

**SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSAL 102-9SP2
RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDESIGN STUDENT ASSIGNMENT**

Introduction

Background

While the diversity index lottery was intended to promote diversity, it has not met SFUSD's longtime desegregation goals of reducing racial isolation and improving educational opportunities and outcomes for all students.

In December 2008, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) Board of Education convened an Ad Hoc Committee on Student Assignment to provide a regular and public way for the Board of Education to conduct public policy discussions with staff about the redesign of student assignment. The Board of Education established the following priorities for the redesign of student assignment:

1. Reverse the trend of racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school;
2. Provide equitable access to the range of opportunities offered to students; and
3. Provide transparency at every stage of the assignment process.

Between December 2008 and January 2010, the Board of Education held monthly Ad Hoc Committee meetings, and staff, with assistance from local and national partners and guidance from the Board of Education, analyzed current conditions, explored different student assignment options, and gathered feedback from the community.

Complex Challenges

Key findings from the research and analysis illustrate the complexity of designing a student assignment system that will meet the Board's goal of reversing the trend of racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school.

- Neighborhood schools are limited in their ability to reverse the trend of racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school, although some schools may be less racially concentrated than they are today, and many schools would have a more robust enrollment.
- Different choice systems are limited in their ability to reverse the trend of racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school because the applicant pools for individual schools are racially isolated, and all families do not have the same opportunity to understand which schools they like and to submit their choices on-time for the assignment process.
- To reverse the trend of racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school through student assignment alone, the Board of Education would need to assign students to schools they have not historically requested and to schools far from where they live. For example, some students living on the west side of the city and in the north of the city would need to be assigned to schools on the east side of the city and the southeast side of the city, and vice-versa.

The diversity index lottery, a mandatory choice system with limited connection to where students live, has resulted in the dispersion of students throughout the city. This dispersion of students and lack of predictability regarding enrollments makes it very difficult for the District to develop projections for strategic planning purposes, to use facilities efficiently, and to cost-effectively create PreK-12 instructional coherence and equitable access to programs and services.

Many schools are currently operating under capacity, despite the fact that they are located in densely populated neighborhoods. The District is constrained in its ability to efficiently provide under-enrolled schools with access to the variety of programs and services available at robustly enrolled schools.

Conclusion and Theory of Action

Staff concluded that a new student assignment system is one part of creating educational environments in which all students can flourish. School quality is the paramount concern, and a student assignment system alone cannot ensure school quality, although it does have a role to play in creating diverse learning environments and robust enrollments in all SFUSD schools.

Five things together need to be in place to have a strong enough effect to have an impact on reversing the trend of racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school, and closing the achievement gap.

If the SFUSD has:

1. a student assignment system that is aligned with and supports other initiatives within SFUSD that are designed to create and support diverse enrollments and quality schools in every neighborhood;
2. a human capital allocation system that ensures quality teaching and instructional leadership and promotes diversity among the faculty at each school;
3. strong and effective programs that attract a diverse student body and meet the needs of the students within each school;
4. professional development focused on culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and strategies to support integrated learning environments within each school; and
5. an equitable distribution of resources designed to promote and support diverse enrollments and quality schools in every neighborhood;

then the SFUSD can:

- reverse the trend of racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school;
- provide equitable access to the range of opportunities offered to students;
- provide transparency at every stage of the assignment process;

and this will dramatically accelerate the achievement of those who are currently less academically successful, and increase the achievement of already high performing students.

Goals for the Student Assignment Policy

This Student Assignment Policy is designed to be flexible so it can be easily monitored and adjusted if it is not accomplishing the goals set forth below.

