

**Providence Public School Board Policy**  
**STUDENTS**  
**ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS**

<b>Purpose</b>	<p>The student assignment plan is intended to achieve the following five goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement an assignment process that is fair and equitable for every child in Providence</li> <li>2. Provide families with greater input into the school their children will attend</li> <li>3. Provide students with a greater opportunity to attend Neighborhood schools</li> <li>4. Allow siblings to attend the same school</li> <li>5. Allow equal, city-wide access for all interested secondary students to Career and Technical Education programs of study.</li> </ol>
<b>Students Affected</b>	<p>The assignment plan, notwithstanding certain provisions which apply to a limited subset of students, affects all students in grades K – 12.</p>
<b>General Procedures</b>	<p>School assignment will take place during the spring prior to the next school year. The School Department will publish a calendar of registration dates and deadlines on its website no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> of each year for the following school year.</p> <p>Families with students entering kindergarten, grade 6 and grade 9 will be allowed to indicate four preferred school choices for their child/children and will be required to make their choices by the assigned deadlines.</p> <p>Students will be placed in order of their choices to the extent school capacity allows.</p> <p>If there are more requests than seats, students of equal priority with the same preference for the same school, or accepted applicants in secondary Career and Technical Education programs of study, are randomly ordered for purposes of determining assignment.</p> <p>Students who register after the initial deadline are ineligible for the lottery and will be assigned after all of the lottery students are placed.</p>
<b>Neighborhood School Defined</b>	<p>“Neighborhood” schools for this plan are those schools that are based on the distance of a student’s residence of record – one mile for grades K-5, one and one-half miles for grades 6 – 8, and three miles for grades 9 – 12. Under this plan there is also the opportunity for students to choose a school that is not their Neighborhood school.</p> <p>Every family will have at a minimum two (2) Neighborhood schools. Some students may have more than two Neighborhood schools, giving them more neighborhood choices. Those students who do not have at least two schools within their “neighborhood” will still have their two closest schools count as Neighborhood schools.</p>

	<p>Additionally, students who are enrolled in certain educational programs that are offered at a limited number of schools (ELL programs, special education / inclusion programs) will have a minimum of two (2) Neighborhood schools if such programs are offered at more than one school. For these students, the two schools closest to the student's residence of record that offer the appropriate educational program will be designated as Neighborhood schools. If the appropriate educational program is offered at only one school, then that school will be deemed the student's Neighborhood school.</p>
<b>Residence Defined</b>	<p>A child's residence is determined by where the custodial parent(s) or legal guardian(s) resides; children living in group homes, shelters, foster care, child caring facilities, or any other Rhode Island state agency facility shall have residency determined by the location of such home / facility. Any child who is homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act, may use either the last residence prior to homelessness as the child's residence or the current location as child's residence.</p>
<b>Allocation of Seats</b>	<p>General education and ELL seats for transition grades (Kindergarten, grade 6 and grade 9) are allocated as set forth below:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Category One: 80% of the general education and ELL seats in each school will be allocated for "neighborhood" students</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Category Two: 20% of the general education and ELL seats in each school will be allocated for "non-neighborhood" students</p> <p>Within each category, students who will have a sibling in the school at the time of entry will be given priority over students who will not have a sibling in school.</p> <p>Assignments are made in order of preferences: first, all 1st choice requests are processed; students who are unsuccessful with their first choice are processed with all 2nd choice requests, and so on through 4th choice requests.</p> <p>Students who do not receive any of their 4 choices are assigned based on closest school with an available seat in the appropriate educational program.</p> <p>Students entering Kindergarten, grade 6 or grade 9 and receiving special education services are allowed to indicate up to four preferred school choices and will be required to make their choices by the assigned deadlines.</p>

