



News Release

From Seattle Public Schools

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Contact: David Tucker, Media Relations, (206) 252 0203

Recommended Attendance Area Maps Presented Revisions Reflect Extensive Community Feedback

Seattle - During more than two years of extensive community engagement on the new student assignment plan, families told Seattle Public Schools that they wanted a plan that is predictable, equitable, and easy to understand.

On October 6 a key step in the new student assignment plan process was taken as staff shared proposed attendance area boundary maps. Four weeks of extensive community engagement followed the release of the maps. Today we introduce the recommended maps that include revisions based on community input and ongoing analysis.

From thousands of comments received via 9 community meetings; email; postal mail; an on-line survey and public testimony, four major themes emerged:

- Families want assurances that every school will be an excellent school;
- They support predictable assignments and feeder patterns;
- Many people have expressed concerns about children being able to walk to school safely; and
- Families expressed a strong desire for younger siblings to be able to attend the same school as older students.

“Today marks an important step in a journey that has involved thousands of people in our community over a period of many years,” said Superintendent Maria L. Goodloe-Johnson, Ph.D. “Our core goal at Seattle Public Schools is to advance each child’s academic success, and we know we have to do many things differently to ensure high quality instruction in each classroom. We are changing the way we do business so that we can make the best possible use of our resources. That means getting the most out of our buildings, improving service delivery models, and redirecting as many costs as possible to support student learning. Creating a new student assignment plan is one important part of the work we must do to better serve all students.”

Staff reviewed all comments received and followed a clear process to consider requests for changes to the maps. Requests to change boundaries included suggestions related to feeder patterns; to supporting greater consistency with District goals; and to adjustments based on specific neighborhood conditions such as walkability, transportation needs, geography and neighborhood identity.

A cross-departmental team assessed requests in light of School Board approved boundary development guidelines, on-going analysis of enrollment data, and consistency of district goals. A steering committee made decisions on any adjustments. As long as changes could be made without conflicting with boundary development guidelines, they were made.

“Creating a new assignment plan is a very complex undertaking, and one that involves every family in our community,” said Dr. Goodloe-Johnson. “Extensive engagement has characterized each step of creating this plan, and we are especially grateful to the thousands of staff, families, and other community members who have participated in the past month. The attendance area boundary maps we are recommending today are stronger as a result of the many thoughtful comments we received.”

Recommended Attendance Area Boundary Maps

At a School Board Work Session on November 3, [staff presented recommended attendance area boundary maps to the community and the School Board](#).

Major changes from the proposed maps that are reflected in the recommended maps include:

- Changes in high school attendance boundaries to balance capacity at north end schools and enable more students to walk to school. (Ballard, Roosevelt, Nathan Hale, Ingraham)
- Changes in attendance areas for Chief Sealth and West Seattle high schools to enable more students to walk to school, and to more closely align attendance area boundaries with neighborhoods. The recommended changes also support the co-location of Denny and Sealth.
- Changes were made in attendance area boundaries within all 9 middle school service areas. These adjustments enable more students to walk to school; more closely align attendance area boundaries with neighborhoods; and reflect changes in enrollment growth based on 2009-10 data. Changes in the Denny and Madison boundary areas reflect the desire by families for more students to walk to school, and for attendance area boundaries to more closely reflect neighborhoods. The recommended feeder patterns support the co-location of Denny and Sealth.

While all feedback was carefully considered, some changes requested by the community were not made. The primary reasons were either that the functional capacity for a building would be exceeded, or the request did not align with the boundary development factors approved by the School Board.

A [high level summary of community feedback](#) and a [document that outlines the rationale for changes in attendance area boundaries](#) and why some changes could not be made are available on the District’s Web site at www.seattleschools.org.

The School Board will vote on maps on November 18. The adopted maps will determine students’ initial school assignments based on their address. This new assignment plan would be phased in beginning in the 2010-11 school year for students at entry-grade levels—usually kindergarten, 6th, and 9th grades.

Families are Encouraged to Review the Recommended Maps; the School Board is Scheduled to Vote on These Maps on November 18

- A wide array of resources is available for families – maps, an address look-up tool, and the opportunity to comment via email are all posted on our [New Student Assignment Plan Web site](#). Families will also receive a brochure in the mail that shows the recommended maps.
- Two community meetings (Nov. 5 and 7) and a public hearing (Nov. 9) are planned.
- Additional information is included at the end of this release.

