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Ms. Deborah Amaral  
Ms. Mary A. Manning*



*Mr. Patrick Schultz  
Dr. Brendan R. Walsh  
Ms. Kristine Wilson*

*Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Chair*

**Review of SC Policy #5103 – Student Assignment  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
July 13, 2017, 5pm**

**MEETING GOALS**

- To gauge effectiveness of current policy
- To identify the goal for the future student assignment policy
- To determine a direction for next steps

**AGENDA**

**Overview of the Current Student Assignment Policy**

- History and Intent
- Implementation Procedures

**What do you think?**

- Warm feedback: What are the things that you like about the current policy?
- Cool feedback: What are the things that you don't like or are concerned about with the current policy?

**What do we know about what others think? *Review of what we've heard***

- Perspectives from the recent strategic planning participants & process

**What are the data telling us?**

- Evaluating the goals of equity and choice

**What more do we need/want to know – and from whom?**

- What additional questions should be answered?

**Looking Ahead – Where should we go from here?**

- Superintendent values and recommendation regarding process, transparency, timeline, transparency, and engagement
- Developing a vision and goal statement for the next student assignment policy
- Determining next steps



<b>STUDENT AND INSTRUCTION</b>	<b>5000</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<b>5100</b>
<b>STUDENT ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>5103</b>

**Rationale:** When a school’s student composition becomes socioeconomically imbalanced in contrast to other schools in the District, that school’s environment and educational opportunities also become imbalanced, contributing to educational inequality. It is well-documented that students learn from each other as well as from teachers and other adults. Interaction with students from different backgrounds and abilities is a powerful tool for advancing student learning and performance as well as preparation to live in the larger world.

**Objective:** The Salem School Committee is committed to providing a high quality, equitable education for every student enrolled in all schools in the Salem School District. Equity is providing equal access to similar resources and the educational opportunity to learn for all children throughout the District. To that end each school’s enrollment shall reflect, to the extent possible, a deviation of no more than five (5) percentage points from the average socioeconomic composition of the city’s school age population, as measured by free and reduced lunch (FRL) students, while simultaneously providing students a school choice option. The desired equitable student distribution shall be achieved in all grades in all the city’s elementary schools within five years of the policy’s inception in the Fall of 2012.

**School Choice:** All students residing in Salem are eligible to attend the Salem Public Schools. Student assignment policies to Salem K-5 or K-8 schools are designed to implement the objective described above and shall be administered according to the guidelines explained below. Students and families may apply for enrollment in any kindergarten, listing three schools in order of preference.

**Lottery:** In accordance with state law, the enrollment of students in the district’s Horace Mann Charter school will be determined by a lottery process. All interested parents wishing to have their child/ren attend that school will be given the opportunity to opt in to the lottery no later than March 1st (or the date determined by the Horace Mann Charter School). This information will be collected via the district’s student registration process or by the school’s own process. Opting into the lottery will not preclude students from being considered for their three school choices through the district.

**Implementation and Procedures:**

**Programmatic Placements (District-wide programs) :** Students enrolled in District-wide specialized programs (*e.g.*, a special education program, a Sheltered English Instruction (SEI)

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program or Kindergarten “Newcomer” Program) will be assigned to schools according to their programmatic needs, regardless of the other provisions of this policy. Students who no longer require a substantially separate special needs program shall be considered established students with priority status in their current school. They shall, thus, be mainstreamed in the school that houses their specialized program unless their parents request a transfer under the assignment process.

**Siblings:** Younger siblings of a student already enrolled in a specific elementary school will be given the opportunity to attend that same school as his or her older sibling. Such siblings must submit their registration materials/applications *February 20<sup>th</sup>* to receive this preferred status. Siblings will be counted as part of the school’s free and reduced lunch (FRL) or non-FRL cohort.

**Choice and Socioeconomic Status:** This policy shall be utilized during the 2015-16 school transition year. It shall be applied to entering Kindergarten students, within district transfers and any students new to the District. At the time of the assignments, each school will have a given number of spaces available for entering students. This shall be based upon the District’s socioeconomic average e.g. 61% F/R meals, 39 % non F/R meals, as set on the date of the assignments. These spaces shall, to the greatest extent possible, be filled with percentages of students of low socioeconomic status reflective of the district average. Kindergartners eligible for FRL shall first be assigned to fill the available FRL spaces at the school listed as their first choice. If choices of a given school exceed space available, students will be considered for their second choice if space is available or, alternately, their third choice. A similar procedure will apply to kindergartners who do not have FRL status, so that kindergarten spaces at each elementary school are assigned from two different pools of students.

A child’s name may be placed on the waiting lists of no more than two schools. Movement from the waiting list shall be in accordance with the assignment policy described above. Waiting lists shall be maintained for six months.

**Choice Procedures:** If sufficient students with FRL status do not apply to fill the allotted or designated seats, those seats shall be filled by non-FRL students who have selected the given school as their first choice. Similarly, if insufficient students with non-FRL status apply at a given school, those seats shall be filled by FRL students who have selected that school as their first choice. If more students have applied than there are spaces available, seats shall be assigned first to students living within walking distance of the school. The remainder shall be assigned by

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lottery. A waiting list shall be maintained for an “oversubscribed” school for no more than six months of the assignment school year.

As each new cohort of Kindergarteners is assigned in ensuing academic years, the equitable socioeconomic objective of this policy, as defined by the percentages of FRL and non-FRL at each school, shall be achieved in all grades of the city’s elementary schools in the 2017-18 school year.

