



THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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PROGRAM SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, October 1, 2015

5:00 pm

Superintendent's Office – District Office
2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION

***A. Review of Policies:**

1. Extraordinary Performance/Service Award Policy, File BHF
2. Naming New Facilities Policy, File FF
3. Attendance/Catchment Areas Policy, File JC
4. Assignment of Students to Schools Policy, File JCA
5. Admission of Students to Elementary Schools Policy, File JF
6. Graduation Requirements, File IKF

B. Confirm a Program Sub-Committee Meeting Schedule

C. Discussion items that were not reasonably anticipated by the Chairperson, in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 18-25

III. ACTION

IV. ADJOURNMENT

DISCLAIMER: The listing of matters is those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

EXTRAORDINARY PERFORMANCE/SERVICE AWARD

From time to time the School Committee becomes aware that a member of our school community has used his/her time and talent to bring extraordinary enrichment to our school. This person may be a student, a teacher, or a Gloucester citizen or organization.

In recognition of this extraordinary performance or service, the School Committee will award a certificate and a personalized plaque, recognizing such performance or service.

Nominations for the award may be made by teachers, administrators, or School Committee Members and will be reviewed for consideration by the School Committee. The recognition ceremony will be at a regular School Committee meeting.

Adopted by the School Committee on May 10, 2001

Adopted 3/2010

SOURCE: Gloucester

NAMING NEW FACILITIES

Naming a school is an important matter that deserves thoughtful attention. Personal prejudice or favoritism, political pressure, or temporary popularity should not be an influence in choosing a school name. A name with educational significance or inspiration should be chosen. The Committee also feels that it is appropriate to name schools for physical locations; geographical areas; distinguished local, state, and national leaders whose names will lend dignity and stature to the school; or significant or pertinent events.

The Superintendent will prepare for the approval of the Committee a procedure to follow in recommending names for school buildings. Whenever possible, the wishes of the community, including parents and students, should be considered in naming new facilities.

It is expected that an orderly, announced procedure will lessen the community or factional pressures that so quickly build up when the selection is delayed or seems uncertain. A prompt decision will reduce disappointments and advance community solidarity. Much confusion in accounts, files, and records can be avoided if a new school can be identified by name before the planning starts.

SOURCE: MASC

ATTENDANCE/CATCHMENT AREAS

Attendance/Catchment areas for the various schools of the town will be drawn up by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee. The primary considerations that govern the establishment of a school attendance area are school capacity and transportation considerations. Generally, students will attend the school in the attendance/catchment area in which they live.

In establishing an attendance/catchment area, the following general guidelines will also be applied:

1. Use of safe walking conditions consistent with the Committee's transportation policies; where possible, major traffic thoroughfares and natural barriers will be used for boundaries.
2. Honoring community of interest; where possible, school attendance zones will incorporate community patterns.

From time to time an overcrowded condition in an existing school, the development of new residential areas, or the opening of a new school may require the establishment or change of previously established school attendance/catchment areas.

The Committee will confer with community representatives prior to setting new attendance lines. However, the Committee's primary basis for judgment must be equality of educational opportunity for all students rather than the personal desires of any one group.

The Superintendent is authorized to make exceptions to attendance lines for individual children in the best interests of the student and/or the school.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37C; 71:37D; 71:37I; 71:37J
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Section 8 of Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, Regarding Magnet School Facilities and Magnet Educational Programs, adopted 2/25/75
Board of Education Regulations Pursuant to Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, adopted 9/10/74
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to the Preparation of Racial Balance Plans which Involve Redistricting, adopted 4/24/73

CROSS REF.: JCA, Assignment of Students to Schools

NOTE: This category is for a statement on methods of establishing attendance areas. A map or written description of areas is sometimes included in a policy manual as an exhibit document coded JC-E.

The cross reference above is to a closely related category in the NEPN classification system. Use code JCA for any requirement for students to attend the school in their attendance area and any exceptions to the requirements.

ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS

Generally, students will be required to attend school in the attendance area in which they reside, unless the Superintendent has granted special permission.