1. Facilitate student diversity within the parameters of current law.
2. Work in alignment with other District initiatives designed to avoid racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students in the same school.
3. Support the strategic use of limited resources to provide PreK-12 program pathways and quality schools in every neighborhood.
4. Provide equitable access to the range of opportunities offered to students.
5. Create robust enrollments at all schools.
6. Be simple and easy to understand, and provide transparency at every stage of the assignment process.
7. Offer families a degree of predictability regarding where their children will attend school.
8. Minimize the degree of effort families must invest to enroll their children in school.
9. Permit the efficient and cost-effective use of school facilities and transportation.
10. Be cost effective to implement and sustain over time.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to terms used in this Student Assignment Policy (hereinafter "Policy").

Attendance Areas: Boundaries drawn around individual schools.

Service Attendance Areas: Boundaries drawn around one or more schools based on the location of services and programs that are not available at every school (for example, pre-K, after school, special education, and language programs). Because there may be different service attendance areas for different types of programs, an individual school may be in more than one service attendance area.

Transitional Grades: The first grade of enrollment at any particular school. For example, in middle school, sixth grade is a transitional grade.

Combined Census Tracts: Geographic areas containing one or more adjacent census tracts from the federal decennial Census. These combined census tracts shall be approved by the Superintendent, who has the authority to change the combined census tracts in response to any adjustments the US Census Bureau may make to the current configuration of San Francisco's 176 census tracts, and to ensure that the combined Census tracts have substantial numbers of students living in them, minimizing the effects of random variation.

Local Preference ("LP"): A preference in program or school assignment for students who live in the attendance area of a school or the service attendance area for programs and services not available at every school.

Census Tract Integration Preference ("CTIP"): A preference in program or school assignment based on a demographic value that is assigned to each combined census tract. This preference is designed to facilitate attendance at the same schools by students who live in demographically different areas of the City. In the first year of implementation of the Student Assignment Policy, the CTIP value will be based on average K-12 California Standards Test ("CST") scores of students who reside in the combined census tract. Following the first year of implementation, the Superintendent may recommend that the Board of Education use different demographic data to assign CTIP values to combined census tracts in order to better fulfill the goals of the Student Assignment Policy. Any recommended changes approved by the Board of Education would be incorporated into this Student Assignment Policy.

CTIP1 and CTIP2 Tracts: For the first year of Policy implementation, an average K-12 CST score will be computed for each combined census tract, and those combined census tracts will be divided into quintiles based on average CST scores so that approximately 20% of all SFUSD students live within each quintile. CTIP1 tracts will be those with the bottom two quintiles of combined census tracts based on CST scores, and CTIP2 tracts will be those with approximately the top three quintiles of combined census tracts based on CST scores. Following the first year of implementation, the Superintendent may recommend changes to the quintile method, adjustments to the definitions of CTIP1 and CTIP2, and/or the creation of additional

CTIP categories. Any recommended changes approved by the Board of Education would be incorporated into this Student Assignment Policy.

English Learner (“EL”): Students who are in the process of acquiring English as a second language and have not yet reached Fully English Proficient (“FEP”) status.

Enrolled: Students are enrolled in a school or program if they have accepted an assignment to and actually begun attending that school or program.

Sibling: Students who have the same parent/guardian and reside in the same household.

Superintendent: The Superintendent of the San Francisco Unified School District (“SFUSD”).

Board of Education (“Board”): The SFUSD Board of Education.

Student Assignment Method

Attendance Area Schools

All schools, except those designated city-wide schools, will have attendance areas. Current attendance area boundaries will not be used. Rather, the Superintendent will have authority to approve revised attendance area boundaries for all attendance area schools. Such approval shall take place in time to permit use of the revised boundaries for implementation of this Student Assignment Policy in the 2011-2012 school year.

In drawing attendance area boundaries, the following factors will be taken into account: neighborhood demographics (with the goal of maximizing racial diversity); where students live now and where enrollment changes are expected in the future; availability of facilities; traffic patterns; location of programs (for example, pre-K, special education, and EL programs); and coherence of pre-K to kindergarten and elementary to middle school pathways. To the extent practicable, attendance area boundaries for middle schools will be drawn to overlap with elementary school attendance areas, so that all students who reside in a particular elementary school's attendance area will reside in the same middle school attendance area.

