DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As of 10/31/2014

Student Assignment and School Boundary Recommendations
Summary of SY15-16 Implementation Plan

Introduction and Background

Over the last year, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) and District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) led a comprehensive review process of the city's student assignment policies, including DCPS school boundaries. The process culminated in a series of recommendations made by the DC Advisory Committee on Student Assignment. In August 2014, the Mayor and Chancellor fully adopted and approved the recommendations. Mayor Gray further requested that DCPS and DME collaborate on a plan that outlines for the public what steps will be taken to implement the recommendations made by the Committee. This document and the accompanying Implementation Chart outline the changes that families can expect for next school year and lay out the major milestones for the implementation of each recommendation. These documents are not final draft but are rather living documents that DCPS will update based on feedback, progress and new developments. All documents referenced can be found on the DCPS website.

Overview of Changes for 2015-2016 School Year

The Advisory Committee on Student Assignment put forward a set of updated new boundaries for 99 DCPS schools and made 42 student assignment policy recommendations. In some cases the Committee was explicit about when a policy should go into effect, but in most cases the Advisory Committee recognized that DCPS would need time to work through implementation issues. As a result, not all recommendations will go into effect next school year.

The following summary provides an overview of the changes and policies that will go into effect starting in school year 2015-16. While the scope of change for next school year is significant, making these changes will allow us to strengthen our foundation of neighborhood schools and will enable us to better align school programs to community needs. Moreover, generous phase-in (grandfathering) policies will mitigate the impact of changes on students and families.

To see the status and timeline for every recommendation, including those that will be implemented in school year 2016-17 and beyond, please see the Implementation Chart. The chart provides an overview of all the changes expected over the next several years and expected milestones, and identifies responsible parties for implementing each policy within District agencies and DCPS.

School Boundaries and Geographic Feeder Patterns

The new school attendance zones (boundaries) and geographic feeder patterns will go into effect next year, along with the phase-in policies referenced above. (In some cases, boundaries and feeder patterns have been developed for schools that are not yet open. In those cases, existing boundaries and feeders will apply until those schools open.) Boundary changes and corresponding phase-in policies will be programmed in to the District's common lottery system, My School DC, in time for the launch of the

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SY2015-16 application on December 15th, 2014. While the boundary changes will go into effect for next year, the vast majority of families will not be immediately affected by these changes. For instance, of the approximately 23,100 students who currently attend their zoned DCPS school, nearly 17,000 or 73% will remain in the same school attendance zone when the boundary changes go into effect. Another 3,000 DCPS students attending their in-boundary school will have a reduced number of school rights (13% of all in boundary DCPS students). And approximately 3,200 students (or 14% of all in boundary DCPS students) will be assigned to a different school zone altogether; however, these students will be entitled to remain in their current in-boundary school until its final grade.

The following tools and resources are critical to the implementation and communication of the new boundaries:

- **My School DC common lottery application and School Finder.** A primary online resource for families to learn about the new boundaries, the My School DC site will include a new tool called School Finder that will allow families to look up their assigned school based on their address and will have the functionality to map schools and boundaries. As noted above, the lottery application has also been programmed to account for the phase-in policies and feeder patterns depending on the specific circumstance of each student.
- **Customer Service Options.** Both the DCPS Chancellor's Response Team (202-478-5738) and the My School DC Hotline (202-888-6336) are important resources for families who prefer to talk to someone on the phone to find information or to get help with submitting a lottery application. The following email address (Chancellorsresponseteam@dc.gov) is also a good resource for families who have questions and are comfortable with corresponding over email.

STEM Programmatic Feeder Patterns

In addition to geographic feeder patterns, the Advisory Committee recommended a series of programmatic feeder patterns. The purpose of a programmatic feeder pattern is to provide the opportunity for students to continue with a specialized course of study as they transition into middle or high school, should the specialized program not be offered in the next level school in their geographic feeder pattern. While the ultimate goal is to have vertical alignment of programming across all geographic feeder patterns, in some cases that may not be feasible or sustainable.

There are two programmatic feeder patterns recommended – dual-language and STEM. For SY15-16, DCPS will implement the STEM programmatic feeder pattern only. This means that 8th graders at McKinley MS will have the additional right to attend Woodson HS to continue their STEM education, should they choose to do so.