Special permission may be granted for the following reasons:

1. If the change involves an exceptional child, a hardship case, or if there are medical considerations.
2. If the change appears to be in the interests of the child, of the schools, and for disciplinary and administrative reasons.
3. If the legal residence of a child changes from one attendance area to another during the school year and the parents wish the child to remain in his former school; permission will not extend beyond the current school year.
4. To permit secondary school students to take courses not offered in their assigned schools.
5. In accordance with the Gloucester Public Schools intra-district choice program.

School bus transportation will not be provided for students attending schools outside their attendance area unless they can be accommodated on existing bus routes and schedules, or an exceptional child is involved; or unless specific permission is granted by the School Committee.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37C; 71:37D; 71:37I; 71:37J
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Section 8 of Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, Regarding Magnet School Facilities and Magnet Educational Programs, adopted 2/25/75
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Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to the Preparation of Racial Balance Plans which Involve Redistricting, adopted 4/24/73

CROSS REF.: JC, Attendance Areas

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

1. **Introduction**

As a matter of principle and good practice in building community, the School Committee believes that children should have the opportunity to attend their local or neighborhood school. The School Committee also believes that:

- a) families resident in the City of Gloucester should have at least the same rights as with regard to School Choice as families living in other municipalities;
- b) siblings should be able to attend the same school;
- c) children with special needs should attend their local school unless due process determines that an alternative placement is in the interests of the student; and
- d) unless there are special circumstances, once a child is enrolled at a school s/he should be able to remain at that school through the grade levels for which the school makes provision, unless the student is removed for misconduct after due process under relevant laws and regulations.

Persistent budget shortfalls have required the committee to restructure the elementary school system and reduce the number of buildings and classes available in order to reduce facilities costs and thereby maintain its class size targets. The greater efficiency in the use of facilities creates a tension between the principle of the neighborhood school and the availability of places in the schools.

This policy is intended to ensure that admission of children to neighborhood schools is managed in an equitable manner with regard to the above principles.

2. **School Catchment Area**

The School Committee will establish local “catchment” areas for each elementary school from time to time. Children living within these areas shall have the right of priority in the admission procedure to their local school.

3. **Residence**

Families may use only one residence on the school admission application. The address must be that of the *permanent residence* of the child; i.e., where the child is expected to live at weekends and during school holidays as well as during the week. Children who spend part of their week with one parent and part with the other, at different addresses, must use the address at which they spend most of their time. The provision of a false address will result in the disqualification of the application if the application is for a school outside the catchment area of the permanent residence.

4. **School Choice**

Families resident in Gloucester have a right to request admission to a school other than their local catchment area school.

5. **Admission Arrangements**

5.1 The district will place an announcement in the media on or about March 1st each year informing residents of their responsibility to enroll children of school age in school, and their right to apply for admission to a school outside their neighborhood, if there is an appropriate place available.

5.2 Intra-district admission requests will open on March 7 and close on May 15.

5.3 **With the exception of kindergarten**, by June 1 of each year, the Principal of each elementary school, after consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, will review the places available, enroll catchment area residents, and make a determination as to how many places the school has available for non-area students at each grade level. **For kindergarten students, the review and determination will be completed between August 1 and August 10 of each year.**

5.4 In the event of there being more children seeking admission from within the catchment area than there are places as determined by the target class size, the Principal shall consult with the Superintendent of Schools, who will review the situation in the context of class sizes at the relevant grade level across the city. The Superintendent of Schools shall have discretion, in consultation with the Principal, to admit students beyond the target class size if, in so doing, the educational opportunities of other students in the class will not be jeopardized. The provisions of Paragraph 5.18 shall apply to such considerations.

- 5.5 If the number of children seeking admission to Kindergarten from within the catchment area is greater than the number of places available, students will be admitted on the basis of the proximity of their home to the school by the nearest safe route.
- 5.6 If the number of children newly resident in the catchment area after June 1 seeking admission is greater than the number of places available, students will be admitted on the basis of the proximity of their home to the school by the nearest safe route.
- 5.7 Siblings shall be given priority consideration within the above process, including priority prior to a lottery.
- 5.8 A child not admitted to its local school under the above process shall be treated as having the same rights as if s/he lived within the catchment area of the next nearest school, as will younger siblings.
- 5.9 Each grade level will be deemed to be full for the purpose of this policy when the average size of the classes at each grade level are at the target class size for the grade level. Average class size will be used for enrollment purposes to accommodate the discretion of Principals to organize classes of different sizes in response to the needs to students with special needs.
- 5.10 After establishing the number of places available for out of catchment area students at each grade level, the latter will be enrolled in the following order:
 - (a) siblings
 - (b) other applicants

Where the number of applications is greater than the number of places available, the available places will be filled by a lottery conducted by the Principal.