**Timelines:** Applications for Kindergarten enrollment for the following school year shall be submitted no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> for assignments to be made on or about May 1<sup>st</sup>. Any application received after March 1<sup>st</sup> will be assigned on or about July 1<sup>st</sup>. Applications received after July 1<sup>st</sup> shall be processed as they arrive.

**In-District Transfers:** When a student seeks an in-district transfer from one elementary school to another, the guidelines of this policy regarding space availability and a positive effect on the school’s socioeconomic percentages shall be primary in placing said students. District transportation policies shall apply.

**Middle School Assignments (Grades 6-8)**

Middle School assignments shall follow the same socioeconomic guidelines (mirroring the entire Salem school age population within five (5) percentage points) based on Free and Reduced Lunch percentages, as those outlined in the policy objective above. For those grade 5 students already enrolled in Salem Public Schools, middle school assignment shall be based on the school in which the student is currently enrolled. Parents and/or guardians of all grade 5 students must notify the School Department by April 15th, if they want their child to change to another school and of their middle school choice. If demand for any middle school assignment is greater than seats available, the socioeconomic assignment policies described in objective section above shall apply.

**Involuntary Transfers:** It is not the intent of this policy to force the involuntary transfer of a student already enrolled in a specific school or to force an incoming student to attend a particular school. However, when a student withdraws or is absent from school for 12 consecutive scheduled school days without medical or other acceptable documentation supporting such leave, the student may not be eligible to return to the school he or she previously attended. Absence without acceptable documentation constitutes voluntary withdrawal from the District and the student may be considered under the same guidelines as a student newly entering the District.

**Review of Effects of This Policy:** The Superintendent shall report to the Committee each school’s socioeconomic composition, relative to the baseline 2011-2012 academic year, during October of each subsequent year that this revised policy is in effect. If it is determined

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that the choice program outlined above is not having the intended results, this policy shall be revisited and revised accordingly to better achieve its stated objective. Until such time as the goal of this policy is achieved, the Superintendent shall distribute funds not restricted by Special Education requirements for additional support/tutorial services among those schools that are at or above the median poverty level of the city's school population as determined by the District's Free & Reduced Lunch data.

**Role of the Parent Information Center in Assignment Coordination:** The Salem Public Schools' Parent Information Center (PIC) shall coordinate the student assignment process for entering students, both kindergartners and students in higher grades who are new to the District. The Center shall be designed and staffed as an accessible, welcoming place and resource center for all Salem families with children in the schools, including those with children new to the

Salem Public Schools. The Center shall provide and maintain translation services; carry out verification of residency and coordination of student transfer in and out of the District; and keep an up-to-date resource directory of school and city services. The PIC is also where referrals for Special Education, Medical Information, and other support services shall be accessed. The location and hours of the PIC shall be well publicized in all schools of the District, at City Hall and on appropriate websites. Appropriate signage and other directions, to make the Center easy to find, shall be developed and maintained.

Revised and Approved: 4 February 2013.

*Approved February 27, 2015*



## Student Assignment Policy

### In Brief

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Registering A Child In the Salem Public Schools

## The Registration Process

### Step 1: Eligibility

- Your child must turn 5 by August 31, 2017\*.

### Step 2: Application

- Complete all forms in the **application packet** and return it along with **all required forms** to the Parent Information Center (PIC) at Collins Middle School.

### Step 3: Student Assignment

- PIC will follow district policy to **assign your child** to a school and inform you of assignment by mail.

### Step 4: Confirmation of Assignment

- Return the **confirmation form** to the PIC to finalize your child's assignment.

*\*Contact the PIC for Nov & March enrollment opportunities at Carlton Innovation School*

## To Register Your Child, You Need...

- Proof of address (2)
- Parents' photo ID
- Household information survey
- Acknowledgement form
- Proof of child's age
- Immunization records





## Student Assignment Considerations

1. Special education placements
2. Siblings attending the same school
3. Choice and socioeconomic status
4. Distance



All student assignments follow the criteria outlined in the district's student assignment policy (Policy #5103)

## Application Deadlines

If you want your child to go to the same school as a sibling, the application should be in **by Feb. 20th.**

Application Deadlines	
Application Received	Student Assigned to School
By March 1	May 1
After March 1	July 1
After July 1	Will be processed as received

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan 31 - Feb 2 Kindergarten tours</li> <li>• Feb 20 Sibling applications due</li> </ul>
<b>MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mar 1 First round of applications due</li> <li>• Mar 9 Bentley lottery</li> </ul>
<b>MAY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 1 1st round of assignments</li> </ul>
<b>JUNE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June Kindergarten screening</li> </ul>
<b>JULY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July 1 2nd round of assignments</li> </ul>
<b>LATE SUMMER &amp; EARLY FALL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screening and language assessments</li> </ul>

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
<b>Student Assignment Policy-Background</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2012 Student Assignment Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Twin Goals:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Improve Equity:</b> balance school enrollment in terms of socio-economic status (~ 5% of district average, based on %FRL) over a five-year period</li> <li>2. <b>Foster Choice:</b> provide students/families with options</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <b>2015-16 is Year 4 of what was established as a 5-year initiative</b></li> </ul>	

## Student Assignment-How it Works

1. **Each year, SPS determines the district avg % FRL and space available in each school**
  - The goal is to achieve a similar proportion of % FRL/% Non-FRL in each school
2. **Families apply for enrollment and identify top 3 choices**
  - by 2/20 for siblings; 3/1 for K-8, 4/15 to transfer in 6-8
3. **Completed applications are entered into Student Information System as “pre-registered”**
4. **Applicants are processed in the order received following the criteria of the student assignment policy**