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Dual-Language Programmatic Feeder Pattern</th></tr>
<tr><th>Elementary School</th><th>Middle School</th><th>High School</th></tr>
<tr><td>Powell ES DL Program</td><td rowspan="6">MacFarland DL Program</td><td rowspan="8">Roosevelt DL Program</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bruce-Monroe ES</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bancroft ES</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cleveland ES DL Program</td></tr>
<tr><td>Marie Reed ES DL Program</td></tr>
<tr><td>Tyler DL Program</td></tr>
<tr><td>N/A</td><td>CHEC MS</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Oyster-Adams EC</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">STEM Programmatic Feeder Pattern</th></tr>
<tr><td>N/A</td><td>McKinley MS</td><td>Woodson HS</td></tr>
</table>

Once the dual-language programs are established at both MacFarland MS and Roosevelt HS, the expanded rights for 5th and 8th graders at the dual-language programmatic feeders identified above will be implemented.

Guaranteed PK at Title 1 Schools

In an effort to expand access to neighborhood zoned schools and increase predictability for families, the Advisory Committee recommended giving families who live in-boundary for a Title 1 school a right to PK via the My School DC application. The guaranteed access for in-boundary families to PK at Title 1 schools benefits both families and schools. Currently, access to PK seats is entirely lottery based. While in-boundary families get the highest preference in the lottery for PK at their assigned school, many families dislike the uncertainty that comes with relying on the lottery. For families this new policy is an opportunity to make the PK entrance process less stressful by adding predictability and making what used to be a preference into a right. This is also an opportunity for schools to capture their in-boundary families earlier, minimizing the risk that they lose families at PK due to their inability to get a seat.

While this policy provides multiple benefits to schools, implementing this policy is operationally challenging for DCPS. Opening new PK classrooms is not something that can happen in a short period of time. DCPS needs ample time to plan and budget for new PK classrooms – and must take into consideration the fiscal, capital and personnel requirements needed for each school. Typically DCPS decides during the late fall/early winter where new classrooms will open up for the following year. There are a few issues that are unique to PK classrooms and must be planned for carefully by DCPS.

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- **Enrollment cap.** PK classrooms have an enrollment cap that is legally mandated. DCPS cannot violate this requirement as it could jeopardize federal funding for PK programs. (the enrollment caps are as follows: PK3 – 16 students, PK4 – 20 students, PK3/PK4 mix – 17 students)
- **Staffing Requirement.** Similar to the enrollment cap, DCPS is also legally mandated to provide a full time certified teacher and aid in each PK classroom.
- **Space Requirements.** There are also space regulations for PK classrooms. This limits DCPS' ability to open up a new classroom on short notice. Most new PK classrooms require some facility work.
- **Classroom Resources.** New PK classrooms require a set of specific resource materials, depending on the school's curriculum and class configuration. Ensuring that each class has the necessary resources is critical to the success of the program. DCPS needs ample time to plan and prepare for new PK classrooms.

For these reasons, DCPS has decided to phase in the implementation of this policy and being with a subset of pilot schools. The purpose of this pilot is to test how the new right will impact enrollment at schools and DCPS' ability to plan for these classrooms within a shorter timeframe. The following schools will be part of the pilot and will offer the new PK right for Title I schools next school year:

- Burroughs Education Campus (Ward 5)
- Brookland Elementary School (Ward 5)
- Amidon-Bowen Elementary School (Ward 6)
- Van Ness Elementary School (Ward 6)
- Stanton Elementary School (Ward 8)

A critical component to a successful pilot is developing a robust marketing and outreach plan. DCPS will work with each school community and other stakeholders to ensure that families have all the information and resources necessary to take advantage of this new right.

It is important to note that the newly established right at PK is not an unlimited right any time of year (like that of the attendance rights at K – 12). Rather, families who will have this option should keep in mind the following:

- **PK right will only be offered at Title 1 schools.** Title I is the largest source of federal funding for education. Schools receive Title I money as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Title I money is used to help ensure that children, regardless of family income, have the opportunity to obtain a quality education and become academically proficient. A school is eligible to become a Title I school if 40% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. To find out which DCPS schools qualify for Title 1, please visit the DCPS website HERE.

Students who are zoned to non-Title I schools will continue to have an in-boundary preference at that school through My School DC, but will not have a guarantee.