Transition Plan Will Be Developed by Early January

Following approval of final attendance area maps by the School Board, a full transition plan will be developed that considers, among other factors, transportation, sibling grandfathering, and developing programs for buildings that will open in 2010, 2011 and 2012:

- Information will be gathered about students who currently attend school outside of their new attendance area boundary, and about the siblings of those students who may be entering kindergarten in 2010.
- A transportation eligibility analysis will be completed.
- The Superintendent will make program placement decisions for 2010.
- The process of preparing to open Old Hay, McDonald, Rainier View, Sand Point, and Viewlands will be finalized and will include:
 - Program design teams will be established for schools opening in Fall 2010.
 - Principals will be named for schools opening Fall 2010

Enrollment Process for Fall 2010

Full details of the enrollment process will be announced following the vote on boundaries. Key elements include:

- Early registration is open now and will be open through January 15, 2010. Any student who will be new to Seattle Public Schools in Fall 2010 is invited to register.
- Open houses will be scheduled for all schools prior to Open Enrollment.
- In late February, students currently attending Seattle Public Schools who are rising from elementary to middle school or middle school to high school; and those students who registered for kindergarten during early registration, will receive their assignment for 2010 in the mail. If that is the desired assignment, no further action is needed.
- Open Enrollment will be scheduled during March. During this time, students who wish to apply to change their assignment may do so. If there are more applicants than spaces available, the new tiebreakers specified in the [New Student Assignment Plan](#) will be used to determine assignments.

Predictable Assignment Hallmark of New Plan

The heart of the new plan is to serve students closer to home. Students will receive an initial assignment to an attendance area elementary-, middle-, or high school. This assignment will be based on their address. Students may also apply to an option school associated with their attendance area. A student can choose to apply to a school outside their attendance area; that assignment will be based on a series of tiebreakers. The tiebreakers are greatly simplified compared with the existing system.

At the high school level, the proposal is to designate approximately 10% of the school capacity for Open Choice seats for students from outside the attendance area, which will provide more equitable access to specialized programs.

Currently Enrolled Students May Remain at the Current School

If a student is currently enrolled at a school outside their attendance area, they can stay at that school through its highest grade under a process called “grandfathering”—as long as the services the student needs are available at that school.

New Attendance Areas To Replace Outdated Boundaries

If adopted by the School Board, the recommended attendance area boundaries will replace a set of school reference areas that haven’t been updated in decades, no longer reflect city demographics, and do not accurately reflect the capacity of the District’s facilities.

By comparison, the development of the new attendance boundaries has been a data-driven process, designed to reflect demographic shifts and building capacity more accurately—as well as provide greater assignment predictability while preserving choice options.

Boundaries Reflect Need For Increased Capacity

Enrollment at Seattle Public Schools has been trending up for the past two years, and has exceeded growth projections. This trend is expected to continue through 2015. These projections reveal the need to add capacity in certain areas of the city.

Seattle Public Schools needs to balance availability of facilities with where students live now, and where enrollment changes are projected for the future. In some areas of the city, buildings currently in use cannot accommodate projected enrollment, so the proposal is to open buildings to align available capacity to meet the needs of current and projected students.

Following introduction of the proposed maps on October 6, new enrollment data for the 2009-10 school year became available. After analyzing this data, staff reconfirmed the proposal to open McDonald Elementary, Rainier View Elementary, Sand Point Elementary, and Viewlands Elementary as attendance area schools. Old Hay has been proposed to open as an option school with a focus on Montessori.

The funds required to prepare buildings for students and staff have been included in the Buildings, Technology and Academics III (BTA III) levy proposal. The [BTA III levy resolution](#) will be introduced to the School Board on November 4 and is scheduled for a vote on November 18. The BTA III levy, together with an [Operations Levy](#), would be placed on the February 9, 2010 ballot. Opening of buildings would be phased between 2010 and 2012, as follows:

Proposed Building	Timing
Sand Point	2010
Old Hay (students at Lincoln in 2010-11)	2011
McDonald (students at Lincoln in 2010-12)	2012
Rainier View	2011
Viewlands	2011

Community Engagement Opportunities and How to Learn More

An array of engagement opportunities and ways to find out more about the recommendations are available:

- **Community Meetings November 5 and 7**
 - Meetings will include a presentation, group discussion and opportunity for Q&A with staff. Interpreters will be available at both meetings:
 - November 5, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Roosevelt High School, 1410 NE 66th Street
 - November 7, 10:00 a.m. to Noon, Rainier Beach High School, 8815 Seward Park South

- **Public Hearing, November 9, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
 - Individuals wishing to provide testimony may sign up to testify starting Thursday, November 5, 8 a.m., by emailing hearing@seattleschools.org or by calling 206 252 0042.

- **Board meeting – November 4, 6:00 p.m. – Recommended Attendance Area Maps will be Introduced at this Meeting**
 - Sign up to give public testimony began Monday, 11/2, 8 a.m. via email to boardagenda@seattleschools.org or phone 206 252 0040.

- **Board meeting – November 18, 6:00 p.m. – Recommended Attendance Area Maps are Scheduled for a Vote at this Meeting**
 - Sign up to give public testimony begins Monday, 11/16, 8 a.m. via email to boardagenda@seattleschools.org or phone 206 252 0040

- Visit www.seattleschools.org
 - New Student Assignment Web site
 - Maps
 - Address Look-Up Tool
 - High level summary of comments and document regarding rationale for changes in boundaries

- **Email** newassign@seattleschools.org

- **Email** schoolboard@seattleschools.org

- **Postal Mail** to Seattle Public Schools, PO Box 34165, MS 32-170, Seattle, WA 98124-1165

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