## Student Assignment Process Steps

1. **Programmatic Placements: Students requiring specialized programs (special education) are assigned on a rolling basis per mandated legal requirements**
2. **Sibling Preferences (for applicants submitted by Feb 20<sup>th</sup>) are assigned first**
3. **1<sup>st</sup> Choices Processed: Students who qualify for FRL assigned to space available based on 1<sup>st</sup> choice for each school, then Non-FRL students are assigned based on their 1<sup>st</sup> choices**

## Student Assignment Process Steps

7. **2<sup>nd</sup> Choices Processed:** FRL students assigned to remaining seats based on space available, then Non-FRL students assigned based on their 2<sup>nd</sup> choices
8. **3<sup>rd</sup> Choices Processed:** FRL students assigned to remaining seats based on space available, then Non-FRL students assigned based on their 3<sup>rd</sup> choices
9. **Administrative Assignments:** Any remaining students are then administratively assigned
10. **Waiting Lists:** Waitlists created, as needed. Waitlisted students assigned based on space available.\*
11. **Transfers:** Transfers requests are accepted all year long. They are granted until the end of September on a space available basis.\*

*\*all Student Assignment Policy factors are applied unless otherwise exhausted*



# The Future of the Student Assignment Policy (SC Policy 5103):

**Salerno Public Schools**

**Committee of the Whole Mtg**

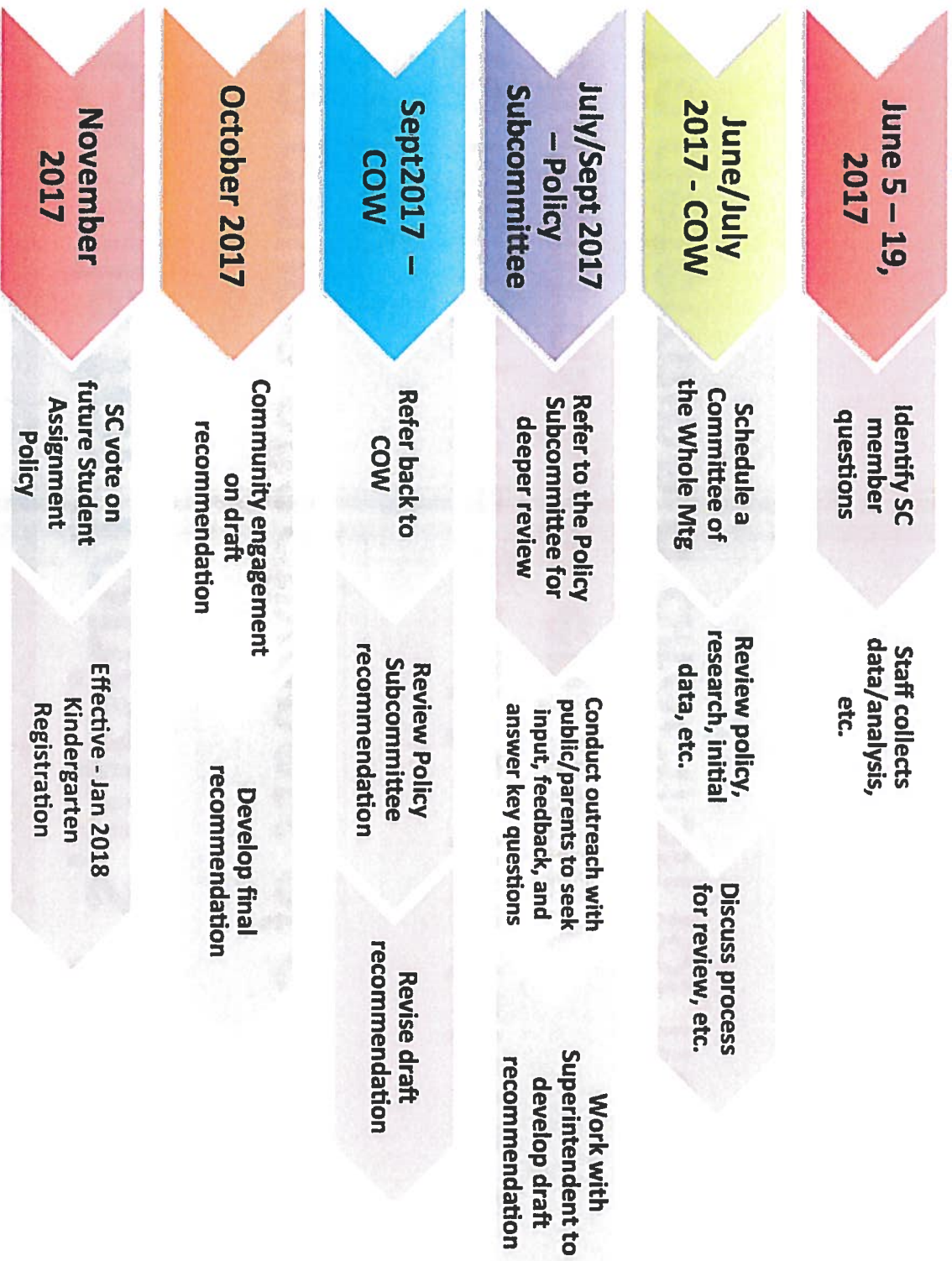
**July 13, 2017**



## Our Charge

- **2016-17 is Year 5 of SC 5103 (final year)**
- **To guide 2018-19 Kindergarten Registration, the policy needs review/ some sort of decision by November 2017**
  - *Can exercise option to extend (or slightly modify) current policy for 1 or more years, if more time needed to consider a larger change*

# Proposed Timeline for Review



# Goals for Tonight's Meeting

- **To gauge effectiveness of current policy**
- **To identify the goal for the future of the student assignment policy**
- **To determine a direction for next steps**