Attendance area boundaries will change over time. On at least an annual basis, SFUSD staff will review attendance area boundaries and make recommendations to the Superintendent as to whether modifications are needed. The Superintendent shall have authority to adjust attendance area boundaries at any time.

Service Attendance Areas

Service attendance areas will be created for programs that are not available at every school (for example, pre-K, after school programs, special education, and language programs). The Superintendent will have the authority to approve service attendance area boundaries. In drawing these boundaries, the following factors will be considered: program location,

neighborhood demographics (with the goal of maximizing racial diversity), where students live now and where enrollment changes are expected in the future, availability of facilities, traffic patterns, and coherence of pre-K to kindergarten and elementary to middle school pathways. To the extent practicable, service attendance area boundaries for middle school programs will be drawn to overlap with elementary school program service attendance areas, so that all students who reside in a particular elementary school's program service attendance area will reside in the same middle school program attendance area. On at least an annual basis, SFUSD staff will review service attendance area boundaries and make recommendations to the Superintendent as to whether modifications are needed. The Superintendent shall have authority to adjust service attendance area boundaries at any time.

City-Wide Schools and Programs

The Superintendent will identify programs and schools that will not have attendance areas, and will thus be designated city-wide programs or schools that will fill up through the choice process. The purpose of the city-wide program or school designation is to facilitate equitable access to the range of educational opportunities offered by SFUSD. Upon initial implementation of the Student Assignment Policy, city-wide programs or schools will include the following: newcomer programs and schools (designed to help recently arrived immigrant EL students), language programs that are listed as discrete choices on the 2010-2011 SFUSD application form and also have distinct enrollment capacities, K-8 schools, Lowell High School, and School of the Arts. City-wide schools will not have attendance area boundaries, and no students will receive initial assignments to city-wide schools or programs.

The Superintendent will have the authority to re-designate city-wide schools or programs as attendance area schools, and vice versa, at any time prior to or after implementation of this Student Assignment Policy.

This Student Assignment Policy does not in any way modify the method of admission to Lowell High School or School of the Arts. Admission to those schools will continue to be governed by SFUSD policies specific to those schools, not by the provisions of this Policy.

Initial Assignment Offers

For elementary and middle school, transitional year students (incoming kindergarteners and sixth graders) will receive initial assignment offers to their local attendance area school or, if their attendance area school does not have sufficient capacity, to the nearest attendance area school with openings. In order to receive an initial assignment, incoming kindergarteners will need to apply by a deadline established by SFUSD staff. SFUSD students transitioning from fifth to sixth grade will not need to apply for middle school in order to receive an initial assignment offer for middle school.

Students will not receive initial assignment offers for high school.

Non-transitional grade students can submit requests to transfer to other schools, but transfers will be processed only where feasible under District procedures or where required by law.

Choice Process

After receiving initial assignments, elementary and middle school students will have the opportunity to participate in an optional choice process. At this time, students will elect whether to retain their initial assignment in the event that they do not receive any of their choices while participating in this choice process. Through this choice process, students will be able to apply for city-wide programs or schools, or for attendance area schools and service attendance area schools other than their own.

High school enrollment will be determined exclusively through the choice process.

Method of Allocating Seats

Attendance area elementary schools: For attendance area elementary schools that have fewer seats available than applicants, the process will give preference to applicants in transitional years (i.e., students entering kindergarten) in the following order: (1) younger siblings of students who are enrolled in and will be attending the school during the year for which the younger sibling requests attendance; (2) students who live in the attendance area of the school and are enrolled in an SFUSD PreK program in the same attendance area; (3) other students who live in the attendance area of the school; (4) students who reside in CTIP1 census tracts; (5) all other students. Within each preference category, seats will be allocated by random lottery. This preference order will govern initial assignment offers and the choice process.

