

# Final Recommendations on Student Assignment Policies and DCPS School Boundaries

Prepared by the DC Advisory Committee on Student Assignment



## Dear Mayor Gray,

In October 2013 Deputy Mayor for Education Abigail Smith appointed the Advisory Committee on Student Assignment, charging us with making policy and planning recommendations to improve clarity, predictability, and equitable access to high quality school options at locations that make sense for families. The Advisory Committee was composed of community members from every one of the city's eight wards, including both DCPS and public charter school parents, and representatives of DCPS, the Public Charter School Board, the DC Office of Planning, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, and of course, the Deputy Mayor for Education. We are pleased to transmit our recommendations on student assignment policies to you.

The clarity, attention and force of what we heard from so many community members and stakeholders over the past nine months in connection with the development of these recommendations give us confidence that they reflect a vision that is firmly rooted in the desires and aspirations of DC families. We hope our vision and these recommendations can provide the District with a road map for moving forward in an educational environment that is unique, challenging, and full of promise.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

### DC Advisory Committee on Student Assignment

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## Introduction

The District of Columbia has not undertaken a comprehensive review of student assignment since 1968. In the decades since, our city has seen significant population, educational, economic, and demographic changes. Dozens of DC Public Schools (DCPS) have closed; others have opened, moved locations, or shifted program focus or grade levels. The District's charter school sector — established in 1996 — now accounts for 44 percent of the public student population and 61 different local education agencies (LEAs). To address the context of today and consider the future, the Deputy Mayor for Education charged the Advisory Committee on Student Assignment with:

- Reviewing current citywide policies on attendance zones, feeder patterns and school choice;
- Formulating guidelines and principles for public school assignment and choice policies and practices;
- Listening to the community and serving as insightful interpreters of public sentiment, concerns, and questions;
- Developing recommendations and scenarios for revised DCPS attendance zone and feeder patterns; and
- Making policy recommendations on how to bridge student assignment and choice policies across DCPS and charter schools.

By reviewing data, information, policies and practices as well as listening to parents and community members and discussing this input in depth with Advisory Committee members, the Advisory Committee came to understand the challenges to the current student assignment system for the city and its families. The recommendations in this document were developed to address the following challenges.

# Student Assignment Policy and Practice Challenges

## *Unpredictable and Complex Student Assignment System<sup>1</sup>*

In school year (SY) 2013-14, there were 74 DCPS elementary and pre-kindergarten (PK)-8th grade schools operating with 104 different boundaries. Twenty-two percent of all public school students had rights to attend multiple schools because the attendance zones were not redrawn after school closings and consolidations. Many schools do not have a clearly defined community for which they are responsible, and many families do not have obvious pathways to their schools of right. In some cases, due to the consolidation of attendance zones, families are assigned to schools that are not within easy walking distance of their homes. In addition, there are school boundaries with far more students than there is capacity, as well as boundaries with more capacity than there are assigned students.

Currently, middle school boundaries do not align with the elementary schools that feed into them, and the same is true for high schools and the middle schools that feed into them. This means a child can be in-boundary for an elementary school, but out-of-boundary for the middle school that the elementary school feeds into. Parents and community members felt strongly that classmates should be able to go through school together, and educators expressed interest in vertical alignment of schools to ensure continuity of academic programming. In addition, there are currently few opportunities for students in specialized schools or programs to continue their academic programs when they advance to middle or high school.

Parents recounted the stresses of trying to get into DCPS and charter schools through lotteries. Many reported entering multiple lotteries over multiple years, in hopes that one child might be accepted, and clearing the way for the rest of the family. The common lottery is an improvement, but continued confusion and angst over which schools were “good” schools, how to commute to these schools, and the odds of getting into them were prominent issues for many parents.

## *Uncertainty of Population and Enrollment Projections<sup>2</sup>*

At the core of any school district’s challenges regarding student assignment, school enrollment, and facilities planning and management is the difficulty of accurately projecting child population changes and school specific enrollment growth, stability, or decline. Decisions about school openings, closings, boundaries and feeder patterns necessarily respond to historic behaviors of families but also affect their choices in the future. The District of Columbia experienced significant child population declines during the period from 2000 to 2010, except in Ward 3. DC is currently in a period of child population growth across the city, but whether young families will stay in the District, where families with children will settle, how long families will stay, and how large the families will be will all have a tremendous effect on DCPS and the public charter schools. In addition, the quality and character of public education in the District of Columbia and of individual DCPS and charter schools will affect the residential and school choices of these families.

## *Enrollment Patterns and Student Movement<sup>2</sup>*

A specific area of concern is the dispersion of students from within one attendance zone to as many as 93 different elementary public schools and the churn of students into and out of these schools, both within and between DCPS or public charter schools. The amount of movement among and between public schools is a challenge for students and schools. Students who repeatedly change schools have statistically worse outcomes, including significantly lower graduation rates. Furthermore, the impact of that enrollment churn on school culture and resources negatively affects other students. Current student assignment and choice policies, as well as approaches to school funding and accountability, do not account for the negative impact of student movement, do not offer disincentives to limit this transience, and arguably are one of the causes of churn.