<p><b>Advanced Academic programs, Exam High School</b></p>	<p>Assignments to an Advanced Academic program or Classical High School are made without regard to neighborhood status and seats are not allocated into neighborhood / non-neighborhood categories.</p> <p>Students who apply to an Advanced Academic program or Classical High School when entering grade 6 or grade 9 should also complete school choice forms to provide school preferences in the event that the student does not gain admission to such program / school.</p>
<p><b>Sibling Definition</b></p>	<p>Siblings are defined as children who reside in the same household with a common parent/guardian.</p> <p>Cousins or other relatives who reside at the same address and who do not share a common parent/guardian do not qualify; foster children do. Twins/multiples are siblings who are in the same grade level, regardless of birthday.</p> <p>Sibling priority for assignment to school is applied when siblings are registering at the same time to attend Providence Schools (i.e., all are new to PPSD).</p> <p>Sibling priority is also applied for transition grades (Kindergarten, grade 6 and grade 9).</p> <p>Sibling priority only belongs to a lower-grade student following an upper-grade student or for two students (twins, etc) who will be in the same school the following year, For example, a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student may claim sibling preference for the school attended by her 4<sup>th</sup> grade sibling, but she cannot claim the preference if her sibling is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade as the sibling will not be in that school the following year.</p> <p>Students cannot claim sibling preference based upon a younger sibling; e.g., a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student cannot claim sibling preference into the school that his 6<sup>th</sup> grade sibling is attending.</p>
<p><b>Special Education Seats</b></p>	<p>Families with children enrolled in Special Education educational programs may choose from a list of schools offering the most suitable programs consistent with the student's individual education plan.</p> <p>Proximity to the student's residence of record is taken into account when special education assignments are made.</p>

<p><b>Career and Technical Education assignment, applications, wait list, and program transfers</b></p>	<p>Assignments to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study are made without regard to neighborhood status and seats are not allocated into neighborhood / non-neighborhood categories.</p> <p>Students who apply to a Career and Technical Education program of study shall be assigned by matching competency for the program, rather than by school building, through an application process completed in grade 8 (effective immediately for the Providence Career and Technical Academy and effective July 1, 2013 for all other CTE programs in Providence High Schools). Such students should also complete school choice forms to provide school preferences in the event that the student does not gain admission to such program.</p> <p>When accepted applicants for a particular Career and Technical Education program of study exceed seats available, students of equal priority with the same preference for the same program of study are randomly ordered for purposes of determining assignment.</p> <p>Wait lists for Career and Technical Education programs will be kept by program rather than by school, and names ranked in the order drawn. If seats open in the program, students will be assigned to fill seats following this order.</p> <p>Students may transfer from one CTE program to another if it is determined mutually by the student and the school that the original assignment is not an effective match, based on interest. Such transfers will be facilitated outside of the comprehensive high school building transfer process guidelines, in an expeditious manner, to ensure enough time in the program for students to earn industry certification before graduation.</p> <p>Student transfers to the Providence Career and Technical Academy must happen before the end of the first quarter of grade ten.</p>
<p><b>Excess Demand for Seats</b></p>	<p>When seats requested exceed seats available for a particular grade / educational program, students of equal priority with a preference for the same school are randomly ordered for purposes of determining assignment</p> <p>Once all seats are filled, the order of students continues for placement of student names on the wait list.</p>
<p><b>Waiting List</b></p>	<p>A wait list will be maintained in any grade/educational program where demand for seats exceeds supply. The wait list may be limited in size For transition grades, students may be placed on up to 3 wait lists for schools of higher choice preference. For non-transition grades, students may be placed on up to 2 wait lists. Once a student is moved from the wait list into an open seat, the student's name will be removed from all wait lists. Waitlists are cleared when the lottery is run (on or about March 1) each school year. Parents are responsible for informing the school district of their desire to be placed on the waiting list each year.</p>

