

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

New Student Assignment Policy

- **Retained goal – balance w/in 5% of avg**
- **Retained process, priority criteria (sibling, choice, proximity)**
- **Changed enrollment targets to school-based**
- **Eliminated language to “release” seats**
- **Clarified key procedures**
- **Requires more outreach & engagement**

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Batch 1 Kindergarten Applications

- **We had 266 applications in Batch 1**
 - 81 were siblings – all assigned together
 - The group was about even with 50% low-income and 50% non-low income
- **Applied 2018 enrollment targets**
 - Seats apportioned and assigned by income category
- **Assignments mailed on 4/30**
 - Waiting lists were then created and have been actively monitored since then

Batch 1: Updates on Challenges

- **In May, there were 11 families who did not receive any of their 3 choices**
 - Seats opened up – 9 of the 11 have now been assigned to one of their choices
 - Remaining 2 have opportunity to enroll in one of their 3 choices -- thus far have declined available seats
 - 1 declined seat at 2nd and 3rd choice; the other only listed 2 choices (Carlton & Saltonstall) on application
 - We continue to actively maintain and monitor seat availability and waiting lists and communicate regularly
- **Some families who received 3^d choice would prefer their first or second**
 - Remain on waiting lists – actively monitoring and communicating

Potential Areas of Confusion

- **New School-Based Enrollment Targets/Seats by Income Category**
- **Policy strives to assign to 1 of 3 choices – no guarantee of 1st choice**
- **Role of proximity v. choice**

*Committed to community outreach
and engagement this summer/fall and ongoing*

Next Steps

- **Continue monitoring spaces available and waiting lists waiting lists**
- **Continue processing Batch2 applications**

Assignment Example: How it Works

- **10 total spaces**
 - Enrollment Target: 60%/40%
- **20 total applicants**
 - 5 are low income
 - 15 are non-low income
- **Assignments**
 - 5 low-income assigned
 - 4 non-low income assigned
- **Wait List**
 - 11 non-low income on WL

| Low Income | 10 Spaces | Non-Low Income |
|------------|--------------|----------------|
| 6 | Total Spaces | 4 |
| 5 | Applicants | 15 |
| 5 | Assigned | 4 |
| 1 | Spaces Left | 0 |
| 0 | Wait List | 11 |

Choices Received

| Choice Received | Number of Applicants | % of Applicants (based on 244) |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 st Choice | 186 | 76.3% |
| 2 nd Choice | 23 | 9.4% |
| 3 rd Choice | 2 | .8% |
| BACS | 31 | 12.7% |
| None of their choices | 2 | .8% |
| N/A <i>(Carlton Winter/Spring or moved/moving)</i> | 22 | |
| Total Apps | 266 – 22 = 244 for Fall 2018 | |

99.2% of applicants received one of their choices (includes BACS)

Overview of SC Policy #5103: Controlled Choice Student Assignment Policy

The district's choice-based student assignment policy was revised in December 2017. While the new policy retained many of the core elements of the previous policy, there were some key changes that were adopted. The table below provides an overview of the elements that were retained from the previous policy as well as the elements that have changed.

| Previous Policy (2011-2017) | New Policy (2018-2022) (see links below) |
|---|--|
| Policy objective to achieve balance based on income, within 5% of the district average | Retained |
| Enrollment Targets | Changed from all schools use the district-wide average to setting individual school targets based on each school's most recently published income-based demographic data. The Superintendent has the authority to set the school-based enrollment targets (see p. 3 of SC #5103) |
| Sibling priority – apply by Feb 20 th | Retained |
| Batches 1 and 2, application process | Retained |
| Assignment Priorities and Criteria | Retained |
| Filling seats with students outside of income category (i.e., "releasing seats") Language read: <i>"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."</i> | This provision was eliminated in the new policy – waiting lists still maintained, but only for seats available within income category (see minutes from 11/20/18 COW, p. 1) |
| Waiting Lists | Retained – however, focus is on 1 st choice as priority within waiting list; lists kept until 9/30 for all |
| | Requires calculation of enrollment projections each year (p. 3) |
| | Examine and consider additional diversity factors (to go beyond income only) (see p. 4) |
| | Develop materials and outreach plan – to ensure that all members of Salem community are aware of choices (p. 6) |
| | Clarifies assignment procedures for Gr1-12 |
| | Clarifies procedures for In-District transfers |
| | Clarifies procedures for automatic withdrawals (after 12 consecutive absences) |

Resources:

- Updates SC Policy #5103: http://www.salemk12.org/pages/SPS_DistSchoolCom/SPS_Policy_Manual_Folder/5000/5103%20Controlled%20Choice%20Student%20Assignment%20FINAL.pdf
- Minutes from the 11/20/17 COW: https://www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/minutes/cow_minutes_-_student_assignment_policy_11_20_17_4pm.pdf
- Minutes from the 7/31/17 COW: https://www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/minutes/cow_7_31_17.pdf
- Minutes from the 7/13/17 COW: https://www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/minutes/cow_minutes_7_13_17.pdf

Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 20, 2017

A Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, November 20, 2017 at 4:16 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

Members Present: Mr. Patrick Schultz, Dr. Brendan Walsh, Ms. Mary Manning, Ms. Kristine Wilson, and Ms. Deborah Amaral

Members Absent: Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Mr. James Fleming

Others Present: Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy, Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications, Sayonara Reyes, Manager of the Parent Information Center (PIC)

Call to Order

Dr. Walsh called the Committee of the Whole (COW) Meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 4:16 p.m.

Review of the Revised Policy #5103 Controlled Choice Student Assignment

Superintendent Ruiz began with an introduction of the policy. They have been through a journey in developing this policy since July of this year. Ms. Ruiz introduced the changes on the policy. From the discussions of the policy, the Subcommittee decided to keep the concept of choice as part of the policy as well as the concept of the 5% objectives of achieving balanced enrollments across all schools. Those continue to be big tenets on this new policy. The new iteration of the policy does the following:

- This policy much more clearly outlines the Controlled Choice Student Assignment process in much more detail than the other.
- It introduces the concept of assigning individual enrollment targets relative to each school in terms of achieving that 5% balance enrollment. It looks at the enrollment of each particular school and analyzes how close they are to meeting that 5% and gives the Superintendent the ability to set specific number targets for both low and non-low income categories based on each individual school.
- Removes language from the previous policy stating that open seats would be given to those on waiting lists, regardless of their income category. Waiting lists would still be maintained, but spaces would only be assigned based on the designated income category.

Superintendent Ruiz continued that one of the big tenets of this new policy is placing strong emphasis on the outreach that is needed in order to make sure that populations around the city, especially those that are more marginalized and do not have access to information. It answers the questions what are we doing as a district to ensure that we are reaching out to those families so that they understand the choices they have in order to make a good choice for themselves. The Assignment policy is rooted in this concept of choice. Superintendent Ruiz continued that she believes that the biggest change to the policy is really the concept of individual school enrollment targets - how to systematically help their schools get closer to that 5% threshold. It is all based on the current enrollment of the school. Superintendent Ruiz informed the members