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1 See Policy Brief #1: DC Student Assignment and Choice Policy, [dme.dc.gov/boundaries](http://dme.dc.gov/boundaries)

2 See Policy Brief #3: The Landscape for Student Assignment and School Choice, [dme.dc.gov/boundaries](http://dme.dc.gov/boundaries)

### *Travel Burdens on Students and Families*

Another challenge in the current student assignment and school choice system is the travel burden on students and families. Because of school closings and, in some cases, low density residential areas there are communities without a zoned school within a half mile—the distance the DC Office of Planning recommends as a walkable scale, which is also consistent with the goals of Sustainable DC and the Move D.C. Multimodal Long-Range Transportation Plan<sup>3</sup>. Although the average distance for elementary students to their zoned school is currently .49 miles, since most students do not attend their closest grade appropriate school, families must drive or use public transportation to get their children to school – something many parents reported as burdensome.

### *Fiscal Inefficiencies*

Another challenge of the current student assignment system is the fiscal efficiencies of the District's current public education system in both capital investment and operating dollars. Each of the 62 local education agencies (LEAs) can independently determine where to locate their school or schools and how to use the District's per pupil and facilities funding. Decisions about grade or school expansion are made on a case-by-case basis by the LEA (DCPS or charter) and by the Public Charter School Board, without a structure or process for coordination across LEAs. This lack of coordination has resulted in inefficient use of public dollars.

## Vision for Public Schools

The recommendations for student assignment policy, school boundaries, and feeder pathways set forth in this document were developed to support a vision for a core system of high quality neighborhood public schools of right complemented by a set of high quality public school options.

The District of Columbia boasts some of the highest performing public schools in the nation and includes national models of highly successful and innovative schools. These success stories are found within DCPS zoned schools, selective DCPS schools, and the charter sector, but there are many communities that lack such high quality options. The overwhelming input from parents and District residents was that families want a citywide system of neighborhood public schools that is equitably invested in and that provides predictable and fair access to high quality schools in all of the city's communities. Reaching this reality will require:

- Improvements in neighborhood schools, particularly those serving low-income communities, so that every school offers comprehensive, rich, and challenging programs supported by a positive school culture;
- Structures that support coordination, cooperation, and joint planning within DCPS and between DCPS and public charter schools;
- An adequate number of seats in DCPS zoned schools to ensure equitable access to and utilization of schools of right; and
- Reduced travel burdens for students, particularly for low-income families and communities.

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<sup>3</sup> The Sustainable DC Plan, DC Office of Planning and District Department of the Environment 2013, [sustainable.dc.gov/finalplan](https://sustainable.dc.gov/finalplan); Move DC, May 2014, [movedc.org](https://movedc.org)

## The Community Engagement Process

The vision and recommendations of this report were guided by voices we heard throughout the city, the thoughtful input of the diverse student assignment advisory committee, and the support of a technical team. From the outset of the process, and throughout our months of work, the Advisory Committee reviewed newly commissioned research and extensive data on enrollment patterns, child population projections, school capacity, and building utilization. All of this extensive material was made available to the public at [dme.dc.gov](http://dme.dc.gov). Starting in November 2013 focus groups were conducted in every ward of the city, through which nearly 200 parents and community members shared their perspectives and experiences with student assignment and school choice issues and provided feedback on the principles that should guide policy recommendations and boundary changes.<sup>4</sup>

After the focus groups, the Advisory Committee developed three policy examples and proposed the first draft of updated school attendance zones and school feeder pathways, which the Deputy Mayor for Education presented for public feedback at a series of working group meetings held in April 2014. More than 800 city residents participated in the working group meetings and provided us with valuable input, making it clear that school quality and predictable school pathways were the most critical concerns of families.

In June 2014, the Advisory Committee released a single policy proposal with a second draft of school attendance zones and feeder pathways. DCPS and DME notified parents and community members of the proposed changes and informed them of the multiple opportunities to provide feedback. The proposals were discussed and debated at another series of three community meetings, which were attended by nearly 300 parents and community members. The proposals were also the subject of a June 26 DC Council hearing. In addition, over the past ten months, the DME and many Advisory Committee members have had the benefit of attending scores of local and school community meetings throughout the city with hundreds of participants and have reviewed as many letters, e-mail inquiries, and suggestions.

Throughout this process, community members expressed their frustration that this process was primarily focused on student assignment rather than on school improvement. We understand this frustration and believe that improving how families access public schools and clarifying DCPS attendance zones and feeder pathways will help stabilize and strengthen relationships between families, schools, and communities, which will contribute to improving schools. The discussions and thoughtful and spirited debate among stakeholders made clear that, to advance an equitable and efficient citywide system of neighborhood public schools that is complemented by a range of school choices, the District needs to continue to engage the public in the planning and implementation of both citywide and school-specific recommendations.

## Recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Student Assignment

In this section, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee are presented and organized according to the following four critical elements for a core system of zoned schools of right complemented by a portfolio of public school options.