For non-transitional grades, the preferences will be modified so that the first priority is for transfers as required by the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB"), to facilitate preference to the lowest income and lowest performing students from Program Improvement ("PI") schools, and to comply with any applicable state or federal requirements. All of the preferences listed in the previous paragraph will apply after the NCLB priorities.

Each year, the Superintendent will evaluate the impact of the order and nature of preference priorities and may recommend adjustments to the Board of Education for implementation in subsequent years. Any recommended changes approved by the Board of Education will be incorporated into this Student Assignment Policy.

Attendance area middle schools: For attendance area middle schools that have fewer seats available than applicants, the process will give preference to applicants in transitional years (i.e., students transitioning from fifth to sixth grade) in the following order: (1) younger siblings of students who are enrolled in and will be attending the school during the year for which the younger sibling requests attendance; (2) students who live in the attendance area of the school; (3) students who reside in CTIP1 census tracts; (4) all other students. Within each preference category, seats will be allocated by random lottery. This preference order will govern initial assignment offers and the choice process.

For non-transitional grades, the preferences will be modified so that the first priority is for transfers as required by the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB"), to facilitate preference to

the lowest income and lowest performing students from PI schools, and to comply with any applicable state or federal requirements. All of the preferences listed in the previous paragraph will apply after the NCLB priorities.

Each year, the Superintendent will evaluate the impact of the order and nature of preference priorities and may recommend adjustments to the Board of Education for implementation in subsequent years. Any recommended changes approved by the Board of Education will be incorporated into this Student Assignment Policy.

High schools: For high schools, when there are fewer seats available than applicants, the choice process will give preference to applicants in transitional years (i.e., students transitioning from eighth to ninth grade) in the following order: (1) younger siblings of students who are enrolled in and will be attending the school during the year for which the younger sibling requests attendance; (2) CTIP, with LP as a tiebreaker. The use of CTIP will involve the reservation of 40% of seats at each high school for students who reside in CTIP1 tracts and 60% of seats at each high school for students who reside in CTIP2 census tracts. If there are fewer requests than reserved seats for CTIP1 or CTIP2 students, the Superintendent shall have discretion to determine whether and when to release reserved seats to other students. Within the CTIP1 and CTIP2 tracts, LP (and then, if necessary, random lottery) will be used as a tiebreaker. Students who are not assigned to one of their choices will be assigned to the high school closest to where they live that has openings.

For non-transitional grades, the preferences will be modified so that the first priority is for transfers as required by the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB"), to facilitate preference to the lowest income and lowest performing students from PI schools, and to comply with any applicable state or federal requirements. All of the preferences listed in the previous paragraph will apply after the NCLB priorities.

Each year, the Superintendent will evaluate the impact of the order and nature of preference priorities and may recommend adjustments to the Board of Education for implementation in subsequent years. Any recommended changes approved by the Board of Education will be incorporated into this Student Assignment Policy.

Special Education Programs: To the extent possible, given the unique needs of students as outlined in their Individual Education Plans ("IEP's"), the student assignment process used to assign general education students will be used to assign special education students. The Superintendent shall establish service attendance area boundaries for special education programs not available at every school (e.g., Special Day Classes ("SDC") and Inclusion services).

To the extent possible, given the unique needs of students as outlined in their IEP's, special education students will receive an assignment offer to an appropriate program in their attendance area school or service attendance area school, depending on the student's needs as outlined in the student's IEP. To the extent possible, given the unique needs of students as outlined in their IEP's, for students whose IEP's specify services available at every school (e.g. RSP or speech services only), the assignment offer will be to the appropriate program in their attendance area school. To the extent possible, given the unique needs of students as outlined in their IEP's, for students whose IEP's specify services not available at every school (e.g. SDC or Inclusion), the assignment offer will be to the appropriate program in a school in their service attendance area. If there is not an appropriate program in the student's attendance area school or service attendance area, or if the appropriate program in a student's attendance area school or

service attendance area does not have sufficient capacity, the assignment offer will be to the nearest school with an appropriate program.

