POLICY REVISIONS

FOR

OUT OF AREA STUDENTS

During the process of changing attendance boundaries for the 2010-11 school year, the large number of students attending schools out of their home attendance boundary, commonly referred to as Out of Area (OOA) students, became an issue of concern to both parents and the School Board.

At the School Board meeting on 2/23/10, Ms. Henderson requested staff to review how the OOA students are being handled, including McKay Scholarships, and determine if the current policies and/or procedures need to be changed.

In response to this request, the following changes are recommended:

Policy 5120 – Assignment Within District
The Policy contains the process for OOA assignment. It refers to Policy 7120 for additional criteria for approval.

The Policy currently requires OOA Request Forms to be submitted to the Area Superintendent for approval. It is recommended that this Policy be revised to have all OOA Request Forms submitted to a single entity. Review and approval by a single entity would eliminate inconsistencies inherent in having three Area Superintendents approve requests. It would also create a central data center for all OOA information in the District.

The Policy has been revised to have all OOA Request Forms submitted to the Director of School Choice.

Policy 7120 – Criteria for Balancing School Membership to Capacity
The Policy contains criteria for OOA approvals based on a school’s enrollment as a percentage of its permanent capacity and criteria for employee preference. It provides the Superintendent flexibility in the implementation of the criteria due to extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis. There are several proposed revisions to the Policy, which are described below.

1. Definition “E” – Sibling defines “sibling” as “Family members of current students...who begin their attendance at a school during the year in which the current student is attending the school.” The intent of this language is to allow siblings of students “grandfathered” into a school to attend the same school as the “grandfathered” student. It is not meant to allow siblings of those siblings to continue to attend the school once the “grandfathered” student had graduated from the school. The Policy has been revised to clarify that siblings who do not begin their attendance at the school while the “grandfathered” student is attending the school do not qualify for the OOA exception.
2. **Criteria “C” for “Soft” Redistricting** currently allows siblings of “grandfathered” students to attend the same school until graduation. The Policy has been revised to clarify that this OOA exception ends for the sibling when the “grandfathered” student graduates.

3. **Criteria “A” for OOA Approvals** allows existing OOA students to remain at a school until graduation. The Policy has been revised to terminate eligibility (not renew) on the following basis:
   a. When a school’s enrollment is projected to be over 95% of its permanent capacity for the following school year, existing OOA students will not be renewed in sufficient numbers to insure that the school’s projected enrollment will be reduced to a maximum of 95% of its permanent capacity.
   b. Non-renewals of existing OOA students to achieve this goal will be prioritized on a “last in, first out” basis, then by grade level, lowest grades first. To clarify, all OOA students admitted the previous year (includes all rising OOA 1st grade students admitted the previous year as Kindergarten OOA students) will not be renewed; if this is not a sufficient number to reduce the projected enrollment to 95% of permanent capacity, all rising OOA 2nd graders will not be renewed. This will continue on a grade level basis until a sufficient number of OOA students are not renewed.
   c. This change will not be effective until the 2011-12 school year. A letter will be attached to all OOA Request Forms this year to explain this change to parents seeking OOA approvals for their students, effectively giving a one-year notice of possible non-renewal. The letter will include capacity projections for all schools.

4. **Criteria “B” and “C” for OOA Approvals** establish limits for incoming and outgoing OOA approvals based on a school’s enrollment as a percentage of its permanent capacity. The Policy has been revised to clarify that these percentages will be based on the enrollment projections approved each November and will not be changed by actual enrollment the following school year. Note that the schools “frozen” for OOA approvals by this Policy are shown in the Student Accommodation Plan each year.

5. **A new Criteria for OOA Approvals** is required to formalize the discretionary restrictions on new incoming and/or outgoing OOA approvals placed on schools by the Director of School Choice (formerly the Area Superintendents) when these restrictions are determined to be in the best interest of the School District. The Policy has been revised to include a new Criteria “D” for this purpose.

6. **Employee Preference Criteria** limits OOA approvals to the capacity of the school. The Policy has been revised on the following basis:
   a. OOA requests for children of non-school employees will be denied when the schools reaches 100% of permanent capacity.
   b. OOA requests for children of school-based employees and substitute teachers that worked a minimum of 30 days at the school the previous year will not be subject to capacity restrictions.
7. Criteria for Special Schools and Programs does not address McKay Scholarship students. The Policy has been revised to add Criteria “C” – McKay Scholarship Students to this section. New McKay Scholarship students will be approved at the requested school if:

   a. Student enrollment is projected to be no more than ninety percent (90%) of permanent capacity of the school.
   b. The student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) can be implemented at the school.
   c. The personnel allocation plan can be implemented for the student’s matrix level.
   d. The school has no more than twenty two percent (22%) ESE students (excluding gifted).

Related Issues

Military Preference: Assistance to Transitioning Students from Military Families is addressed in Policy 5120, providing preference to students of military families for admission to special academic programs if they meet the eligibility requirements of the program. District staff works closely with the military liaison in these instances.

Question: Should Policy 5120 be revised to limit access OOA access to these students.

Recommendation: No revision to Policy 5120 is recommended. Students attending OOA schools as a result of military preference will be required to submit OOA Request Forms for tracking purposes as an Administrative Procedure.

Redistricted Rising 6th and 8th Graders: The Board approved “grandfathering” for rising 6th and 8th graders in the areas redistricted for the 2010-11 school year.

Question: Should Policy 7120 be revised to require OOA approval for these students.

Recommendation: No revision to Policy 7120 is recommended. These students, and all future students “grandfathered” during redistricting activities, will be required to submit OOA Request Forms for tracking purposes as an Administrative Procedure.