1. Student assignment policy that spells out the rights of families based on a geographic designation of attendance zones and feeder pathways that are aligned with population, enrollment, and capacity.
2. Adequate capacity maintained in the by-right system to responsibly meet the short, medium, and long term demand of families with school age children.
3. Equitable access to public school options.
4. A culture of investment and planning, on the part of both schools and families, to ensure that schools are fully equipped to meet the needs of their communities

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<sup>4</sup> See Focus Group Analysis Report, [dme.dc.gov/boundaries](http://dme.dc.gov/boundaries)

## 1. Student Assignment by Right Based on DCPS Attendance Zones and Feeder Pathways

Although the current practice of most families has been to explore and use school options outside their assigned neighborhood school, the public was clear that they wanted predictable public school pathways of right for children in the District of Columbia. Parents and community members strongly rejected policy examples that were introduced in April 2014 that suggested expanded lottery access, either through choice sets or citywide schools. Families wanted to know and be able to make decisions that give them control over the schools their children attend.

### *Support Predictable DCPS Pathways*

Much of the policy to support predictable DCPS pathways is in place. However, because not all four elements of a core system of zoned schools, as noted above, are in place, the benefits of the system are compromised. Having policy for attendance zones and feeder patterns alone is insufficient to effectively administer a system of zones and feeder pathways. The attendance zones for DCPS elementary schools, DCPS PK-8th grade schools, DCPS middle schools and DCPS high schools need to align to school-age population, rates of in-boundary participation, and facility capacities, as well as to transportation and other neighborhood development changes.

Therefore, the Committee recommends the following:

### *DCPS Attendance Zones*

**Recommendation 1:** Retain the existing policies on attendance zones, which give each student the right to attend a grade-appropriate school based on his/her place of residence, and adopt the updated and revised elementary and PK-8th attendance zones recommended by the Advisory Committee on Student Assignment.

**Recommendation 2:** Provide students residing in zone for a whole school dual-language elementary or PK-8th school the right to attend a non-dual language school that the Chancellor has designated as the by-right alternative to the zoned dual-language school.

**Recommendation 3:** Establish middle school attendance zones by combining elementary attendance zones designated to geographically feed into the middle school and establish high school attendance zones by combining middle school or PK-8th school zones designated to geographically feed into the high school.

**Recommendation 4:** A student whose place of residence within the District of Columbia changes from one attendance zone to a different attendance zone shall be permitted to stay in the school until the end of the school year. The student must obtain a seat through the out-of-boundary lottery via the My School DC system in order to stay at the school beyond the end of the school year.

### *DCPS Feeder Pathways*

**Recommendation 5:** Provide DCPS elementary students access by right to the middle school designated as a next-level school in the geographic feeder pattern for the elementary school they complete, regardless of whether a student lives in the attendance zone of the designated middle school.

**Recommendation 6:** Provide DCPS middle-grade students access by right to the high school designated as a next-level school in the geographic feeder pattern for the middle school they complete, regardless of whether a student lives in the attendance zone of the designated high school.

**Recommendation 7:** Provide DCPS students access by right to the designated next level school in the programmatic feeder pattern for the specialized program/school they complete.

**Recommendation 8:** Adopt the updated DCPS feeder patterns recommended by the Advisory Committee on Student Assignment. See pages 17-19 for the Recommended Geographic and Programmatic Feeder Patterns.

## *DCPS Early Childhood Access by Right*

**Recommendation 9:** Provide each child residing within the attendance zone of a DCPS Title I school by right access to PK3 and PK4 in his/her zoned DCPS school via the My School DC system.

**Recommendation 10:** Title I schools shall provide access to excess PK3 and PK4 seats in the out-of-boundary lottery via the My School DC system.

**Recommendation 11:** Non-Title I schools shall provide access by lottery to their PK3 or PK4 seats based on program availability and capacity and applicable lottery preferences.

## **2. Adequate Capacity in Zoned DCPS Schools**

An essential responsibility for DCPS, as the LEA providing the core system of zoned schools of right, is to maintain sufficient capacity to provide access to schools of right to current and future families throughout the District. The following recommendations address areas where the Advisory Committee and technical team identified a need for adequate DCPS capacity.

### *Early Childhood Capacity*

**Recommendation 12:** DCPS shall work with local schools, parents and communities to develop a written program, facility plan and budget in support of the expansion of early childhood rights for families living in zones of Title I schools.

### *Capacity for Elementary Grades*

**Recommendation 13:** DCPS shall undertake a study to consider re-opening Ferebee-Hope to adequately serve the community living within the Hendley attendance zone.

**Recommendation 14:** DCPS shall undertake a boundary and student travel study for the Kenilworth, Thomas, and River Terrace communities; consider re-opening Kenilworth; and explore options for River Terrace so the children living within the new Thomas boundary are adequately served.

**Recommendation 15:** DCPS shall undertake a boundary and student travel study to consider re-opening Marshall to adequately serve the community living within the new Langdon boundary.

### *Capacity for Middle Grades*

**Recommendation 16:** DCPS shall open a stand-alone middle school at the original Shaw Middle School site to replace the middle grades program at Cardozo High School, in order to:

- Improve middle grade academics and programming for families in Wards 1 and 2;
- Increase capacity of Cardozo HS for 9th -12th grade programming; and
- Build a strong middle grades cohort to feed into Cardozo HS from the elementary feeders.