- **Must submit an application by deadline.** Unlike the rights families have to enroll year round at their assigned school for grades K – 12, this policy limits the timeframe by which a family can exercise this right. Families must submit an online application by the My School DC round 1 deadline in order to exercise their right to a PK seat. If a student is matched with a PK seat at a school they ranked higher than their in-boundary school, they will no longer qualify for a seat at their in-boundary school. But, if they are not matched with a school they ranked higher – they will be guaranteed a seat at their in-boundary school for PK3 or PK4.
- **Must enroll by the deadline.** If a family goes through the lottery process and is matched with a seat at their in-boundary school, the family must submit all the appropriate enrollment paperwork by the enrollment deadline for My School DC to claim that seat. The school will not hold seats indefinitely, even if they are an eligible Title I school who is offering the guarantee to their in-boundary families.

New Proximity Preference in the My School DC Out-of-Boundary Lottery

The Advisory Committee recommended redefining the proximity preference in the lottery to focus on addressing walkability issues at the elementary school level. The recommendation is to provide a preference to families who have been zoned for an elementary school that is more than a half mile walking distance from their home. These families would get a preference in the lottery at a DCPS elementary school that is within a half mile walking distance from their home. This will replace the current proximity preference, which does not focus on improving walkability and does not take into account whether a student's zoned school is already within close walking distance.

The new proximity preference will be the last preference offered to out-of-boundary families, after sibling preference. To see the full list of lottery preferences for SY15-16, please see the DCPS My School DC Lottery and Enrollment Policy Handbook. Staring on December 15, 2014 as part of the My School DC out-of-boundary lottery application process families will be able to find out whether and where they qualify for this preference.

Out-of-Boundary Minimums

The purpose of establishing out-of-boundary (OOB) minimums is to ensure that families continue to have choices outside of their neighborhood in-boundary school, should they want to pursue them. Families who participated in the community engagement process cited many reason for wanting the option to attend a school other than their assigned school. The Advisory Committee proposed three policies on OOB minimums at schools. The first was a standard OOB minimum for all schools – 10% for elementary, 15% for middle and 20% for high school. The second and third recommendations were

grade specific minimums that ensured middle and high schools always maintain an entry point for new families at 6th and 9th grades. The latter recommendation will not be implemented until SY18-19 to allow for the boundary changes and phase-in policies to be fully implemented.

The 10%, 15%, and 20% percent minimums, while not part of current policy, are already met at all but one DCPS school-- Janney Elementary School. For schools not meeting the minimums, they will only have to open up the number of OOB seats that would fill the percentage gap between where they currently are to the minimum thresholds (10%, 15% and 20%). So in the case of Janney, the 20+ seats would increase the OOB percentage by 3%, taking them from 7% to 10%. While Janney's modernization added capacity for SY14-15, they still experience some space constraints, and therefore this is not feasible at Janney for next school year. DCPS will work with Janney leadership over the next school year in an effort to accommodate the needed seats for SY16-17.

Dual-language schools with attendance zones

In an effort to be responsive to the challenges families face when zoned for a school that only offers a dual-language program, DCPS has paired these schools with non dual-language programs. This pairing provides an alternative school for students that don't have the language proficiency needed to enroll or for whom a dual-language environment is not the best fit. The following schools have been paired:

Dual-Language School	Non Dual-Language Alternative for In-boundary Families
Bancroft ES	Tubman ES
Bruce-Monroe ES	Raymond EC
Columbia Heights EC (6-8)	Cardozo EC (6-8)
Oyster-Adams EC	School without Wall at Francis-Stevens
Powell ES (K only)	West EC

Maintaining the Momentum – Planning for Future Changes

While a number of new policies will be implemented in school year 2015-16, there are still many new policies left to implement over the next few years. As noted above, detailed information on the status of implementing each recommendation is provided in the Implementation Chart. Below is an overview of key aspects of the longer-term implementation plan.

New middle schools

The Advisory Committee recommended the opening of four new middle schools, which in some cases would coincide with eliminating the middle grades at existing PK-8 education campuses. While there are no plans to open any of these schools next school year, it is important that DCPS begin to work now on

developing and securing the necessary resources and support to ensure a successful opening of these schools in the future. We understand that many families are impacted by the new schools and are eager to engage in the planning process. In order to leverage this momentum, we have outlined some critical milestones in the planning process that will help ensure we meet our goal and that provide activities and timeframes that the community can hold us accountable to. For each new middle school, these milestones include:

- Securing the necessary capital funds
- Establishing a process for program planning with the community
- Engaging in facility planning with the community
- Establishing a partnership with the school community and its feeder schools to focus on recruitment

The Implementation Chart provides more detail about each of these factors, including dates for meeting key milestones.

