PARENT PREFERENCE/MANAGED CHOICE POLICY

The Rochester City School District is legally and morally obligated to educate all the students who are legally enrolled in the school district and to educate students in a way that is equitable for all students. This policy provides for an orderly and equitable assignment of all students enrolled in public schools. The implementation of changes to this policy will be implemented for the school year 2024-25, in alignment with the District's reorganization plan.

1. The Board charges the Superintendent with implementing enrollment and assignment of students at all grade levels – while taking into consideration special focus schools that have entrance requirements based on academic or other criteria – using a variation of the *Parent Preference/Managed Choice Student Assignment Plan*.

2. The Superintendent:
    a. may alter the Attendance Zone boundaries once a year if needed after soliciting student and parent input;
    b. is encouraged to limit seating via lottery (kindergarten, 7th and 9th grades) to 85% of available seats to provide space for families moving into the City; and
    c. may adjust class capacity (override/waiver) up to bargaining agreement limits and any other state limitations.

3. This Board policy endorses and directs the implementation of a **three** Student Attendance Zone model that is predicated on the following:

    a. Proximity preference choices will be honored except where physical barriers such as railroad tracks and the Genesee River present hazards and where no pedestrian bridge or walkway is available to mitigate the hazard (refer to bullet 3cii);

    b. Parents/Guardians of students in grades PK-8 may choose the potential schools they want their children to attend by their own rank order of preference within their respective student attendance zone;

    c. Students will be matched to zone schools of choice by a computerized lottery, which requires the District to assign students to their first choice school in accordance with the following priorities: (a) Sibling Preference when there is one child enrolled at a school for the next school year living in the same household; (b) Pre-kindergarten preference where if a student attended a school for PreK and is within their zone, they would have a preference to a kindergarten seat (this preference does not apply in city-wide schools); and (c) 0.75-mile proximity preference for up to 60% of capacity;

        i. Proximity Preference is defined as:
        If a family does not have any school within 0.75 miles of their residence (as the car drives), then the school nearest that residence (without regard to zone boundaries except if there are significant hazards or barriers to walking, such as the river or railroad tracks) shall carry the walk zone preference, so that every family can benefit from walk zone preference;

        ii. If the closest school is beyond a 0.75-mile radius where traffic hazards exist as determined by applicable District transportation policies, then students may be eligible for transportation;

d. Students are assigned to schools based on the address of the custodial parent/guardian. Non-custodial parents, babysitters, or other address considerations shall not apply;

e. Students who cannot be accommodated in first-choice schools will be assigned to their second-choice schools, then to their third-choice schools, and so on;

f. Students who are enrolled at the *Welcome Center* (Office of Student Equity & Placement) walk-in will be assigned to schools based on available seats and adherence to contractual class limit sizes as set forth in the RTA contract;

g. Families who move before September 30th will be assigned to a school in their new Attendance Zone. Students may continue to attend the school of their original assignment until the end of that academic year if the move occurs after September 30th. Placement will coordinate with families to secure a seat within the school of their new attendance zone;

h. For returning families to the District, only at the request of the family, every effort will be made to place the student at their last school enrolled if grade appropriate and within attendance zone;

i. The *Parent Preference/Managed Choice Policy Transfer Option will* occur concurrent with the assignment lottery and no later than September 30;

j. Voluntary transfers will be permitted only once at the elementary level, once at the middle school level and once at the high school level – 11th and 12th grade students <u>will not</u> be permitted a voluntary transfer. Voluntary transfer applications will be accepted from April 30th to June 30th for the following school year, with students placed by August 31st if seats are available in the desired school;
    i. Safety, medical, and hardship transfers are available throughout the school year. To begin this process, contact your child's school as this type of transfer requires additional documentation and participation from school administrative staff. Once a transfer has been reviewed, families will receive notification from District personnel about the acceptance or denial of a safety, medical, or hardship transfer request.

k. Citywide schools are required to recruit students from each zone so that no student is denied access to a citywide school because of where they live and that all are given proportionate access;

l. Citywide special education classes that serve relatively few students with disabilities will be located centrally so that they are more accessible to students with disabilities residing in each zone;

m. Students with disabilities are provided choice as long as there is an appropriate program and services aligned with the student's Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) at the school of choice. Parents/guardians of students with disabilities have the opportunity to select the schools they believe are best suited for their children <u>within</u> their respective student attendance zone;

n. Each attendance zone should have sufficient capacity to accommodate the instructional needs of its special education students who are not enrolled in citywide special education classes; and

o. Parents/guardians of English Language Learners will have the opportunity to choose the schools they believe are most educationally appropriate for their children within their respective Student Attendance Zone.

Review & Reporting

District administration shall annually review this policy for amendment or rescission, and present such recommendations, if there are any, to the Board in sufficient time for the Board to act upon the recommendations to the policy by October 31st. The administration will also report on this policy's implementation, outcomes, and impact through qualitative and quantitative data as mutually agreed upon by the Board and District administration. This data shall include, but is not limited to, the percentage of students receiving their first and second choice of schools, the percentage of students who participated in the lottery, the percentage of students that utilized sibling or walk zone preference, the percentage of students that requested a transfer (voluntary, safety, medical, and hardship), and the percentage of students that received a transfer (voluntary, safety, medical, and hardship). At a minimum, the data shall be disaggregated by school and appropriate grade levels.

Cross-ref: Voluntary Transfer Process Regulation (5153-R)
Transportation of Students & Others (8400)

NYSSBA Ref: Student Assignment to Schools and Classes (5153) – Recommended Policy

Notes: Adopted October 17, 2002; Amended February 12, 2004; May 22, 2008; Amended July 27, 2023 pursuant to Resolution No. 2023-24: 137; Amended October 24, 2024 pursuant to Resolution No. 2024-25: 314; Reviewed October 30, 2025 with no amendments pursuant to Resolution No. 2025-26: 245; Amended October 29, 2026 pursuant to Resolution No. 2026-27: 337

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