**Recommendation 17:** DCPS shall open a stand-alone Ward 4 south middle school at the MacFarland site and phase out middle grades programming at the geographic feeder schools in order to:

- Improve middle grade academics and programming;
- Relieve current and projected crowding at nearby PK-8th schools;
- Support the expansion of early childhood access in neighborhood schools; and
- Provide a dual-language middle school feeder pathway.

**Recommendation 18:** DCPS shall identify a site for a Ward 4 North middle school no later than summer 2015 and plan to open a Ward 4 North middle school and phase out middle grades programming at the geographic feeder schools. The siting, planning and design of a new middle school should occur in concert with the Coolidge modernization process and focus on:

- Improving middle grade academics and programming;
- Relieving current and projected crowding, particularly at Brightwood and La Salle; and
- Supporting the expansion of early childhood access in neighborhood schools.

**Recommendation 19:** DCPS shall open a Ward 7 middle school with specialized and selective programming at the Ron Brown site, in order to:

- Improve middle grade academics and programming east of the Anacostia river;
- More equitably distribute selective programs in the city;
- Relieve crowding at Kelly Miller MS; and
- Increase investment in the Woodson feeder pathway to ensure a well-prepared student cohort that will matriculate to Woodson High School.

### 3. Equitable Access to High Quality Public School Options

Parents expressed strong desire for high quality neighborhood schools, but they also wanted access to schools other than their zoned schools. Acknowledging the limitations of a strictly neighborhood assignment system, the Advisory Committee supports a complementary system of school choice to address current inequities in DCPS zoned schools, the desire for socioeconomic diversity, and the desire of families to exercise personal preferences for school programs and culture. Some communities raised concerns about the travel burdens on families whose DCPS zoned elementary school is not within easy walking distance from their homes. For a complementary system of choice to be equitable, the travel costs for families and the District need to be understood and minimized.

The Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations in order to:

- Give families increased access to schools that may better fit their children’s needs or that may be more convenient for those families;
- Increase and preserve socioeconomic diversity in DCPS neighborhood zoned schools;
- Provide “at-risk” students better access to high demand public schools; and
- Ameliorate travel burdens on students and families.

#### *Out-of-Boundary Minimums*

**Recommendation 20:** Starting in SY 2015–2016, elementary schools shall maintain at least 10 percent of enrollment capacity for out-of-zone students. Middle schools and high schools shall maintain at least 15 percent and 20 percent, respectively, of their enrollment capacity for out-of-zone students. The number and percentage of out-of-zone students shall be based on all enrolled students including those who attend via special education placement, involuntary transfer, feeder rights, or because they opted to attend the by-right alternative to their dual-language zoned school.

**Recommendation 21:** Starting in SY 2018–2019, DCPS shall reserve at least 10 percent of the 6th grade seats in each DCPS zoned middle school for out-of-zone students who do not have a right to attend the school through geographic or programmatic feeder right.

**Recommendation 22:** Starting in SY 2018-19, DCPS shall reserve at least 10 percent of the new 9th grade seats (excluding enrollment of 9th grade repeaters) in each zoned high school for out-of-zone students who do not have a right to attend the school through geographic or programmatic feeder right.

## *Placement Priorities for Students Designated “At Risk”<sup>5</sup>*

**Recommendation 23:** Starting in SY2016–2017, any DCPS zoned, DCPS citywide (non-selective) and public charter school that has a student body consisting of 25 percent or less at-risk students shall give priority to “at-risk” students for 25 percent of available seats in the lottery for a given year.

Implementing this recommendation for public charter schools will require a change in law and engagement with additional stakeholders.

**Recommendation 24:** Starting in SY2016–2017, DCPS selective schools shall provide a priority for at-risk students who meet the admissions criteria for the selective school. Prior to implementation, DCPS should convene appropriate stakeholders, including community members, parents, students, and school staff (including those from selective schools) to determine the details of this policy.

## *Specialized and Selective Programs and Schools*

**Recommendation 25:** DCPS shall develop and adopt separate definitions for specialized schools or programs and for selective schools or programs.

**Recommendation 26:** DCPS shall ensure that specialized and selective programs are developed and supported in every one of the comprehensive high schools as part of their educational plans.

**Recommendation 27:** DCPS shall ensure that there is parity in specialized and selective programs within each DCPS high school feeder pathway.

**Recommendation 28:** A specialized (non-selective) school can be designated a citywide school with no attendance zone only if the grade-appropriate school serving the attendance zone where the specialized school is located is less than 75 percent utilized and has less than 70 percent of their enrollment from within their attendance zones.

**Recommendation 29:** When DCPS needs capacity for in-zone students in a particular attendance zone, then DCPS may require a DCPS city-wide school — lottery or selective — located within the attendance zone to:

- Relocate to provide capacity for students in a boundary;
- Convert to a neighborhood school and offer a non-specialized strand;
- Convert to a neighborhood school and pair with a non-specialized school to offer the traditional grade level program; or
- Provide neighborhood priority in citywide lottery.

