

Possible Seat Allocation Solutions for 2012-13

Theory of action underlying the possible solutions

High concentrations of low-performing students in a single school have consequences for teacher recruitment and retention, resource allocation, and ultimately student achievement. If the concentration of students who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting standards is too high within a school, student achievement is likely to suffer in the absence of significant, sustained intervention. Managing that concentration across all schools in the district will help prevent any one school from getting into a situation where they cannot meet the needs of all of their students.

Proposed solutions

1. Establish a **target range** to set a minimum and a maximum for each school based on the percentage of students who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting achievement standards.
 - How it would be implemented:
 - Staff will calculate for each school the percentage of enrolled students for 2012-13 who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting achievement standards. This calculation could be based on one of the following:
 - The percentage of students enrolled who scored below Level III on their most recent EOG and EOC tests. For students who have not yet taken those tests (students in grades K-3, students new to the system, etc.), the historical performance level for the node in which they reside would be used as a proxy.
 - The percentage of students enrolled who reside in historically low-performing nodes as defined in the assignment plan.
 - The distribution of school proficiency projections will be examined, and a target range will be set.
 - Once a school falls outside the target range, new students who would add to the imbalance are no longer eligible to enroll at those schools unless and until future enrollment changes bring the school back within the target range.
 - Options:
 - Could be implemented only at Kindergarten, only at entry grades (K, 6, and 9), or at all grades.
 - Target range can be set for all schools, by grade span, or even individual schools.
 - Target range(s) can be re-evaluated annually if necessary.
 - Who would be affected?
 - If implemented immediately for 2012-13:
 - Would affect pending waitlist processing and transfer requests for some existing students.

3. Establish a **fixed minimum seat allocation** for each school based on the percentage of students who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting achievement standards

- How it would be implemented:
 - Staff will calculate for each school the percentage of enrolled students for 2012-13 who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting achievement standards. This calculation could be based on one of the following:
 - The percentage of students enrolled who scored below Level III on their most recent EOG and EOC tests. For students who have not yet taken those tests (students in grades K-3, students new to the system, etc.), the historical performance level for the node in which they reside would be used as a proxy.
 - The percentage of students enrolled who reside in historically low-performing nodes as defined in the assignment plan.
 - The distribution of school percentages will be examined, and minimum percentage of seats will be designated at each school for students who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting standards.
 - As students enroll and/or withdraw from a school over time, the availability of seats for new incoming students will be monitored such that each school will maintain their minimum seat allocation for students who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting standards. If a seat opens up at a school which is below its minimum, then only students who are (or who are at risk of) not meeting standards will be eligible for that seat.
- Options:
 - Could be implemented only at Kindergarten, only at entry grades (K, 6, and 9), or at all grades
 - Could be implemented only at high-performing schools as defined in the assignment plan
 - Would be more targeted and strategic, but
 - Would also require a larger per-school minimum since not all schools would be involved
 - Seat allocation can be individualized to specific schools if necessary
 - Seat allocation can be adjusted annually if necessary
- Who would be affected?
 - If implemented immediately for 2012-13:
 - Would affect pending waitlist processing and transfer requests for some existing students
 - Would allow the policy to begin to have impact starting with new enrollees and students who change addresses
 - Students who are already enrolled for 2012-13 would stay where they are
 - If implemented after waitlist expiration (July 18) for 2012-13:
 - Would NOT affect pending waitlist processing and transfer requests

- Would allow the policy to begin to have impact starting with new enrollees and students who change addresses after July 18
 - Students who are already enrolled for 2012-13 would stay where they are unless they are granted a transfer or given a waitlist seat at a first-choice school between now and July 18.
- Implementation in future years (2013-14 and forward):
 - Would be programmatically incorporated into the choice selection process and seating algorithms.
 - Would affect rising Kindergarteners in 2013-14 and any other students new to the system or who were trying to change schools.
- Other Considerations:
 - If a school falls below the minimum, those seats will have to be held open even if other students who would add to the imbalance might want to enroll
 - May not be amenable to a technology-based solution on such short notice – would have to be done “manually” by Office of Student Assignment staff as students enroll
 - Controls to balance achievement may or may not ensure balance in other areas (poverty, etc.).
 - If the minimum is not reached at a given school, and the remaining seats are full, there need to be sufficient options to seat new students who do not meet the criteria at other schools on their choice list. In the absence of a “maximum” at all schools, or in areas where capacity is extremely tight, this may not be realistic.
 - Setting a minimum threshold does not necessarily prevent a school from becoming over-saturated with higher-needs students.