

“Grandfathering” Of Students Impacted By Reassignment

Approved By The Board of Education On February 3, 2009

Board Policy 6203 governs requests by parents for their child to attend a school other than the school assigned by the Board of Education. Transfer requests are accepted and evaluated by staff each year following official notification of school assignment for the subsequent year. (Note that Policy 6203 stipulates that no transportation will be provided for approved transfer requests.) It has been the past practice of the Board of Education to establish special consideration for transfer requests from families impacted by the reassignment of the nodes in which they live. On February 3, 2009, the Board of Education approved the following special consideration for families impacted by changes in school assignment (both base school assignment changes and calendar application changes) contained in the Growth Management Plan for 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12.

Transfer requests will be automatically approved if the following three conditions apply:

1. If they are submitted during the annual transfer application period (In 2009 the transfer application period will occur between May 15th and June 1st.)

and

2. If the application is for a student who has been attending a WCPSS school and the Board’s action has changed the student’s assignment for the subsequent year to a school different from the current school

and

3. If one of the following statements is true:

- The student is rising into grades 4 or 5 (and is reassigned to either an existing or a new school), or
- The student is rising into grades 7, 8, 10, 11, or 12 and the change in assignment is from an existing school to an existing school, or
- The student is rising into grade 8 and the reassignment is to a new school

Three new middle schools will open in 2010 and 2011 with all three grade levels (6, 7, 8). Two new high schools will open in 2010 with only two grade levels (9 and 10). Transfer requests will not be approved by staff for students rising into grades 6, 7, 9, or 10 if the Growth Management Plan assigns the student to a newly opening school unless the request is for a younger sibling of a rising 8th grade student or the younger sibling of a rising 11th or 12th grade student and that younger sibling has already attended the same school as the older sibling during the year preceding reassignment. Transfer requests for rising 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade students will be automatically approved if the student has already begun attending school with an older sibling eligible for a “grandfathered” transfer.

A transfer request to remain at the current school will be automatically approved if it is for a student who will be impacted by district assignment decisions twice within a three-year period. For example, if a student was in School A as either a base or a calendar applicant and board action changes that student's assignment to School B and then subsequent board action would change the student's assignment to School C after less than three years in School B, a transfer request for the student to remain in School B would be automatically approved.

The conversion of Baucom Elementary from a traditional calendar to a year-round calendar in 2007 and the Board’s decision to change Baucom back to a traditional calendar in 2009 created a special circumstance. Approximately 52 students were reassigned from Turner Creek YR Elementary to Baucom YR Elementary in 2007 in grades 1-3. When Baucom changes to a traditional calendar, Laurel Park Elementary will be the year-round application school for Baucom nodes. For some children who want to stay on the year-round calendar, this could mean a third school in four years. A request for transfer to Turner Creek will be automatically approved if the child previously attended Turner Creek. Because of projected crowding at Turner Creek, transfer requests for younger siblings who did not attend Turner Creek will not be automatically approved. Such requests will be evaluated by staff based upon crowding at the school.

Similarly, when Green Hope Elementary converts from a year-round calendar to a traditional calendar in the 2010-11 school year, the same consideration will be given to students who were in the year-round application program at Morrisville but were moved to Green Hope in 2007-08 when Green Hope was placed on the year-round calendar and who now will be offered Carpenter Elementary as their year-round application school. A transfer request to return to Morrisville will be automatically approved for the students who previously attended Morrisville.

A similar situation exists at other schools that converted from traditional to year-round calendars in 2007. Some students were kindergarten year-round applicants at a year-round school and were brought back to their base school in 1st grade when it changed to a year-round calendar. Some of those students may be impacted in 3rd grade by reassignment from their base to another school. Staff will give special consideration to families that are in this situation and will make an effort to approve transfer requests to remain at the current base year-round school if the request does not lead to overcrowding.

Finally, the adoption of a multi-year student assignment plan creates a situation in which parents may want to request a transfer to a school other than their base school because that school will become their base school in a future year. Staff will give special consideration to requests for transfers that are made in anticipation of a new assignment in a future year. Such requests will not be automatically approved because the requested school may not have space for additional students prior to the year in which assignment changes are scheduled to occur. However, if school crowding is not a problem, staff will normally approve such requests.