# Agenda

- **Overview of current policy**
- **Perspectives on current policy**
- **A look at some data**
- **Looking ahead**
  - Shared values regarding process
  - Identification of policy goal
  - Determining sense of direction and next steps
- **Refer to Policy Subcommittee**

## Overview of the Current Policy:

### History & Intent

- SC Policy #5013 – the district’s student assignment policy -- established in 2012
- The policy sunsets after 5 years
- 2016-17 is Year 5 (final year)
- **Twin Goals:**
  1. **Improve Equity:** balance school enrollment in terms of socio-economic status (~ 5% of district average, based on %FRL) over a five-year period
  2. **Foster Choice:** provide students/families with options

# Overview of Current Policy: Implementation

1. Special education placements
2. Siblings attending the same school
3. Choice and socioeconomic status
4. Distance



*See handout  
for more  
details*

All student assignments follow the criteria outlined in the district's student assignment policy (Policy #5103)



# What do you think?

## *Small Group Discussion*

- **Warm Feedback**
  - What are the things that you like about the current policy?
- **Cool Feedback**
  - What are the things that concern you about the current policy?

## What do we know about what others think? Perspectives from strategic plan process

- **No consensus on choice-based assignment v. neighborhood schools** –
  - Some said they liked having choice for assignments as well as a variety of options from which to choose
  - Others expressed a desire for “neighborhood schools” -- wanting to send their children closer to where they live (and buy a house) and having more consistency in the programming across schools

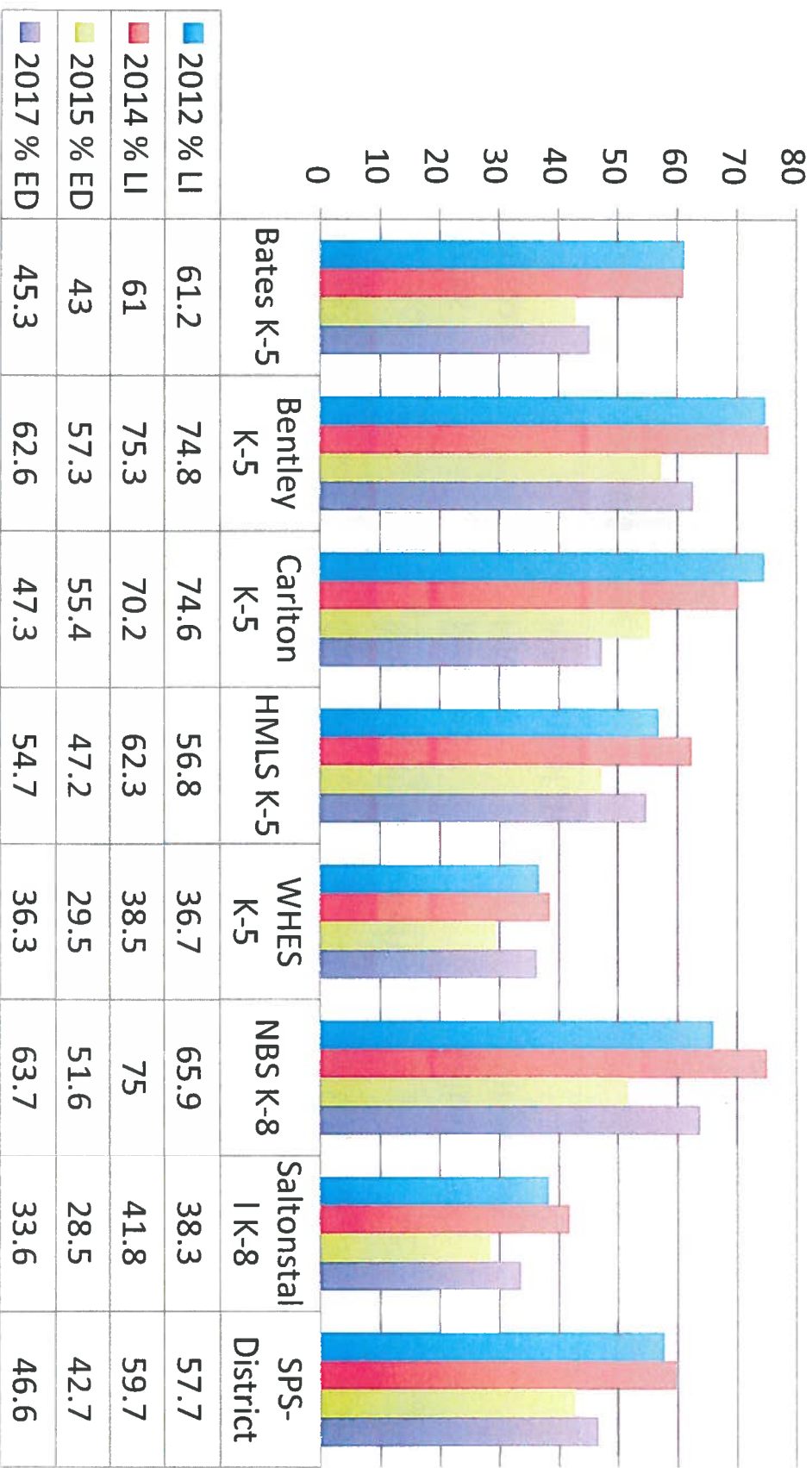
## What do we know about what others think? Perspectives from strategic plan process

- **High consensus around need to improve parent outreach and communication**
  - High level of consensus around need to improve parent outreach and communication as well as to better market each school's offerings
- **Improved transparency for the choice process**
  - Some participants shared that the process was confusing
- **Call for better marketing and publicity about school options and offerings**
  - Want district to be more proactive about marketing options to the public



