

## STUDENT AND INSTRUCTION

5000

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT POLICY

5301

#### INTRODUCTION:

The Melrose Public Schools, in order to best meet the academic needs of its elementary school children, implements the following school assignment policy. The goal of this policy is to provide equitable class size throughout the district as well as the smallest class size possible for children in our elementary schools. Additionally, it respects parent preference regarding the school their children will attend and it supports families attending schools near their homes. The policy also recognizes that the Melrose Elementary Schools are not evenly spaced throughout the district, and it is the intention of the School Committee to allow all families equal choice. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to oversee the assignment of students to schools, and this policy is intended to provide guidance while maintaining flexibility in that process.

#### *POLICY:*

The Melrose Public Schools' school assignment policy recognizes no district lines or neutral zones.

Assignment for new students entering grades 2 and above will be based on parental preference and current class sizes, with the specific intention of maintaining equitable class sizes throughout the district.

Assignment for all students entering kindergarten and first grade will be based on the criteria set out below in this policy, augmented by written administrative procedures which will be created by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

Notification of initial school assignment will be made no later than May 15th of the current school year.

#### KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE PLACEMENT CRITERIA:

The district will request each family with a student entering Kindergarten or 1<sup>st</sup> grade to register and make known their preference as to which school their child will attend. The timing and method for requesting this information will be contained in the administrative procedures created by the Superintendent. The school assignment for the students registered by the registration deadline is as follows.

In the event that, of the on time registrants, the number of families choosing a particular school as their first preference exceeds the acceptable number of students in a classroom as delineated in the class size policy, the following criteria will be utilized to determine student placement.

- First - Need for special programs or facilities (including ½ day or full day kindergarten as appropriate).
- Second - Presence of siblings in the school as of September of the child's kindergarten or first grade year.
- Third - Proximity to schools: including, but not limited to, proximity of the child's residence to the preferred schools and proximity of the child's residence to each of the Melrose Public Schools.

#### *WAIT LIST PROCESS:*

In the event a child is not placed in their first choice school during the initial school assignment, the child's name will be placed on a wait list for that school. Late registrants will be placed on the wait list in the order that they register, but after the children with on time registrations who did not

receive placement at their first choice school.

If seats open at a particular school, parents of wait-listed children will be notified *in order* and can make a decision regarding school placement accordingly. Parents may request removal of their child's name from the waitlist at any time by notifying the Superintendent.

Because of the movement of students during the summer, the placement of students from the waitlist will continue throughout the summer, but will not continue beyond the end of the first quarter of the school year.

#### *APPEALS PROCESS:*

For those families for whom the assigned school presents a hardship, an appeals process is available. The appeals process will be exempt from the Class Size Policy, and thus will not begin until after most of the placements are assigned, as determined by the Superintendent.

The appealing parent will notify the Superintendent's office in writing explaining the hardship caused by the school assignment. An Appeals Board, consisting of at least one Central Office Administrator, and two Principals who are not at the schools in question, will review all appeals. During the appeal, the students will remain on the waitlist for their first choice school and placement may be made through that avenue as well.

All students will be notified of the appeals board's decision as soon as possible, and notification will always occur at least two weeks before the start of the school year.

The Superintendent will set out the specific administrative procedures for the appeals process, which will be approved by the School Committee."

MSC first vote 11.10.09  
MSC second vote 11.24.09