

Article VII.G.1. Annual Student Population Review Procedures

A. Purpose

Based on its statutory responsibility and authority to do all things necessary for the maintenance, prosperity, and success of schools and for the promotion of education, the Board of Education establishes the following procedures in order to provide for the ongoing, systematic, and orderly review of student populations, school boundaries and school facility issues.

B. Definitions

1. “Facility Master Plan” means a plan regarding capital projects for the coming fiscal year, including new construction, building replacement or major upgrade, consolidation of existing facilities, and property acquisition for future sites. The plan is updated and approved by the Board of Education annually.
2. “Population analysis committee” means a committee of district employees with expertise in student population, school boundary and school facility issues. The committee studies the issues and advises the board regarding solutions to resolve the issues.
3. “School committee” means the principal and at least three parents or guardians representing different geographic areas of the school, appointed by the parent and guardian members of the school’s community council.
4. “Strategy” means a possible approach or tactic for addressing an issue or problem. A strategy serves to distinguish competing solutions to issues or problems by establishing a desired standard or value. For example, “establish contiguous boundaries” may be a strategy against which potential solutions to issues may be measured.
5. “Study list” means a list of population, boundary and facility issues identified by the population analysis committee.

C. Study List Development

1. The population analysis committee shall prepare and recommend a study list to the Board of Education in February of each year. The recommended study list shall be developed considering concerns received from individuals and entities such as district employees, patrons, parent and community organizations, municipalities, governmental entities and agencies etc.
2. The study list is subject to approval by the board. The board retains discretion to add, delete and modify issues being reviewed at any time.

D. Population Analysis

1. The population analysis committee reviews the study list that has been approved by the board and gathers such information and conducts such research as is necessary to develop potential solutions for the issues.

2. The board may, at its own initiative or at the administration's recommendation, establish strategies to guide the population analysis committee in the development and review of potential solutions. At its discretion, the board may request public input on various strategies prior to establishing final strategies for the population analysis committee's application.
3. The population analysis committee shall notify principals that their schools are being studied and give the reasons why the school has been placed on the study list. The principal provides this information to the parent and guardian members of the school community council so that a school committee may be appointed. The population analysis committee shall request and consider feedback from the school committee while preparing potential solutions.
4. Acknowledging the importance of our public schools as community assets that foster community-wide support for education and encourage and create a sense of cohesion and cooperation in the communities and neighborhoods of the District, the population analysis committee shall seek to reinforce the concept of neighborhood schools and nurture the success of neighborhood schools. Further, the committee shall endeavor to maximize opportunities for students and provide effective and efficient access to District facilities, programs and resources while respecting the paramount importance of student safety. The population analysis committee may also consider factors such as the following as recommendations develop:
  - a. Contiguous boundaries
  - b. Cost effectiveness
  - c. Limited use of relocatables
  - d. Minimal busing
  - e. Program stability
  - f. Protection of special populations
  - g. Reasonableness
  - h. Resolution of other challenges
  - i. Student enrollment
5. The population analysis committee shall consider consolidation of existing facilities when:
  - a. A facility is identified on the Facility Master Plan as needing replacement or major upgrade.
  - b. The enrollment of a school being studied could be combined with neighboring schools without creating additional safety, transportation or instructional issues.

E. Population Analysis Initial Report

1. The population analysis committee shall prepare a written initial report outlining potential solutions and the deliberations leading to the development of potential solutions.
2. In June, the report shall be presented to the board in a workshop or similar board meeting which allows opportunity for the board to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues being studied and how the population analysis committee has evaluated potential solutions.

F. Development of Recommended Solutions

1. Following presentation of the initial report, the population analysis committee shall refine the potential solutions based on the board's discussion and present the potential solutions to school committees from areas which could be affected.
2. The population analysis committee shall receive feedback from the school committees and refine potential solutions as appropriate.
3. Based on the guidelines of this policy, specific board direction and strategies if applicable, the population analysis committee shall develop recommended solutions to the issues identified on the study list.
4. The population analysis committee shall present the recommended solutions to the board for approval for presentation at open house meetings in September.

G. Board Action on Recommended Solutions

1. Under the direction of the board, open house meetings shall be scheduled for presentation of the recommended solutions to the public and receipt of the public's comment.
2. Presentation of recommended solutions at open house meetings is subject to approval by the board. The board retains discretion to add, delete and modify solutions at any time.
3. Communities which could be affected shall be informed of recommended solutions and open house meetings through school notices, mail, and other appropriate means.
4. Public input shall be gathered, reviewed, and catalogued for review by the board and population analysis committee.
5. The population analysis committee shall revise recommended solutions based on the public input received. In November, the recommended solutions shall be presented to the board in writing in a workshop or similar board meeting which allows opportunity for the board to review the public input and to gain an in-depth understanding of how the recommended solutions have been developed.

H. Board Action on Final Recommendations

1. Based on the guidance received from the board, the population analysis committee presents final recommendations to the board following policy adoption procedures.
2. The board may ask for public input at board meetings when final recommendations are presented but may structure the input time at its discretion.

I. Consulting Services

In lieu of any or all of subsections C through H.1, the board retains discretion to employ the services of consultants to prepare recommendations for board action following policy adoption procedures. At such time as the board exercises its discretion under this subsection, the board will establish timelines for the discussion of information, reports or recommendations provided by consultants.