**Recommendation 30:** DCPS shall ensure enforcement of the current policy that states that no non-resident of the District of Columbia is admitted to any DCPS school or program if there are DC residents waitlisted for placement.

## *Walking and Public Transit to Public Schools*

Throughout this process, the Advisory Committee, parents, and community members expressed a strong desire to locate and sustain DCPS zoned elementary schools that can be reached safely by walking. The Committee developed a deeper understanding for the varying walkability and transportation issues across the city. It was clear that we could not measure the ease of walking and transportation based solely on distance, but that geographic barriers, public transit routes, and the safety of the neighborhood are also important factors to consider.

Where a community is geographically isolated, the Committee recommends that a small school be considered in order to ensure equity in access to walkable schools. When this is not feasible, the Committee seeks to relieve the transportation burden placed on parents, students, and families and

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<sup>5</sup> “At Risk” is a designation in D.C. code for students who fall into at least one of the following categories: in foster care, homeless, in families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), in families receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP), or are high school students who are more than one year over-age for their grade.

find ways to better support transportation to school, which is currently the responsibility of families, not the district, except in the case of students who receive special education services. Currently all students have access to free Metrobus transportation to and from school, and subsidized Metrorail.

In many school districts where walkability is the exception rather than the organizing principle of the system, transportation is provided by the school district. The Advisory Committee and many of the participants in the public discussions believe that the District of Columbia is in the fortunate position of never having fully dismantled its walkable system of schools and strongly encourages the District to retain walk zones for elementary schools of roughly a half mile. The Committee acknowledges that the enrollment patterns are complex and that even after re-commissioning some geographically isolated schools there will still be some students and families who will have greater travel burdens than others. However, to address the limitations of the current and proposed student assignment system, boundaries and feeder pathways, the Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations:

**Recommendation 31:** Provide students who live greater than a half mile walking distance from their zoned DCPS elementary school with a proximity priority for out-of-zone placement to a DCPS elementary school that is a half mile or less walking distance from their home.

**Recommendation 32:** 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.

**Recommendation 33:** Provide free passage on Metrorail to 9th through 12th grade students for travel to and from a public school.

**Recommendation 34:** DME shall work with Metro, Metro Police, Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), DC Department of Transportation, and public school parents and students to review bus routes and other Safe Routes to School services and ensure that bus routes and services are maximized to support safe and efficient public school travel by DCPS and public charter school students.

## 4. Education Infrastructure Planning

A consistent theme throughout this process – both in public meetings and at Advisory Committee meetings – has been the need to improve school enrollment and facilities planning and management.

### *Enrollment and Facilities Planning in DCPS*

There is concern about DCPS capacity and priority for planning, managing and investing in the current and proposed student assignment and choice policies and recommendations. As the system of right, DCPS must monitor its buildings and programs, engage families and communities, and ensure that it has the capacity to meet the current and future demands for public schools.

**Recommendation 35:** DCPS shall conduct a boundary study when:

- A zoned DCPS school has been utilized at 90 percent or more and has had an in-boundary percentage of enrollment greater than 75 percent for three consecutive years; or
- A zoned DCPS school has been utilized at 60 percent or less for three consecutive years.

**Recommendation 36:** As part of the annual monitoring of school capacity and utilization, DCPS shall undertake a more detailed study of the capacity, utilization, and in-boundary participation for a zoned DCPS school that has enrollment capacity equal to or less than 45 percent of the age-appropriate public school population within the attendance zone.

**Recommendation 37:** As part of DCPS boundary studies, DCPS shall work with the local school and community to secure input into the studies on school capacity, utilization and attendance zones. This should include:

- Evaluating the school specific boundary population, in-boundary participation rates, and charter enrollments in the vicinity;

- Obtaining five- to ten-year population projections for the boundary and its adjacent boundaries;
- Identifying any school quality barriers that may be affecting school utilization; and
- Assessing the walkability and transportation concerns of students and families.

DCPS shall then identify whether any action on boundaries, co-locations, consolidations, grade configuration changes, or educational interventions are required to address the utilization concerns coming out of Recommendations 35, 36, and 37.

**Recommendation 38:** DCPS shall conduct a child population and enrollment study prior to setting the enrollment capacities for schools slated for modernization to ensure these schools are not under- or over-built.

**Recommendation 39:** The Chancellor shall support local school and community participation in the planning of re-commissioned and new schools.

**Recommendation 40:** The District shall revise DC Municipal Regulations to ensure that the same public notice and engagement requirements in DC Municipal Regulations for boundary changes are required for changes in feeder patterns.

**Recommendation 41:** In 2022, and every ten years thereafter, the District shall undergo a comprehensive review of student assignment policies, including school boundaries and feeder patterns.

### *Better Planning Across Public School Sectors*

There was widespread recognition that devising student assignment policies that support a core system of high quality neighborhood schools of right without consideration of the role played by DC's charter sector would lead to policies that do not realistically foster the stated goals of predictability and access to high quality schools close to home for families across the District. As such, the Committee worked to identify areas where we could bridge student assignment policies across sectors. The Committee strongly believes that a discussion of the decision making surrounding public school openings, expansions, re-locations, school siting, and capital investments is needed, and that policies, such as proposed in Recommendations 23 and 24, to give at-risk students priority in the lottery in schools serving few at risk students, should apply to both DCPS and public charter schools. Unfortunately, based on objections to Recommendation 23 the representative of the Public Charter School Board resigned from the Committee.