Boundary studies

There are a series of recommendations that provide guidance and triggers for when and how DCPS maintains and monitors its system of zoned neighborhood schools, including where it might open additional schools and how to ensure transparency and engagement throughout the process. DCPS is committed to building the capacity to conduct the necessary data analysis, share the information and engage the community in how best to respond to the data.

The DME will work with DCPS, the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) and the DC Office of Planning to institutionalize the data sharing mechanisms that went into the data analysis used for the recommendations to ensure that DCPS has access to the most up to date population data and other relevant citywide data needed to inform future boundary studies.

Summary of Fiscal Impact

Transportation Subsidies

The Advisory Committee on Student Assignment made a series of recommendations that attempt to address transportation and access issues families have to public school options. Two of the recommendations provide a transportation subsidy to students and families in an effort to lessen the travel burdens to and from school. Each of these policy recommendations has a significant fiscal impact and must be considered when identifying when and how these policies can be implemented.

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- *Provide parents or guardians of PK3 through 5th grade students residing one mile or greater walking distance from their zoned DCPS school with free passage on Metrobus to accompany the elementary grade student to their zoned school.* Based on SY13-14 enrollment data, the DME estimates approximately 2,500 students live 1 mile or more from their assigned DCPS elementary school, and approximately 29% (730) of those students would attend their in-boundary school and thus qualify for the subsidy. Based on an estimated in-boundary participation, it will cost approximately $570K in annual costs for parent/guardian ridership. DME will work with DDOT to determine additional operating costs, such as programming cards and managing accounts. DME will also work with the Mayor's Budget Office and the City Council to determine feasibility to cover the costs associated with the development and maintenance of providing this service. By December 2015, DME will work with DDOT and the relevant agencies to develop a plan for how to operationalize this program.

- *Provide free passage on Metrorail to 9th through 12th grade students for travel to and from a public school.* DME worked with DC Office of Planning (OP) and DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) to determine the time, walkable distance, and cost between a student's closest metro stop from their home to high school where they are enrolled in SY13-14. The associated cost for free ridership for high school students (DCPS and public charter) would be between $1.7M to $2.5M more than what the District would have to spend for these students to participate in the current unlimited monthly student program subsidy. This cost range assumes that 50-75% of public high school students participate in the program. DME will also work with the Mayor's Budget Office and the City Council to determine feasibility to cover the costs associated with the development and maintenance of providing this service. By December 2015, DME will work with DDOT and the relevant agencies to develop a plan for how to operationalize this program.

Capital Improvements

The Advisory Committee also made several recommendations that have significant impact on capital planning efforts and budgeting. The most significant of these are the recommendations to open four new middle schools and the expansion of PK rights at Title 1 schools. Currently, the CIP reflects the following allocations:

- $49M allocated across FY19 and FY20 for the Shaw site
- $8M allocated in FY15 for the Ward 7 selective middle school
- $7M allocated in FY15 for MacFarland site

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The CIP is reviewed and adjusted annually based upon needs, costs and available budget. By April 2015, DCPS and the Mayor's Office will propose a schedule for the sequence of middle school openings along with relevant costs and other considerations.

Program Expansions

There are multiple policy recommendations that once implemented will result in program expansions at DCPS schools. In particular this includes opening new schools, expanding rights to PK at Title 1 schools, ensuring each comprehensive high school has a selective or specialized program, and that each feeder pattern includes specialized program options for families. Program expansions include a range of associated program costs – for example, providing classroom and instructional resources for students and teachers; expanded professional development; and certification costs for programs pursuing outside certification. While this implementation plan does not go into detail as to what type of program and which schools will get new programming, it is important to flag that as DCPS engages school communities in program expansion plans, we must consider the range of relevant costs that will be associated with these changes.

Next Steps – Ongoing Implementation and Community Engagement

The Summary of SY15-16 Implementation Plan and Implementation Chart are meant to be living documents that DCPS will continue to update based on feedback and engagement with communities. Please refer to the Implementation Chart for a status update on all 42 recommendations made by the Advisory Committee, including the at-risk preference, transportation planning group, and cross-sector advisory committee.

The dialogue and discussion that communities across the city engaged in over the last year during the development of the student assignment and boundary recommendations have provided DCPS with an active audience of stakeholders who are committed to working with DCPS. DCPS looks forward to continuing the dialogue and leveraging this support to ensure a successful implementation of these recommendations.

To share your thoughts and feedback or if you have questions please contact 202-478-5738 or chancellorsresponseteam@dc.gov.