# Evaluating the Equity Goal

SES Differences by School: 2012 v 2017



*NOTE: LI = Low Income (old measure). ED = Economically Disadvantaged - new measure introduced by DESE in 2014-15*

# Evaluating the Equity Goal

Year	Met Goal (w/in 5% of District Avg for Low Income)	Schools that are Above District Avg for Low Income	Schools that are Below District Avg for Low Income									
2012	HMLS Bates	Bentley Carlton Nathaniel Bowditch	Saltonstall Witchcraft									
2017	Bates Carlton	Bentley HMLS Nathaniel Bowditch	Saltonstall Witchcraft									
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Schools</th> <th>2012: How Below</th> <th>2017: How Below</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Saltonstall</td> <td>19.4</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Witchcraft</td> <td>21</td> <td>10.3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Schools	2012: How Below	2017: How Below	Saltonstall	19.4	13	Witchcraft	21	10.3
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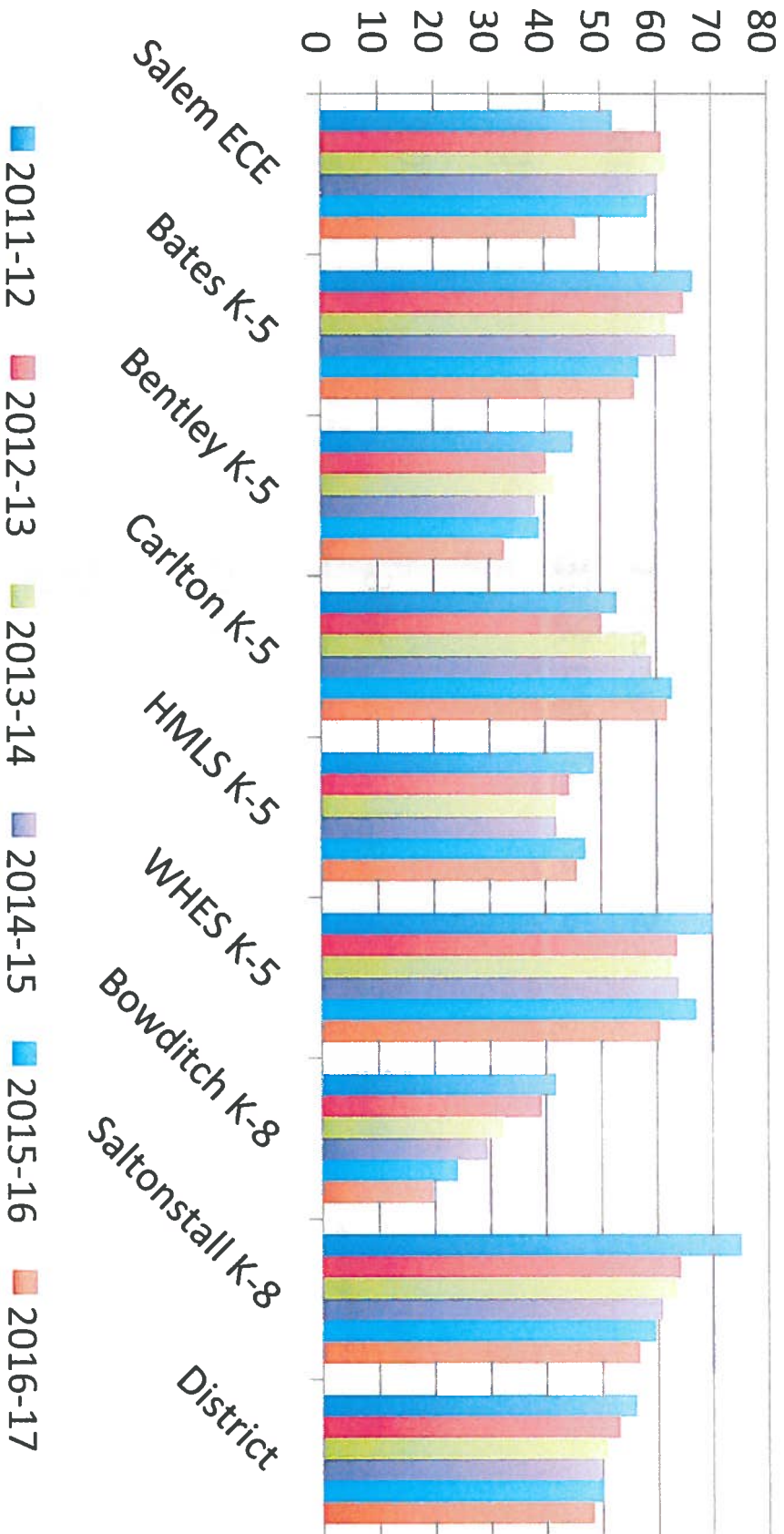
*Gap reduced between district % low income and schools historically below district avg % low income*

*For schools historically above district % low income, slight reduction in gap for Bentley, but large increase for NBS*



