



# Cumberland School Department Policy Manual

## STUDENT WELFARE

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### Student Attendance Areas / Boundary Lines

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#### **PURPOSE**

This policy is set forth for the purpose of establishing the designated school of attendance (neighborhood schools) for all resident students enrolled in school within the Cumberland School District.

#### **PHILOSOPHY**

The school committee is committed to creating a rational and appropriate geographic boundary line for determining the assignment of students to the schools buildings of the district for daily school attendance. In fulfilling this task, it seeks to do so in a manner which assures availability of program, staff and facilities to meet student educational needs in an existing school facility within reasonable location and orientation to the student's place of residence in the community.

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

1. It is the determination of the Cumberland School Committee that, except as otherwise provided by School Committee policy, all students will be enrolled and required to attend class on a daily basis at their designated school of attendance as determined by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee in keeping with the guidelines.
2. Each student will attend the elementary or middle school located in the attendance area within the stipulated boundaries as established by the guidelines and understanding in this policy. The entire boundaries of the district shall serve as the designate attendance boundary lines of high school students.
3. Students will be assigned to a school of attendance based on the location of their place of official residence and its relationship to the school buildings where the appropriate grade level of instruction is in place. Exceptions to this policy would be in cases where, in the interest in maintaining efficiencies and meeting the program needs of the students, the school district has the right to move a student to another school. The best educational judgment of the Superintendent will determine placement of the student.
4. The assignment of students to a school of attendance shall also take into consideration the overall needs of the district as it relates to an appropriate and reasonable distribution of the total student population.

#### **GUIDELINES AND UNDERSTANDINGS**

1. Grade configurations at the elementary school level are established as Grades K-5; for middle school as Grades 6-8; and high school as Grades 9-12.



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2. Students will be assigned to elementary school and middle schools based on the following criteria:
  - a. Fulfillment of district needs as determined by the most efficient and effective use of school facilities to provide maximum educational opportunity throughout the district.
  - b. The goal is to educate students in their neighborhood school, whenever possible.
3. Attendance areas will be designed to incorporate entire neighborhoods, where and whenever possible, so as to provide the student groupings which are deemed reasonably viable, keeping neighborhood children together, and which fall within the operation and maintenance of an efficient, economic and effective transportation configuration. Such assigning of students should also conform to a sensible distribution of students within the district's available school facilities.

### **REQUESTS FOR PLACEMENT OUTSIDE OF STUDENT'S DESIGNATED ATTENDANCE AREA**

The School Committee recognizes that the school department may receive requests from parents to have children regularly attend class in a school other than their designated school of attendance as established by policy. While the Committee is sensitive to such needs and concerns of parents, it must be recognized that it has a responsibility to all children and to all teachers to see that programming and class sizes throughout the district are reasonably consistent and within contractual constraints. In addition, the Committee is committed to assuring that equal educational opportunity is maintained for all students throughout the district.

1. In the event of a parental request to deviate from the Committee's attendance area policy, the administration will review applications for policy deviation from one elementary or middle school attendance area to another in accord with the following guidelines:
  - a. Any approval for school attendance outside a student's policy-designated attendance area will be for the remainder of the school year only, and for the school year in which approval was granted.
  - b. In cases where parents move to another school attendance area within the district (or out of the district) after the school year has begun, the student may finish the semester/trimester at the original school of assignment in compliance with RIGL §16-64-1.
  - c. Requests for a student to remain at a school of reassignment for a period longer than one (1) year, or to exceed beyond the semester/trimester, will be reviewed on the basis of cause and classroom space availability.
  - d. Requests for reassignment must be made on an annual basis. Failure to renew a request for reassignment will result in the student being registered in their home school.



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- e. Parents receiving approval of a request for a change in a student's school attendance area are required to provide daily transportation to and from the out-of-attendance area school, including the responsibility for transportation service on those days when schools close early due to bad weather or emergencies.
- f. After an attendance area change has been approved, if the size of the class to which the reassigned student is placed becomes so large as to:
  - 1. cause the School Committee to violate its "class size" agreement with the Teachers' Association; or
  - 2. creates the potential for the need to "split" the class and hire a new teacher, then the approval of reassignment may be revoked at any time during the year as determined necessary by the Superintendent.
- g. In the event that a reassigned student must be returned to their designated attendance area school during the school year, such terminated reassignment shall be made based on the date the initial request was received on the basis of last in, first out.

2. Requests for deviation from a student's designated school of attendance must be made, in writing, and submitted to the Assistant Superintendent's Office. Requests must be received on or before August 1st. No requests will be considered after that date. Parents will be notified, in writing, of the decision to deviate from the designated school of attendance at least one (1) week prior to the start of school. Until a decision has been rendered on a request, the student shall remain enrolled in their designated school of attendance.

*Amendments Approved by Cumberland SC Policy and Procedures Sub-Committee: 10/28/2014*

*Amendments Approved by Cumberland School Committee: 11/13/2014*

*Amendments Approved by Cumberland SC Policy and Procedures Sub-Committee: 5/23/2017*

*Amendments Approved by Cumberland School Committee: 5/25/2017*