- 5.11 Decisions on out-of-district applications will be made during the last week in June, with families notified about the outcome of the placement request postmarked no later than June 30. Out-of-district students will be enrolled in the following order:
 - (a) siblings (in accordance with the 1994 amendment to the School Choice Law)
 - (b) other applicants

Where the number of applications is greater than the number of places available, the available places will be filled by a lottery conducted by the Principal.

- 5.12 Once admitted to the school a child shall be entitled to remain at that school through the grade levels for which the school makes provision, unless the student is removed for misconduct after due process under relevant laws and regulations, or the School Committee redistricts students.
- 5.13 If a family moves out of the City of Gloucester, the student must apply for admission to the school under the terms of the state School Choice regulations.
- 5.14 Once admitted to an out-of-catchment area school a student shall not have the right to return to his or her local school during the school year in question.
- 5.15 The School Committee will provide transport as required by law unless it chooses to make special arrangements to meet particular circumstances. Out-of-catchment area families will be responsible for the transport of their child/ren to and from the out-of area school. Families are responsible for ensuring that their children arrive at school punctually, and will be required to reapply for admission towards the end of any school year in which punctuality has in the view of the administration prejudiced the learning and participation of the student. In such cases the administration shall have given the family notice of its concerns orally and in writing and reasonable opportunity to meet attendance expectations. Families will confirm this responsibility by signing the admission application form.
- 5.16 In the event of a family changing their place of residence within the city after their child is enrolled in school, the child will have the right to remain at that school through the grade levels for which the school makes provision, unless the student is removed for misconduct after due process under relevant laws and regulations.
- 5.17 In the event of a family changing its place of residence within the city, the family shall have the right to enroll their child at the local school, subject to the provisions of Paragraphs 5.5 through 5.8 above.

- 5.18 In the event of student numbers increasing, such that the average class size at a grade level **at a school** would increase by 2 or more students, consideration will be given, within the resources available, to the district providing additional support for such teachers as may be affected, additional support may include but not be limited to the provision of supplementary adult support in the classroom, supplementary clerical support, or periodic release for grading and preparation purposes. If student numbers in a particular class are such as to cause concern that the addition of a further student would be prejudicial to the interests of students previously enrolled, the Superintendent of Schools will review the situation with the Principal and the family.
- 5.19 A change of school for a student with an IEP will require a meeting of the IEP team to review the implications of a change of placement.
- 5.20 Once admission arrangements for the year have been completed, Principals will maintain a waiting list. If places become available as a result of students transferring out of the school between June 1 and the opening of school, the available places will be allocated by lottery.

Advisory on Free Transport Arrangements

The district policy is that transport is provided were a child lives more than 1.5 miles from his or her school, unless the family has chosen a school other than the local school under the intra-district school choice arrangements.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A
603 CMR 26:01; 26:02; 26:03

CROSS REFS.: JLCA, Physical Examination of Students
JLCB, Inoculations of Students
JFBB, School Choice

Approved by the School Committee on May 8, 2013

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from Gloucester High School, a student must have earned at least 112 credits and complied with all state accountability requirements. Course requirements are the following:

- Four years of English
- Three years of Math (**Four years for students in the class of 2015 and beyond**)
- Three years of History
- Three years of Science
- Two years of Health and Fitness or two years of ROTC
- One Year of Computer Technology
- Five credits in Fine Arts (visual, performing, occupational or industrial arts)

Other requirements may be established by the school administration in relation to the particular program, otherwise the additional credits needed for a graduation may be selected from among elective courses.

Credit for Foreign Study: Students who are away for a term or year to participate in a student exchange program or otherwise study abroad may receive credits toward high school graduation when (1) study plans are approved by the school administration in advance; and (2) the institution where the study occurred submits a record of the student's work. In these instances, the Principal and student's guidance counselor will evaluate the work and assign credit for it according to standards prevailing in Gloucester High School.

SOURCE: MASC