	The registration center will fill empty seats from the sibling waitlist first, the neighborhood waitlist second, and the non-neighborhood waitlist last.
<b>School Closure</b>	In the case of school closure, the process for re-assignment of students will be determined by PPSD. All special education reassignments will be determined by the Office of Special Populations.
<b>Oversight Committee and Periodic Review</b>	In order to ensure the integrity of the plan an Oversight Committee will be formed. This committee will consist of community members outside of the School Department and will be responsible for reviewing the plan on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the adopted policies and procedures and make recommendations to the School Department to improve the system. In addition, criteria will be developed that will trigger an automatic review by the Oversight Committee. This criterion could include data pertaining to racial isolation, parent complaints, etc.
<b>Registration Center</b>	<p>The registration center and the registration process will be designed (a) to comply with the assignment policy and (b) be customer focused. Items that will be reviewed in the design of this center and process will include but are not limited to: staffing issues (quantity and quality), registration center locations, registration center hours, and parent notification.</p> <p>A position of “ombudsman” will be created. The ombudsman will serve as a troubleshooter for families that are experiencing difficulty with the process or feel that they have not been treated in a fair and equitable manner.</p>
<b>Exceptions</b>	The superintendent or designee may assign a limited number of students who actively participate in school development activities to a specific school without participation in the lottery process.
<b>Safety and Hardship Transfers</b>	<p>Safety and Hardship transfers move students outside of the lottery process, and as such they should be rare and done only under the most compelling circumstances. Principals in a student’s current school must exhaust all possible avenues to address the student’s concern before recommending a transfer. Final authority to approve or deny a transfer rests with the superintendent’s designee. Transfer requests are reviewed as follows:</p> <p><b><u>Hardship</u></b></p> <p>The following are issues that can be considered for a hardship transfer:</p>

	<p>1. Distance, only if the student is eligible for transportation but the district is not able to provide service to the student’s residence.</p> <p>2. Before/After school needs – if the school the student is currently assigned to a school without before/after school programming and there is another school that has those programs available.</p> <p>3. Placement Conflict – if the family has student(s) assigned in other schools AND the family did not request the students to be placed in different schools.</p> <p>4. Other – Another significant event or condition that prevents the student from regularly attending school.</p> <p>Academic performance of the student or the school is never considered valid reasons for a hardship transfer.</p> <p>The superintendent’s designee shall investigate the reasons for the hardship transfer request, identify potential solutions short of a transfer that might help ameliorate the student’s problem, and work with the family and principal to implement those alternatives. If these alternatives are ineffectual, then the designee may determine if a transfer is warranted. The decision of the designee is final.</p> <p><b><u>Safety</u></b></p> <p>The following are issues that can be considered for a safety transfer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bullying – A student may ask for a transfer if the student is being bullied. This request will be considered as part of the resolution of the bullying complaint.</li> <li>2. Restraining Orders – A student who has restraining orders for and/or against them may be moved with a safety transfer.</li> <li>3. Threats of Violence– A student who is subject to credible threats of violence from members of the school community or nearby neighborhood.</li> <li>4. Assault – Students who have been physically assaulted by other students within the school may request a safety transfer.</li> <li>5. Other – Another significant event or condition that threatens the student’s safety.</li> </ol> <p>Academic performance of the student or the school is never considered valid reasons for a hardship transfer.</p> <p>The superintendent’s designee shall investigate the reasons for the safety transfer request, identify potential solutions short of a transfer that might help ameliorate the</p>
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	student's problem, and work with the family and principal to implement those alternatives. If these alternatives do not appear sufficient, then the designee may determine if a transfer is warranted. The decision of the designee is final.
<b>Parent Notification and Engagement</b>	For the plan to be successful, it is critical that all parents understand the plan and all the relevant deadlines. A comprehensive public notification and public engagement plan will be created. This plan will include print media, radio and possible television. In addition, social services agencies, community organizations, religious institutions and other social organizations will be used to get out the word. All communications will be delivered in the appropriate languages to ensure the greatest impact.
<b>Review</b>	
<b>Legal Reference</b>	[References to any RI laws governing this]
<b>History</b>	<p>Adopted: December 13, 1999 Resolution 429</p> <p>Amended: March 9, 200 Resolution 2-76-00</p> <p>Amended: June 23, 2003 Resolution 6-32-03</p> <p>Amended: November 22, 2004 Resolution 11-22-04</p> <p>Amended: February 28, 2005 Resolution 2</p> <p>Amended: January 24, 2008</p> <p>Amended: November 10, 2008</p> <p>Amended: January 9, 2012</p> <p>Amended: November 26, 2012</p> <p>Amended: November 24, 2014</p>