

A. ASSIGNMENT AREAS

School assignment areas will be established by the board and all modifications or alterations in school assignment areas must be approved by the board. The assignment areas shall be developed in accordance with state requirements and court rulings; the need to serve all school-age children who live in the school system; and the effective use of each school facility. Assignments shall be made in a non-discriminatory manner.

The superintendent shall review the assignment areas annually and make recommendations to the board on the maintenance or alteration of established school assignment areas.

B. ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS

The superintendent shall assign students to particular schools based upon the established assignment areas. Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, the superintendent shall assign homeless students in a manner consistent with state and federal law and board policy 4125, Homeless Students. Tuition students shall be assigned to the school attendance area closest to their place of residence. Students requiring special services or programs not available at the school within their normal assignment area may be assigned by the superintendent or designee to a more appropriate school, with transportation provided by the school system.

Students who are participating in or whose parent is participating in the North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program established by G.S. Chapter 15C shall be assigned on the basis of their actual address, but such address shall remain confidential in accordance with law and board policy 4250/5075/7316, North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program.

C. REQUESTS FOR REASSIGNMENT**1. Discretionary Transfer Requests**

Parents or guardians may request that their children be assigned to a school outside their area of current residence for one or more of the following reasons:

- a. extreme hardship situations affecting the physical or emotional welfare of the child;
- b. high school students who desire a course of study not provided by the school serving their attendance area;
- c. a parent or guardian who is employed by the school system and requests that his or her child be assigned to a school in the attendance area in which the student's parent or guardian works;

- d. to accommodate child care needs, especially for students in kindergarten through grade five; and
- e. parents who are under contract for purchase and provide proof of purchase of a residence, or lease of residence, in a different school attendance area, upon the condition they will move to the new residence on or before a specified date.

Any reason having to do with athletics or participation in athletics is not a valid or sufficient explanation of need. Students in grades 9-12 granted transfer requests will be ineligible for participation in athletics for a period of 365 calendar days following their date of enrollment in the out of attendance area school. Exceptions will only be permitted under two conditions:

- a. Any student who completes one full academic year at a Carteret County Public Schools middle school in the eighth grade, and is out of district for that middle school, will be immediately eligible at the high school in which that middle school feeds if all North Carolina High School Athletic Association rules and regulations are met.
 - b. A waiver of this 365-day waiting period may be considered by a committee appointed by the Board of Education in cases where the transfer is due to medical need not able to be met at the domicile school; an agency requirement, such as that governed by the Department of Social Services; or situations where the transfer was necessitated in order to protect the safety of the student. This committee will consist of the superintendent and two board of education members appointed by the board. The committee will make a recommendation to the board, with the board's decision being final.
2. Procedure for Requesting Reassignment Before Notice of Assignment

Before notice is given of assignment for the following school year, parents or guardians may request assignment to a school outside of their regular attendance area after first communicating the reason for the request to the home district principal. Such a request may then be made by submitting the Request for Change of School Assignment form, in writing, to the principal of the requested school by June 1. The superintendent may also request from parents or guardians other documentation, including (1) a letter from a medical doctor supporting an extreme hardship request, certifying the existence of a physical or emotional problem necessitating transfer; (2) a letter from the school system's psychologist or a private psychologist licensed by the State of North Carolina supporting the extreme hardship request, certifying the existence of an emotional problem necessitating transfer; or (3) any other documentation the superintendent deems to be appropriate.

The superintendent shall consider and make a determination based upon the best interest of the child, the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools, the proper administration of the school to which assignment is requested, and the

instruction, health and safety of the pupils there enrolled. A decision shall be made and the parent notified by July 15. If the parent is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response, the parent may request the board to reassign the student as provided below.

3. Procedure for Requesting Reassignment After Notice of Assignment

Notice of a student's initial assignment to a school for the upcoming school year shall be recorded on the student's final report card for the previous school year. Such notice may also be provided to the student's parent or guardian by any other practical means. Also, where deemed appropriate, such as in the case of incoming kindergarten students or a change in school district lines, notice of initial assignment of groups of students may be made by local newspaper publication or posting on the school system's web site.