Students may apply to other schools that offer the services outlined in their IEP through the choice process. The attendance areas, service attendance areas, and the assignment and choice processes may be modified by the Superintendent as needed in order to comply with the requirements of applicable laws and to facilitate the provision of an appropriate education to all special education students.

City-wide Schools: For city-wide schools that have fewer seats available than applicants, the choice process will give preference to applicants in transitional years (i.e., students entering kindergarten or transitioning from fifth to sixth grade) in the following order: (1) younger siblings of students who are enrolled in and will be attending the school during the year for which the younger sibling requests attendance; (2) students enrolled in an SFUSD PreK program in the same attendance area; (3) students who reside in CTIP1 census tracts; (4) all other students. Within each category, seats will be allocated by random lottery. Students who are not assigned to one of their choices will be assigned to their attendance area or service attendance area school or the school closest to where they live that has openings.

For non-transitional grades, the preferences will be modified so that the first priority is for transfers as required by the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB"), to facilitate preference to the lowest income and lowest performing students from PI schools, and to comply with any applicable state or federal requirements. All of the preferences listed in the previous paragraph will apply after the NCLB priorities.

Each year, the Superintendent will evaluate the impact of the order and nature of preference priorities and may recommend adjustments to the Board of Education for implementation in subsequent years. Any recommended changes approved by the Board of Education will be incorporated into this Student Assignment Policy.

Language Programs: Language programs that are: (a) clearly defined and listed on the SFUSD application form as a discrete choice, and (b) have a separate enrollment capacity with seats reserved specifically for students enrolled in the program will be designated city-wide, and students will be assigned to these programs through the choice process.

When assigning students to language programs through the choice process, SFUSD staff will first make sure that students meet the eligibility requirements for the language program at issue. Students assigned to the One Way Immersion Programs must be proficient in English. EL students are the only students that can be assigned to Newcomer or Biliteracy programs. To enter a Newcomer program, students must have arrived in the United States within 12 months prior to enrollment. One-half to two-thirds of seats in Dual Language Immersion programs are reserved for students who speak the target language to the applicable level of proficiency required for the grade, and one-third to one-half of the seats are reserved for students who do not speak the target language. The Superintendent will have the authority to determine the proportion of seats reserved for each eligibility group of students in Dual Language Immersion programs, and to modify these parameters as needed prior to and following implementation of this Student Assignment Policy.

Once students meet the eligibility requirements for the particular language program at issue, for programs that have fewer seats available than applicants, the choice process will give preference to applicants in the following order: (1) transitional grade students who are currently

enrolled in and wish to continue in the language program, and who are the younger siblings of students who are enrolled in and will be enrolled in the program at the school at issue during the year for which the younger sibling requests attendance; (2) other transitional grade students currently enrolled in and wishing to continue in the language program; (3) other younger siblings of students who are enrolled in and will be enrolled in the program at the school at issue during the year for which the younger sibling requests attendance; (4) students who reside in CTIP1 census tracts; (5) all other students. Within each category seats will be allocated by random lottery.

Each year, the Superintendent will evaluate the impact of the order and nature of preference priorities and may recommend adjustments to the Board of Education for implementation in subsequent years. Any recommended changes approved by the Board of Education will be incorporated into this Student Assignment Policy.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

The District will comply with its transfer and transportation obligations under NCLB as part of this Student Assignment Policy through the choice process.