The Committee echoes the public sentiment heard throughout this process that the city must develop the means to plan its public education infrastructure across sectors and to identify the policies that should apply across sectors. To advance these objectives, the Advisory Committee makes the following recommendation.

**Recommendation 42:** The Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) shall establish a task force of relevant stakeholders, including representatives from a diverse sample of LEAs and schools, parents with students in DCPS and public charter schools, as well as residents and community leaders to make recommendations to the Mayor on the following:

- Methods and systems for information sharing across sectors;
- Structures for increased accountability and transparent decision-making on school openings, closings, co-locations, student assignment, student mobility, and capital investment across sectors; and
- Processes for securing and considering public input about school openings, closings, co-location, student assignment, student mobility, and capital investment across sectors.

By the end of December 2014 the DME will appoint members and define the charge per the recommendation above and propose a timeline for the task force.

## Phasing in Student Assignment, Boundaries and Feeder Pathways

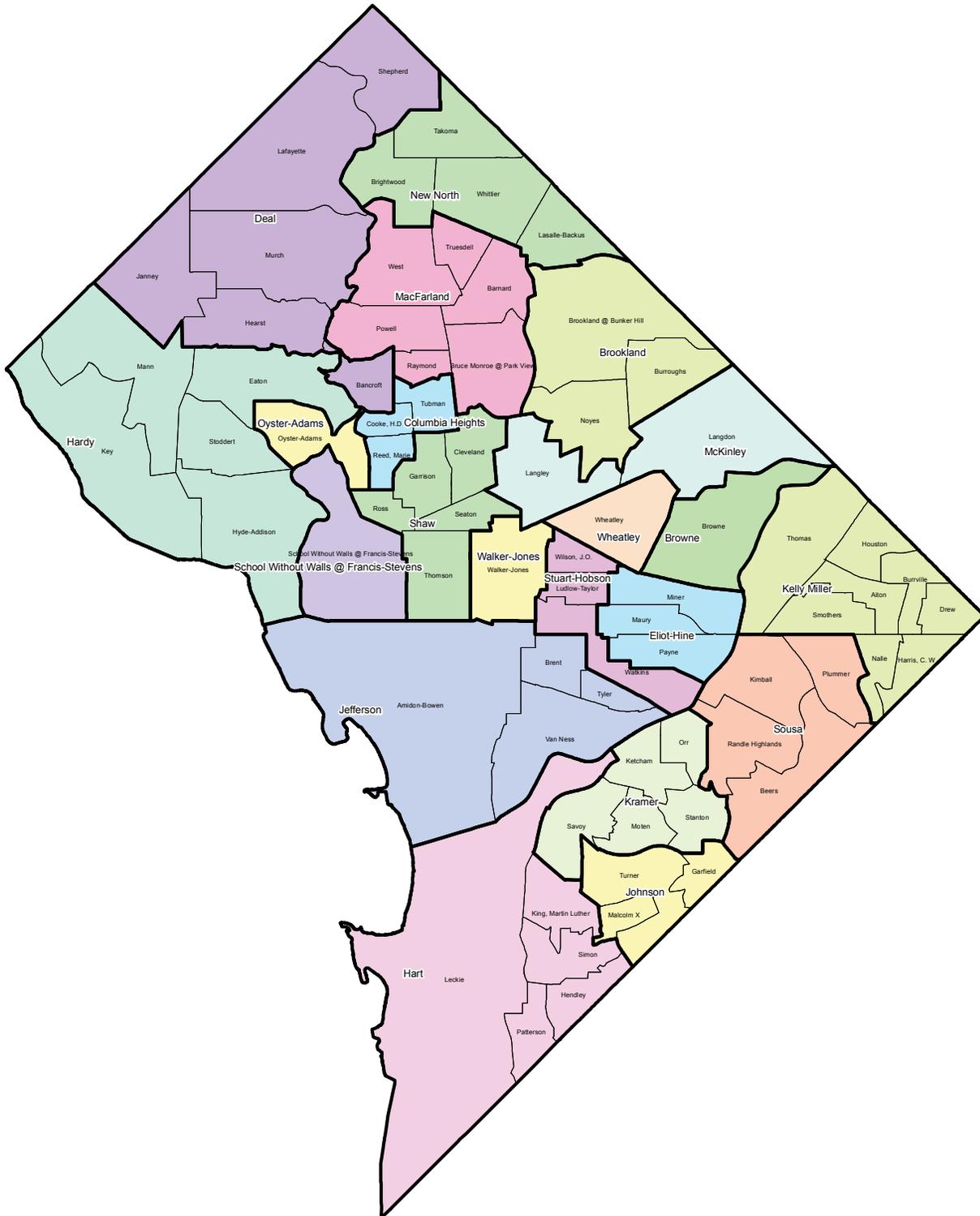
The first year any boundary or feeder changes will go into effect is SY2015-16. However, the boundary and feeder changes are phased in for families and for schools to ensure adequate transition times for families and for DCPS schools. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends the following:

- A. Starting in 2015-16, students who have been enrolled in their in-boundary school, but have been re-zoned to another school, shall maintain in-boundary rights at their current in-boundary school until they complete that school. Siblings of students defined in the previous sentence also maintain their current in-boundary rights if they have a sibling attending the school at the time of their entry to that school.
- B. Starting in 2015-16, students who have been rezoned to another school may attend their newly zoned school, by right.
- C. Starting in 2015-16 all **NEW students** shall be assigned to the newly zoned school. NEW students are defined as:
  - Students moving into an area that has been assigned to a different school;
  - Charter school students or out-of-boundary DCPS students who wish to return to their DCPS neighborhood school from their charter school or out-of-boundary DCPS school; or
  - Students who are attending a school for the first time (e.g., at the entry grade) who live in an area that has been rezoned and who do not have siblings currently attending the former assigned school.
- D. Students who are enrolled in the 3rd through 5th grade for the 2014-15 school year at an elementary school whose feeder pathway changes shall have the right to continue to their former destination school OR to their newly designated feeder pathway beginning in the 2015-16 school year.
- E. Students who are in PK3 through 2nd grade as of the 2014-15 school year shall feed into the newly designated feeder pathway, unless they have a sibling attending the former destination school at the time of transition.
- F. Students enrolled in the 6th through 8th grades for the 2014-15 school year at a school whose high school feeder pathway changes shall have the right to continue in their former feeder pathway OR the newly designated pathway beginning in the 2015-16 school year.
- G. Students whose new feeder pathway relies on the opening of a new school shall retain their current feeder pathway and geographic rights until the new school is open.

## Technical Follow-Up to Advisory Committee Recommendations

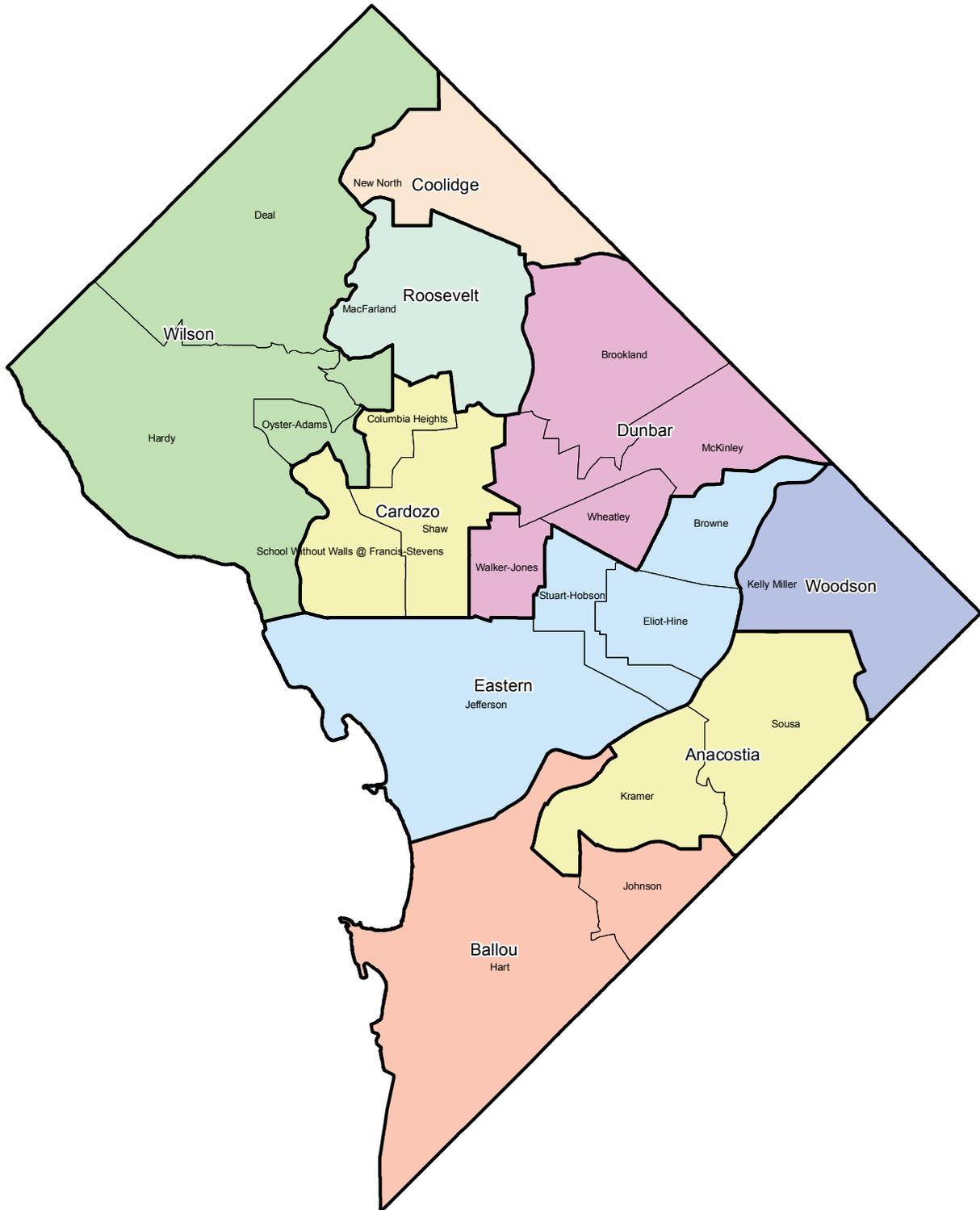
There is follow-up work that must happen to develop an implementation plan that includes final fiscal impact analysis and capital and facility planning implications. The technical team will work with DCPS and DME to support the development of an implementation plan and timeline.

