schools
Option schools
Service schools

Areas in the new plan

attendance area
service area
geographic zone (option schools only)

Attendance Area Schools

Each attendance area school has a defined geographic boundary and is intended to serve the students who live within that geographic boundary. The creation of boundaries will balance many factors and is intended to create predictable feeder patterns from elementary to middle school.

Elementary, middle and high school students will be assigned to a designated attendance area school based on their home address, as long as the school can meet the student's needs.

Elementary school attendance areas will be combined to create middle school attendance areas, resulting in feeder patterns as students move from elementary to middle school. The middle school attendance area is also a service area within which services, including transportation, are provided for students who live within the service area. There are not feeder patterns from middle to high schools. Each attendance area high school has its own geographic attendance area.

Option Schools

Students must apply to attend an option school.

Service Schools

Several types of schools exist to provide services to meet individual student needs. Students are not assigned based on their residence address and are assigned individually as appropriate. Students may transition into or out of service schools during the school year. The annual timelines for assignment do not apply to service schools.

School Choice

Any student may apply for assignment to an attendance area school **other** than the designated attendance area school, with assignments determined by tiebreakers. Any student may also apply for assignment to any option school, with assignments determined by tiebreakers. Once assigned, a student may remain at that school through the highest grade without reapplying.

Implementation of the Plan

It will take several years to complete implementation of the new student assignment plan. Implementation of this plan will begin at grades K, 6, and 9. During the transition period, current students will remain assigned to their current school through the highest grade without having to reapply. The extent of “grandfathered” transportation will also depend on the transition plan which will define the period of time for which grandfathered transportation will be provided.

Siblings

Entering siblings of currently assigned students are **NOT** grandfathered but are eligible for the sibling tiebreaker. The sibling tiebreaker is applicable for assignment to a school, but not for assignment to a specific program within a school.

For option schools—schools without an attendance area population—all entry grade seats are open as at present.

The issue of grandfathering incoming kindergarten siblings is not part of the student assignment plan itself, but is an implementation issue. It is the Board’s desire to address grandfathering incoming kindergarten students as part of the transition plan without displacing incoming attendance area kindergarten students.

Assignment and Enrollment

The vast majority of K-12 students will be assigned to a designated attendance area school based on their home address, as long as the school can meet the student’s needs. Each attendance area school has a defined geographic boundary (attendance area), and students who live within the boundary are assigned to that school.

Elementary school attendance areas are grouped together to form a middle school attendance area. Each middle school attendance area is also a service area for transportation.

Elementary students may apply to attend another attendance area school in their service area, or an attendance area school in another service area. Assignments are determined by tiebreakers.

Once a student is registered to enroll in Seattle Public Schools, no further application is required for the student to attend the designated attendance area school. If a student is assigned to an attendance area school and the family moves to another attendance area during the school year, the student may enroll in the new attendance area school, or may complete the school year at the current school. Any student requesting assignment to an attendance area school other than the designated attendance area school must submit an application during the open enrollment period. Applicants not assigned

to their first choice school will be placed on an ordered wait list for that school based on the same tiebreakers used to make assignments.

Assignment Tiebreakers for Attendance Area Schools

After students in the attendance area are assigned, tiebreakers for students applying for an attendance area school other than their attendance area school are:

Tiebreakers for
Attendance Area
Elementary and
K-8 Schools

1. Sibling
2. Lottery

Tiebreakers for
Attendance Area
Middle Schools

1. Sibling
2. Feeder School
3. Lottery

Tiebreakers for
Attendance Area
High Schools

1. Sibling
2. Lottery

The sibling tiebreaker applies when the sibling of an applicant is attending a school and will continue to attend that school the following year. Sibling tiebreaker will not apply for admission to a program.

The feeder school tiebreaker is for students applying for an attendance area middle school that is not their assigned middle school.

A computer-generated random number rank orders students for assignment.

Processing Applications

1. process all first choices first, then process all second choices, etc.
2. if the student is not assigned to the first choice school, the student is placed on the waiting list for that school
3. the same tiebreakers are used for making assignments and for sequencing the ordered waiting list.
4. twins/multiples applying for the same school in the same order will be assigned together or kept at the current school if requesting reassignment and they cannot be reassigned together

Applications submitted after open enrollment will be processed in the order received

Transportation for Attendance Area Schools

School bus transportation for elementary and middle school students is provided within each middle school attendance (service) area **if** students live outside the assigned school's approved walk zone.

Transportation is provided for elementary students to their attendance area school or to any other K-5 or K-8 attendance area or option school located in their service area.

Transportation is provided for middle school students to their attendance area school or to any other K-8 attendance area or option school located in their service area.

Transportation is provided for elementary and middle school students to option or service schools in a linked service area if their service area does not have a service or option school. Transportation for students with disabilities is base on individual student needs.

During the transition period of the new plan, some school bus transportation will be provided for a period of time for grandfathered students staying at their current school in a different service area.

Transportation will not be available for newly assigned students who are assigned to a school outside of their service area, *unless* specific school services are not available in the student's service area and a link has been created between schools within the service areas.

OPTION SCHOOLS

Thornton Creek is a designated option school. Option schools do not have attendance boundaries or feeder patterns. Assignment is by application only, based on set tiebreakers.

Enrollment for Option Schools

Once a student is registered to enroll in Seattle Public Schools the student is eligible for apply for assignment to an option school. School assignment will be continued through the highest grade at the school without the need to reapply, as long as the services the student needs are available at that school. Grade 6-8 students at option schools are also part of a middle school service area and have a designated attendance area middle school. If a student wishes to leave their K-8 school to attend their attendance area middle school, and if they apply within the open enrollment specified timelines they will be assigned to their attendance area middle school.

If a student is assigned to an option school and the family moves to another attendance area during the school year, the student may enroll in the new attendance area school, or may continue at the current school through the highest grade at the school.

If more students apply than can be accommodated at an option school, tiebreakers will determine assignments. Applicants not assigned to a requested option school will keep their assignment to their designated attendance area school and be placed on an ordered waiting list at the option school. Placement on the waitlist is based on the same tiebreakers used to make assignments.

After all open enrollment applications have been processed, students may apply to attend any option school with space available during a designated time period.

Assignment Tiebreakers for Option Schools

Assignment tiebreakers for students applying for option schools are:

1. Sibling
2. *Geographic Zone*
3. Lottery

The sibling tiebreaker applies when the sibling of an applicant is attending an option school and will continue to attend that school the following year.

The geographic zone tiebreaker is for applicants to an option school who live within a defined area in proximity to the school. Living within the geographic zone does not guarantee assignment to the requested school.

A computer-generated random number rank orders students for assignment.

Processing Applications for Option Schools

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2. if the student is not assigned to the first choice school, the student is placed on the waiting list for that school
3. the same tiebreakers are used for making assignments and for sequencing the ordered waiting list.
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Transportation is also provided for middle school students to their attendance area school or to any other K-8 attendance area or option school located in their service area.

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