Within 10 days of notice of the assignment or the last publication thereof, the parent must request in writing reassignment of the child to a different public school using the Request for Change of School Assignment form and following the same application procedures listed in section C.2. above. If the application for reassignment is disapproved, the superintendent will give notice to the applicant by mail, telephone, telefax, email, or any other method reasonably designed to achieve notice by July 31.

Within five days of receiving the notice of the disapproval, the parent may request a hearing on the reassignment request. The board or a panel of the board will hear the appeal. If a panel hears the appeal, the panel's recommendation will be submitted to the full board for a final determination. At the hearing the board will consider and make a determination based upon the best interest of the child, the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools, the proper administration of the school to which reassignment is requested, and the instruction, health and safety of the pupils there enrolled. The board will promptly render a decision, and notice of the decision will be given to the applicant by mail, telephone, telefax, e-mail, or any other method reasonably designed to achieve notice.

D. TRANSFER OF STUDENTS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

1. Change of Residence

Students whose legal residence changes from one school assignment area to another within the school system during the same school year may choose to finish out that school year in the same school or attend school in the area to which they have moved. If they elect to remain in the first school in order to complete that year, they will be assigned to the school according to the area in which they live at the beginning of the next school year. Students whose legal residence has

changed but who choose to complete the school year at their first school will be responsible for their own transportation to school.

2. Unsafe School Choice Transfer under the *No Child Left Behind Act*

Transfers for students who are victims of violent criminal offenses at school or for students attending persistently dangerous schools as defined by State Board of Education policy will be made pursuant to policy 4152, Unsafe School Choice Transfer.

3. School Improvement Choice Transfer under the *No Child Left Behind Act*

Students enrolled in a Title I school that has not made adequate yearly progress for at least two years in a row under the *No Child Left Behind Act* may transfer to another school in the system that has not been identified for school improvement or identified as persistently dangerous, pursuant to policy 4153, School Improvement Choice Transfer. In providing school improvement choice transfers, the superintendent shall ensure that first priority for choice is provided to the lowest-achieving, low income students.

4. Transfer of Homeless Students

Students who become homeless between academic years or during an academic year may request to remain at the school of origin for the duration of their homelessness or may request to be enrolled in any public school that other students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend. Any decision about the transfer or reassignment of a homeless student will be consistent with legal requirements and based on the student's best interest. (See policy 4125, Homeless Students.)

5. Other Transfers

The superintendent shall consider student requests for transfer to another school during the school year based upon space availability, the needs of the child, the effect on the school to which transfer is requested, principal recommendations, and other criteria established by the superintendent.

E. CONDITIONS FOR REASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER

The following conditions apply in regard to any reassignments or transfers made in accordance with subsections C and D of this policy.

1. The parent is responsible for transportation (except for (a) school improvement choice transfers for which the system must provide transportation for as long as the original school is identified for Title I school improvement or (b) homeless

student transfers for which the system will provide transportation in a manner consistent with legal requirements and board policy 4125).

2. The transfer or reassignment is valid for no more than one school year (except for (a) unsafe school choice transfers and school improvement choice transfers for which the length of reassignment will be consistent with legal requirements and board policies 4152 and 4153 and (b) homeless student transfers for which the length of reassignment will be consistent with legal requirements and board policy 4125).
3. Any transfer request that is approved based upon false or misleading information will be declared void, and the transfer will be rescinded.

F. CONDITIONS FOR REVOKING TRANSFERS

To maintain transfer approval during a school year or have transfer approval renewed for subsequent school years, all admission criteria must continue to be met, and the student must be in good standing in terms of attendance, academics, discipline, and other measures of standing and progress in the school system. A high school student may only have his or her approval revoked at the beginning of a semester.

G. ASSIGNMENT TO ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Students shall be assigned to the alternative school in accordance with board policy 3470/4305, Alternative Learning Programs/Schools.

Legal References: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431 *et seq.*; No Child Left Behind Act, 20 U.S.C. 6301 *et seq.*; *Unsafe School Choice Option Non Regulatory Guidance*, U.S. Department of Education (May 2004); G.S. 15C-8; 115C-36, -366, -367, -369; State Board of Education Policy Number SS-A-006

Cross References: Alternative Learning Programs/Schools (policy 3470/4305), Unsafe School Choice Transfer (policy 4152), School Improvement Choice Transfer (policy 4153), North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program (policy 4250/5075/7316)

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