

**Policy Statement #4400 (Supporting Services) of the Board of Education Regarding
Educational Facilities Planning and School Geographical Attendance Areas**

I. Purpose

- A. To maintain throughout the county a reasonably uniform and efficient system of public schools that is designed to provide high quality education and equitable educational opportunity for all children.
- B. To provide for the development of an educational facilities master plan that leads to the development of a capital improvement plan.
- C. To establish a new public school or expand existing facilities if the Board of Education determines it is advisable.
- D. To provide a process to be used in making decisions to consolidate and close schools.
- E. To determine with the advice of the Superintendent the geographical attendance area for each school

II. Definitions

- A. Capital Improvement Plan – the annual Public School Construction Program submission outlining the funding requests for new school construction, renovations, and systemic improvement projects.
- B. Educational Facility Master Plan – the annual Public School Construction Program submission which elaborates on the school system’s principles of planning and evaluating community needs, methods of instruction and educational objectives as they relate to school facilities (including schools and support facilities)
- C. Geographical Attendance Area – the current school attendance boundaries approved by the Board of Education that are used to determine the home school of attendance for students.
- D. Overcrowded – the student enrollment at a school exceeds the school’s capacity to such a degree that one or more of the following conditions exist: school enrollment is beyond its State Rated Capacity; there are an insufficient number of general classroom places; the building core cannot support the school population; and/or school space is used for other than its usual intended purpose in order to deliver instruction.
- E. Underutilized- the student enrollment at a school is below the school’s capacity and is projected to remain at that low level for the foreseeable future to such a degree that it is programmatically and/or financially advisable to close the school.

III. Policy Statement

- A. The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to provide a reasonably uniform and efficient system of public schools that is designed to provide high quality education and

equitable educational opportunity for all children. The Board fulfills this responsibility in part by ensuring the development of a well-designed, long-range educational facilities plan which is regularly reviewed and revised to meet the needs of high-quality educational programming, changing enrollment patterns, and geographic shifts in population. In addition, the Board strives to ensure that facilities are used efficiently and effectively.

- B. The Board recognizes that broad stakeholder input into the educational facilities planning process and the establishment of school geographical attendance areas is necessary for successful implementation of developed plans.
 - C. The Board is committed to working with the Superintendent and appropriate local and state officials to secure the necessary resources to implement the educational facilities master plan.
 - D. The Board will consider adjusting school geographical attendance areas when a school is constructed, closed, an addition to an existing school is constructed, when one or more schools are or are predicted to become overcrowded or underutilized, or when an emergency situation arises.
 - E. When establishing the school geographical attendance areas, the Board will consider facility utilization, impact on educational programming, enrollment trends, student demographics, number of students from outside of the established school geographical attendance areas attending affected schools, transportation, cost, impact to communities and neighborhoods, and enrollment patterns among school levels. These factors are not listed in priority order, and, while each of these factors will be considered, it may be impractical to reconcile each and every school geographical attendance adjustment with each and every factor.
- IV. Delegation of Authority
- A. The Superintendent of Schools is directed to develop administrative procedures to implement this policy in accordance with all local policies and local, state and federal laws and regulations and to communicate this policy and accompanying procedures to all relevant parties.
- V. Exceptions
- A. There are no exceptions to this policy. However, the Board by majority vote may temporarily suspend all or part of this policy. Suspension of all or part of this policy, however, in no way relieves the Board of its obligation to comply with the pertinent local, state and federal laws and regulations and the rules and regulations of the Maryland State Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education.
- VI. Review
- A. This policy will be reviewed at the end of four years, or sooner, if approved by majority vote of the Board of Education in public session.
- VII. Effective Date
- A. This policy is effective June 10, 2021.

Citations

State Law: §§4-101, 4-108, and 4-109; 4-115, 4-120 Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland

State Reg.: COMAR 13A.02.09; 14.39.02.02

Federal Law:

Adm. Reg.:

Neg. Agr.:

Other Citation:

Related Policy

3925 Regarding Student Transfers

Supporting Services #4400

Adopted: 1/11/07

Revised: 6/9/11; 6/12/14; 7/12/18; 6/10/21

Page **3** of **3**