# Evaluating the Equity Goal

% White: Prek-5 & K-8 Schols



# Evaluating the Choice Goal

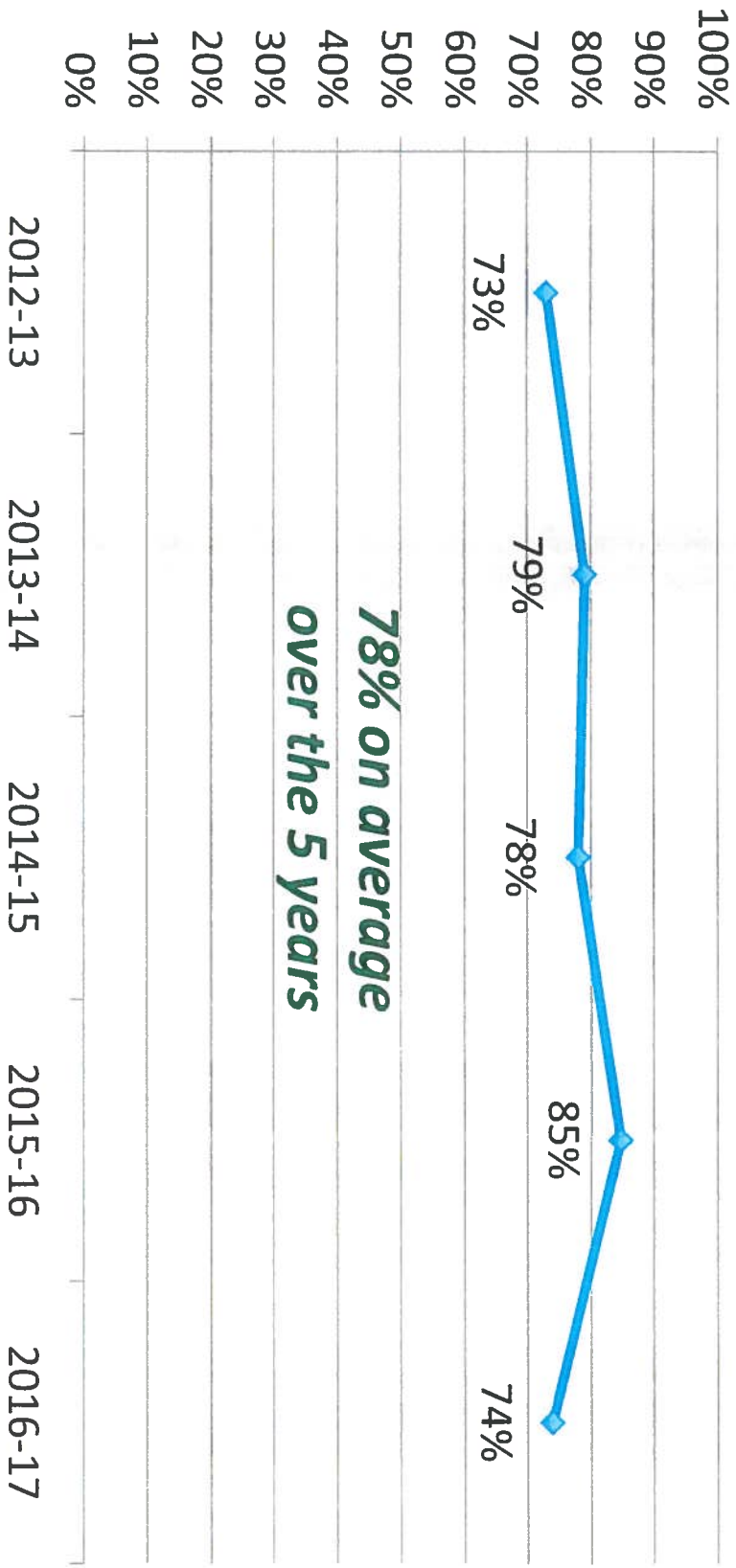
% K Assigned to 1 of 3 Choices



***Most districts with controlled choice (e.g., Cambridge) claim approx 85% ability to assign to 1 of an applicant's 3 choices***