Infrastructure Support for Student Assignment Policy

Transportation

Following the adoption of the Student Assignment Policy and prior to its implementation, the Superintendent will propose a new transportation policy to the Board of Education based upon input from SFUSD staff and the community. Because students who utilize existing buses may not continue to receive the same transportation services after adoption of the new transportation policy, the Board should make best efforts to approve a policy no later than Fall 2010 to take effect for the 2011-12 school year. The new transportation policy will provide transportation to special education students whose need for transportation is set forth in their IEP's, to students as required by NCLB, and to elementary students who reside on Treasure Island. In developing the new transportation policy, the Superintendent will explore including transportation service areas for programs not available at every school, a limited number of within-attendance-area buses where needed to permit reasonable access to attendance area schools, limited but strategic transportation for low-income elementary school students from designated neighborhoods to support the use of choice as a tactic for creating integrated learning environments, transportation to some SFUSD after-school programs, the elimination of middle and high school transportation other than for special education students whose IEP includes transportation as a requirement, and cooperation with MUNI to facilitate transportation for middle and high school students.

Program Placement, Outreach and Recruitment

In order to effectively use choice as a tactic to reduce racial isolation and the concentration of underserved students at the same school, and to accomplish other objectives, the Superintendent will undertake the following measures: placement of high quality and attractive programs at schools with high concentrations of underserved students and schools with a lack of

diversity built into surrounding residential patterns; changes to the current configuration of programs and services to ensure equitable access, to facilitate pre-K-12 instructional coherence, and to attract a diverse group of students; development and implementation of an outreach and recruitment campaign to encourage students across differences in language, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic background to attend schools that students from their backgrounds have not historically requested and that may be located outside their neighborhoods; and strategic recruitment of diverse faculty across SFUSD. SFUSD staff will also develop a targeted recruitment campaign to help eighth graders navigate the high school choice system and learn about their options.

Monitoring and Implementation

District Monitoring and Modifications

The Superintendent will evaluate the outcomes of the Student Assignment Policy in relation to the Board's goals set forth in this Student Assignment Policy, and shall make an annual report to the Board as to how well the Policy is accomplishing these goals. The annual report may recommend changes in the implementation of the Student Assignment Policy to better fulfill these goals, and may recommend changes to the Student Assignment Policy itself to the Board of Education.

In particular, the Superintendent will determine if any of the following aspects of the student assignment policy need to be adjusted:

- initial assignment process;
- choice process;
- method of allocating seats;
- order of preference between CTIP and LP;
- percentage of seats reserved and/or available for each of the preferences;
- demographic information used to assign CTIP values;
- which CTIP values are granted priority;
- whether to keep surplus seats at schools open in order to maintain desired CTIP percentages; and
- whether the CTIP and/or LP preferences should vary among different schools or different types of schools.

The Superintendent will also monitor how well program placement, transportation, outreach and recruitment, and other efforts are helping to fulfill the Board's student assignment goals, and will recommend to the Board of Education appropriate changes to those mechanisms to better fulfill those goals.

Tracking and Reporting Statistics

The Superintendent will track demand, school level and classroom level enrollment, and student performance by race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, language status, and special education status, and those statistics will be reported to the Board of Education on an annual basis.

Implementation Regulations

Following adoption of this Student Assignment Policy, SFUSD staff will develop administrative regulations to support the goals and objectives of the Policy. These regulations will address the following among other subjects: guidelines for establishing and managing enrollment capacity; enrollment guidelines for residents and non-residents of San Francisco; key dates and the enrollment timeline; enrollment guidelines for students new to the District, Special Education students, and English Learners; language assessment procedures; age of first enrollment; aged out students; younger siblings; proof of address; change of address; transfers including NCLB transfers; proof of guardianship or custodianship; documentation required for enrollment; appeals; and waiting pools.

Timing and Implementation

The Student Assignment Policy set forth herein will take several years to implement and will begin with students entering transitional grades in Fall 2011.

The transition from the current Policy to the new assignment policy will provide stability for students attending a school outside their newly defined attendance area school. All currently enrolled students may remain at their current school. Currently enrolled students interested in attending their newly defined attendance area school can submit a request to transfer to their attendance area school, but transfers will only be processed when feasible or where required by law.

This Student Assignment Policy overrides all terms in Board policies and administrative regulations that are inconsistent with any of its provisions.