



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: December 2, 2016
FROM: School Board Director Sue Peters

1. TITLE

Amendment 1 to the Student Assignment Plan for 2017-18: Allow Grandfathering with Transportation for All Rising 8th Graders

For Introduction: December 7, 2016
For Action: January 4, 2017

2. PURPOSE

Due to the opening of two new middle schools, Eagle Staff and Meany Middle Schools, the proposed Student Assignment Plan would move some existing students to these new schools from their existing middle schools. This amendment would allow rising 8th graders the choice to stay at their existing school or move to the new school.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board amend the proposed Student Assignment Plan for 2017-18 to permit and implement grandfathering with transportation at comprehensive middle schools for all rising 8th graders in the 2017-2018 school year who live within any area that is changing from one middle school to another for the 2017-18 school year due to the opening of Eagle Staff and Meany Middle Schools, adding language to the Assignment Plan as shown in the amendment attached to this Board Action Report.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

Under the recently adopted growth boundaries changes, a number of boundary changes are scheduled for the 2017-18 school year with the purpose of sending students to two new middle schools, Eagle Staff and Meany.

This amendment would mean that all students rising to the 8th grade next year would be able to continue through 8th grade at their current 2016-17 middle school and thus matriculate from the school that they are currently attending. This amendment applies only to students at comprehensive middle schools; it would not apply to students at Madrona K-8, as that school is proposed to be truncated to a K-5 elementary school by the Student Assignment Plan.

Dir. Peters has proposed this amendment as a way to minimize disruption for these students and families, in accordance with the commitment to students outlined in the District's Strategic Plan: "Our Students Come First: We believe it is essential to place the interests of students above all others in every decision we make."

The implication of this change would be to open the two new middle schools with full 6th grade and 7th grade classes, but potentially limited numbers of 8th grade students. The

two schools' planning principals have been actively working with their communities to plan for an opening with full classes at all three grades and, in November, started the search for their school leadership team. The amendment also potentially poses additional capacity challenges over the next year for Hamilton and Washington Middle Schools, which are currently overenrolled.

The last comprehensive middle school to open, Jane Addams, was opened with full classes at all three grades. The 2013 Facilities and Capacity Management Advisory Committee recommended this approach over a "roll up" approach that starts with only 6th graders, stating this approach "will facilitate the strongest start for new schools or programs and in doing so will offer both a high quality and comprehensive educational experience during the brief three-year cycle of middle school." However, this plan was also disruptive to many students, and resulted in removing students from their existing middle school, preventing 8th graders from matriculating from their school. This caused great anguish for students and families and is not in the best interest of student stability.

This amendment would not affect any areas that have been separately approved for grandfathering in either approved staff recommendations or an approved Director amendment.

Any costs or impacts would be restricted to this one transitional year.

b. Alternatives

Proceed with previously approved boundary adjustments for the 2017-18 school year. This is not recommended as implementing boundary changes without grandfathering would create significant disruption by reassigning families and preventing eighth grade students from matriculating from their school.

c. Research

N/A

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

This amendment could have significant financial implications for the 2017-18 school year. It would limit the 8th grade enrollment in the District's two new middle schools, Eagle Staff and Meany. As a result, significant mitigation funding for staffing may be needed in order to provide a comprehensive middle school experience at these schools in their initial years of operation. The Budget Office estimates that as much as \$432,000 in staff mitigation funding may be needed to provide a comprehensive educational experience for 8th graders at the new schools, but the exact amount of this mitigation is difficult to determine at this time because there is no recent precedent for this action that would allow for predictions on the number of students who might opt into the new schools.

The estimated cost impact on transportation is approximately \$136,000 for 2 additional buses. The amendment will require 6 additional bus routes in total, but because the Board has previously approved amendments to the Growth Boundaries Plan that require the addition of 4 buses, those buses can be used in both Tier 1 and again in Tier 2 for the 8th graders. Therefore, the impact of this amendment is only two additional buses.

This amendment could also potentially create additional capacity constraints at the existing schools for the grandfathered students, particularly Hamilton and Washington. Schools that face capacity constraints either have to repurpose existing space or add portables, where possible. Each additional portable costs the District approximately \$160,000.

The revenue source for this motion is general funds.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

This action would allow rising 8th graders the choice to stay at their current school, mitigating any potential unwanted disruption for these students.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)

Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)

Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy

Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract

Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter

Board Policy No. _____, [TITLE], provides the Board shall approve this item

Other: Board action is necessary for any formal amendments to another proposed Board action

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

Board Policy No. 3130, Student Assignment, states that students shall have the opportunity to attend an elementary, middle, or high school in a designated attendance area based upon home address, unless the school designated by a student's home address does not have the appropriate services for the student's needs, as determined by the District.

Any changes to boundaries, geographic zones, or assignment rules subsequent to implementation of the Student Assignment Plan require Board action.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was not discussed by a Board Committee.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the underlying Board Action Report for the Student Assignment Plan for 2017-18 would be amended.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Student Assignment Plan Amendment Language (for approval)

**Amendment 1 to Student Assignment Plan for 2017-18
Specific Amendment Language Proposed by School Board Director Sue Peters
For Action on January 4, 2017**

The proposed language to be added to Section II (Standard Assignments), Subsection A (Summary) is shown in double-underline below:

Grandfathered Assignments

All students enrolled with a grandfathered assignment who stay at the school are continued (grandfathered) at that school through the highest grade served by the school, as long as the school offers the services the student needs; no application is required.

In addition to any students grandfathered by previous Board actions, rising 8th graders at comprehensive middle schools who would be assigned to new middle schools for the 2017-18 school year due to the opening of Eagle Staff and Meany Middle Schools will be grandfathered at their current middle school with transportation provided, unless the student opts to instead attend Eagle Staff or Meany Middle School as applicable based on the student's new attendance area.