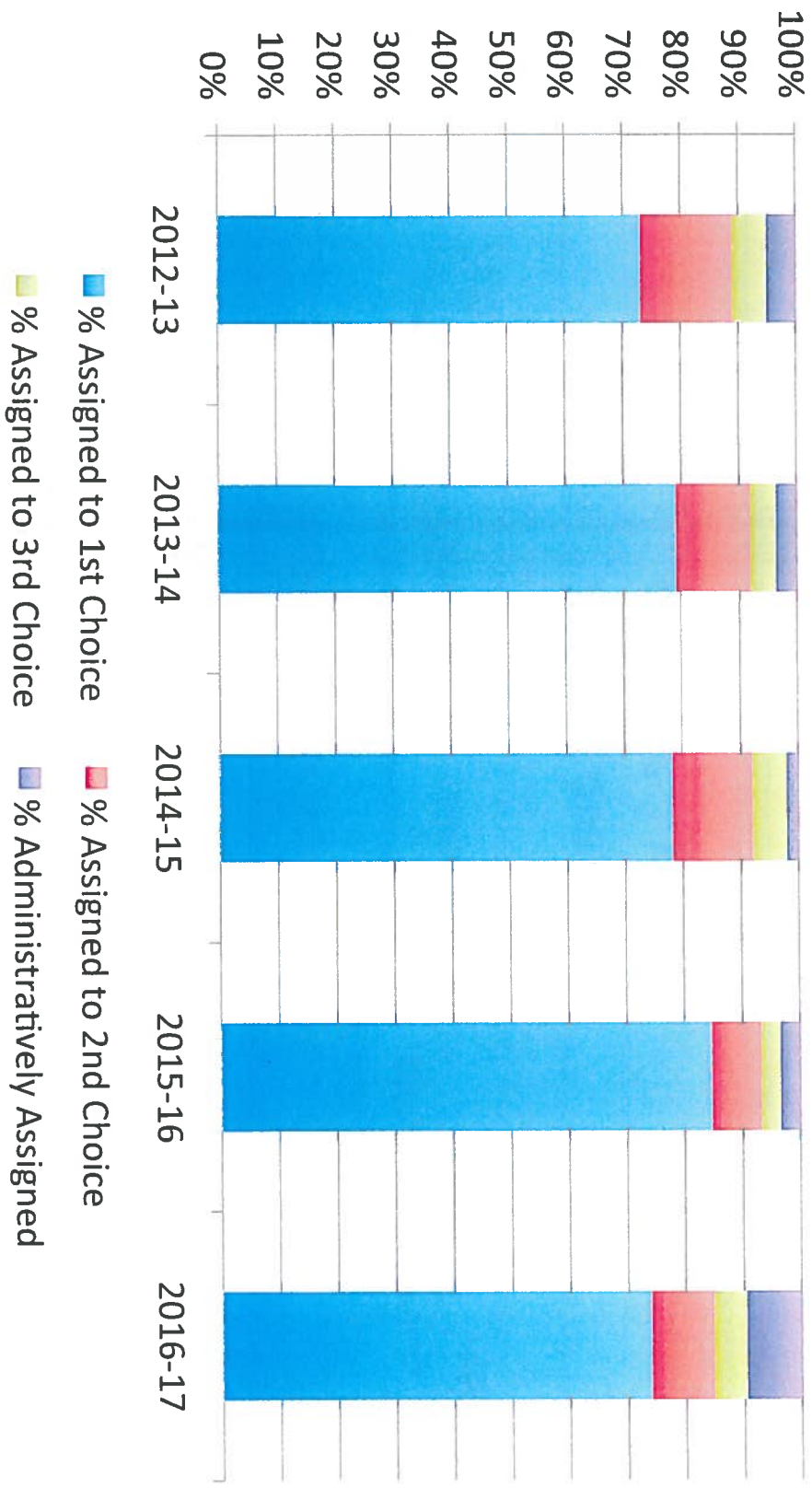
# Evaluating the Choice Goal

% Assigned to 1st Choice



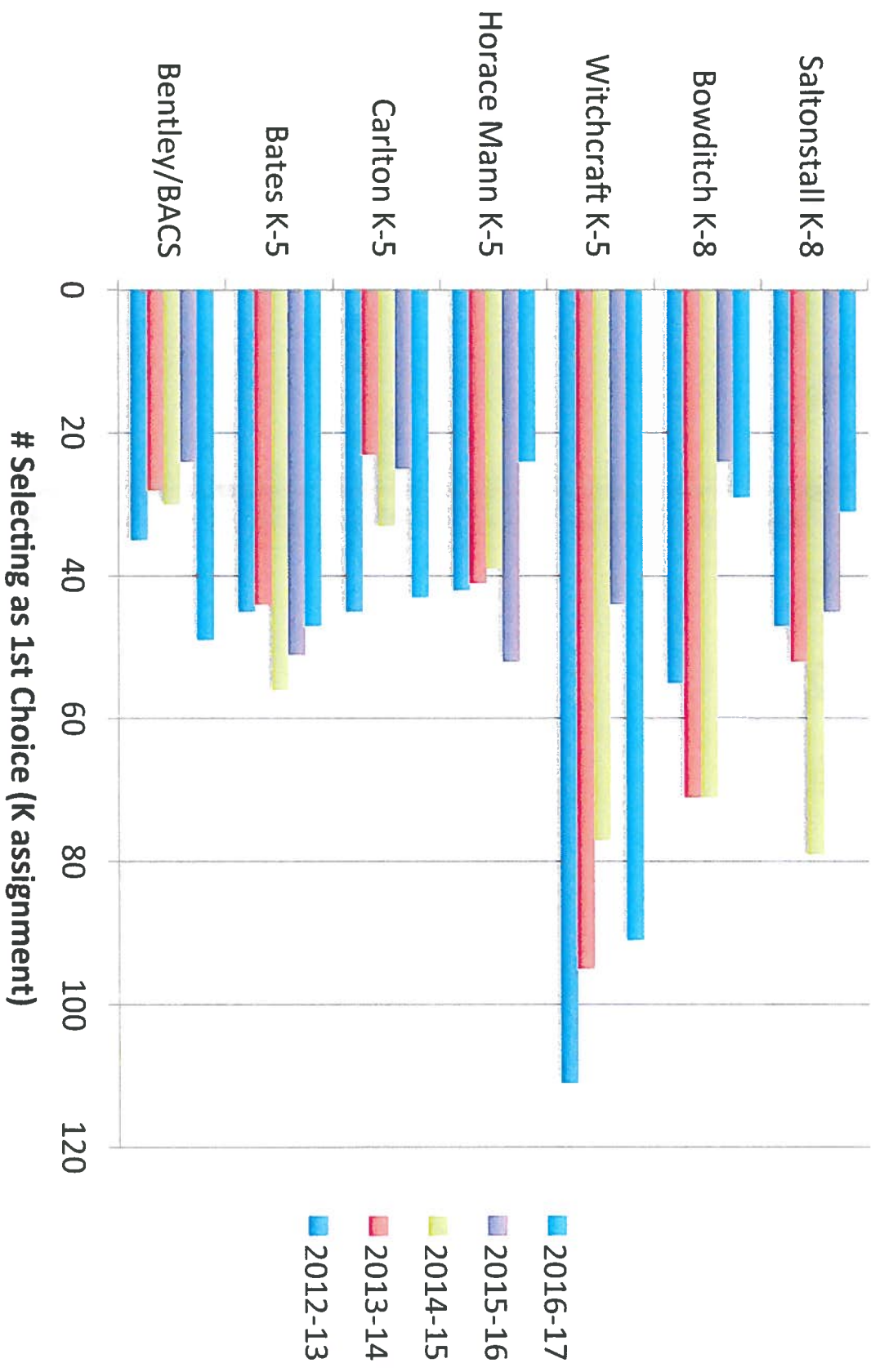
# Evaluating the Choice Goal

% K Assigned to Application Choices



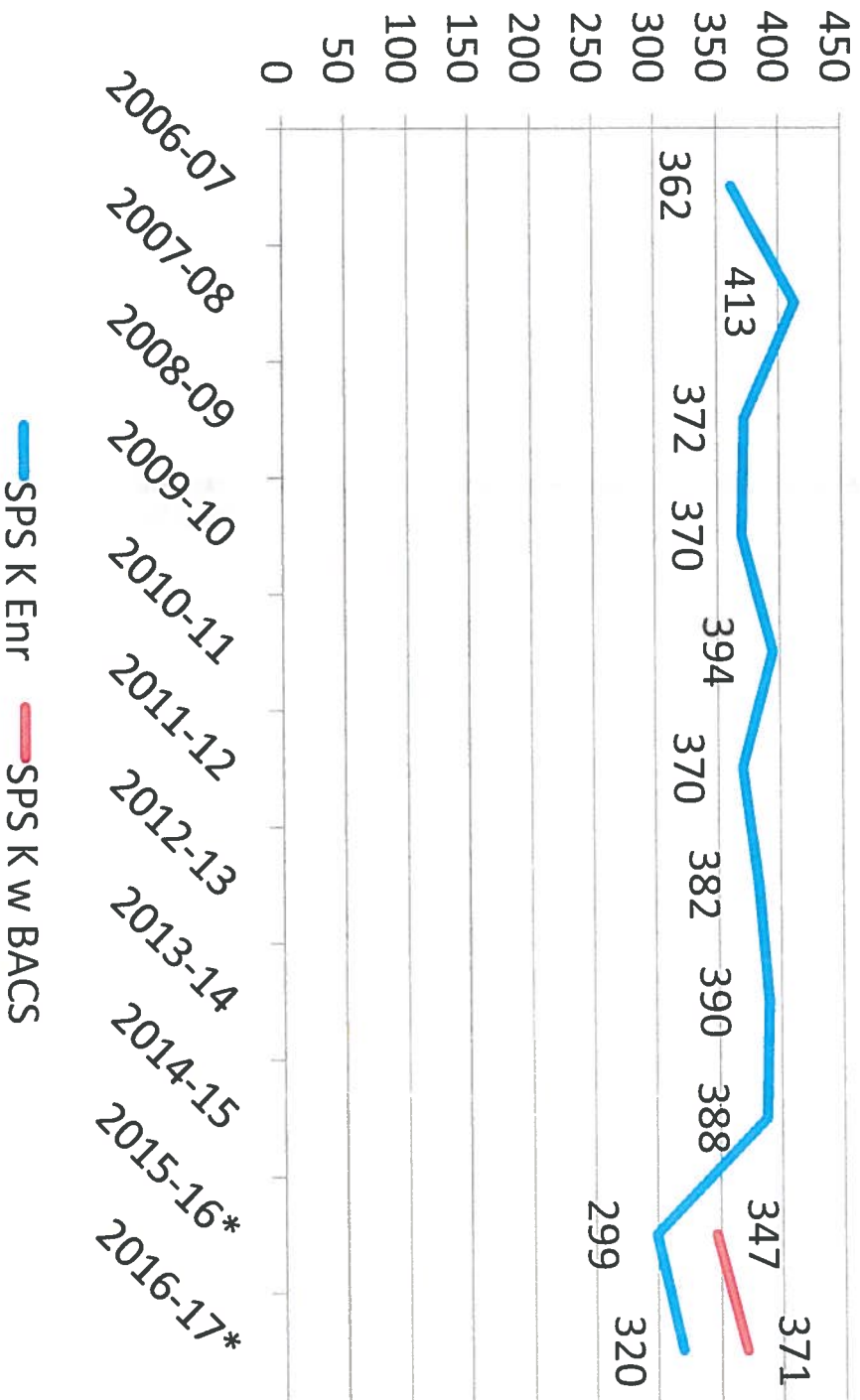


1st Choice Schools for Kindergarten, 2012-17



# Trends in Kindergarten Enrollment: 10 Years

Kindergarten Enrollment, 2006-17



# Looking Ahead: Superintendent Recommendation on Process

## Process

- Thoughtful, deliberative, data-driven

## Transparency

- Open meetings, information sharing, and decisions

## Timeline

- Take time, especially if major changes considered

## Engagement

- Continue new norms of community engagement & outreach



## Looking Ahead: Identifying the Goal for the Future Policy

- **THINK**
  - Take 5 minutes to write what you think should be the goal(s)
- **PAIR**
  - Pair up with a neighbor to share and discuss your goals. Identify areas of agreement, where possible
- **SHARE**
  - Report your areas of agreement to the whole group



## Determining a Sense of Direction

- **PART 1: INDIVIDUAL**

- Take 5 minutes to read and complete the worksheet for both Options 1 and 2
- Put self in mindset of the option (not just your preference)

- **PART 2: SMALL GROUP**

- Round1: If the district were to pursue this option, discuss and record benefits, drawbacks, and conditions
- Round 2: Repeat for the other option
- Record responses on chart paper

- **PART 3: GALLERY REVIEW**

- Circulate to review responses for both options
- Place dot on your preferred direction for Salem

## Next Steps

- **Refer matter to Policy Subcommittee**
  - Subcommittee will work with Superintendent staff to go deeper and develop a recommendation for fall
- **Guidance and Recommendations**
  - In pursuing this direction and charge, what should the subcommittee and administration keep in mind?

# Questions & Discussion?