# Recommended Middle School Attendance Zones and Geographic Feeder Elementary Schools



Note: The elementary schools recommended to feed the same designated middle school are shaded the same color. For instance, H.D. Cooke ES, Marie Reed ES and Tubman ES are recommended to feed to Columbia Heights EC and they are uniformly shaded a blue color.

## Recommended High School Attendance Zones and Geographic Feeder Middle Schools



Note: The middle schools recommended to feed the same high school are shaded the same color. For instance, Sousa MS and Kramer MS are recommended to feed to Anacostia HS and they are uniformly shaded a yellow color.

## Recommended Geographic Feeder Pathways

<b>ANACOSTIA HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 8)</b>			
Ketcham ES	Kramer MS	Anacostia HS	
Moten ES			
Orr ES			
Savoy ES			
Stanton ES			
Beers ES	Sousa MS		
Kimball ES			
Plummer ES			
Randle-Highlands ES			
<b>BALLOU HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 8)</b>			
Hendley ES	Hart MS	Ballou HS	
King ES			
Leckie ES			
Simon ES			
Patterson ES			
Garfield ES	Johnson MS		
Malcolm X ES			
Turner ES			
<b>WOODSON HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 7)</b>			
C.W. Harris ES	Kelly Miller MS		Woodson HS
Houston ES			
J.C. Nalle ES			
Aiton ES			
Burrville ES			
Drew ES			
Smothers ES			
Thomas ES			
N/A	Ron Brown MS (Specialized and selective citywide school)		

<b>EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 6)</b>		
Maury ES	Eliot-Hine MS	Eastern HS
Miner ES		
Payne ES		
School-within-School ES (citywide school with no boundary)		
Capitol Hill Montessori @Logan PS-8 (citywide school with no boundary)		
Browne PS-8	Jefferson Acad. MS	
Brent ES		
Tyler ES		
Amidon-Bowen ES		
Van Ness ES		
J.O. Wilson ES	Stuart-Hobson MS	
Peabody/Watkins ES		
Ludlow-Taylor ES		
<b>COOLIDGE HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 4)</b>		
Brightwood ES (To be converted to elementary)	New North MS	Coolidge HS
Takoma ES (To be converted to elementary)		
Whittier ES (To be converted to elementary)		
La Salle-Backus ES (To be converted to elementary)		
<b>ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 4)</b>		
Barnard ES	MacFarland MS	Roosevelt HS
Truesdell ES (To be converted to elementary)		
Powell ES		
Bruce-Monroe ES		
Raymond ES (To be converted to elementary)		
West ES (To be converted to elementary)		
<b>CARDOZO HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 1)</b>		
Cleveland ES	Shaw MS	Cardozo HS
Garrison ES		
Ross ES		
Seaton ES		
Thomson ES		
Tubman ES	Columbia Heights MS	
Marie Reed ES		
H.D. Cooke ES		
SWW at Francis-Stevens EC		

<b>DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 5)</b>		
Brookland at Bunker Hill ES (To be converted to elementary)	Brookland MS	Dunbar HS
Burroughs ES (To be converted to elementary)		
Noyes ES (To be converted to elementary)		
Langdon ES (To be converted to elementary)	McKinley Tech. Ed. Campus (6-8)	
Langley ES		
Walker Jones EC		
Wheatley EC		
<b>WILSON HIGH SCHOOL (Ward 3)</b>		
Bancroft ES	Deal MS	Wilson HS
Janney ES		
Lafayette ES		
Murch ES		
Shepherd ES		
Hearst ES		
Eaton ES	Hardy MS	
Hyde/Addison ES		
Key ES		
Mann ES		
Stoddert ES		
Oyster-Adams EC		

## Recommended Programmatic Feeder Pathways

<b>ELEMENTARY</b>	<b>MIDDLE</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
<b>Dual-Language Programs</b>		
Powell ES DL Program	MacFarland DL Program	Roosevelt DL Program
Bruce-Monroe ES		
Bancroft ES		
Cleveland ES DL Program		
Marie Reed ES DL Program		
Tyler DL Program		
N/A	CHEC MS	
Oyster-Adams EC		
<b>STEM Programs</b>		
N/A	McKinley MS	Woodson HS

To download a copy of this report and for more information about the data and maps used by the Advisory Committee on Student Assignment, please visit: [dme.dc.gov/boundaries](https://dme.dc.gov/boundaries)