

# Community Engagement Forum

## Hopewell High School

**Note:** Issues and clarifications are not listed in priority order unless indicated within each group.

**Guiding Principle 1:** The student assignment plan must provide our students and families with stability and predictability to the extent possible. This will require careful consideration of both expected growth patterns and additional schools planned for the area before home school boundaries are established. Home school boundaries will be changed only in accordance with a predetermined schedule or when required by the opening of new schools. New schools in high-growth areas will reserve capacity for future growth. Consideration will be given to placing special/alternative programs in new schools to use seats until needed for growth.

Issues	Clarification	S	U	G
1. Accurate growth patterns; work with municipalities to make predictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcapacity – set limits (caps)</li> <li>• Under-capacity result in school closures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek input from municipalities around Mecklenburg</li> <li>• Hold CMS accountability for accurate growth predictions</li> <li>• Have lead time for families coming into CMS from private, charter schools</li> <li>• Set capacity limits for all schools</li> </ul>	H	H	H
2. High-quality education for students at all schools; should have diversity for all home schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality staff, resources, that meet individual schools’ needs;</li> <li>• Diversity is needed for all schools</li> <li>• Greater transparency</li> </ul>	H	M	H
3. Consistency across district				
4. Redraw boundaries				
5. Priority is given to magnet schools – not home schools				
6. Re-evaluate feeder patterns				
7. Establish clear, consistent, stable reassignment plans				
8. Provide early notification of changes and keep open lines of communication				
9. Schools closest to home should be home school				
10. Articulate why not attending a school closer to home				
11. Shuttle stops negatively impact magnet schools				

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**Guiding Principle 2: Every student will be guaranteed a seat in a school close to home. There will be no capping of schools for students within the home-school area. Home-school zones will be logically drawn, compact and contiguous. To the extent possible, the boundary lines for such home-school zones will incorporate whole neighborhoods, anticipate growth and make efficient use of facilities.**

Issues	Clarification	Dots	U	G
1. Boundaries are not logical.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are traffic patterns considered when boundaries are being drawn?</li> <li>• Home school zones are not always 'contiguous and compact'.</li> <li>• Boundaries should be a radius around a school.</li> </ul>	13		
2. Some boundaries contribute to overcrowding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the home school is overcrowded, we want a guaranteed seat in a different school that is close to home.</li> <li>• If the school is too crowded, the zone is too big.</li> </ul>	2		
3. Feeding patterns are inconsistent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeder patterns should be reestablished at each level so that the assignment is closest to home.</li> </ul>	1		
4. Is growth considered when new schools are planned?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some schools are built and quickly overcrowded.</li> <li>• Some schools are built and underutilized.</li> </ul>	1		
5. Does race play a part when home-school boundaries are drawn?		1		
6. The home school is not necessarily the closest school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where we live (our community – shopping, activities, etc.) is not where our home school is.</li> <li>• Communities are split.</li> </ul>			
7. Close proximity facilitates parent involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity doesn't always inhibit parental involvement (e.g., magnets).</li> <li>• Proximity makes it easier to be more involved.</li> <li>• When the assigned school at each level is far apart, parent involvement is inhibited.</li> </ul>			
8. When the home school is not the closest school, transportation costs are increased (for both families and the district).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates unnecessary busing.</li> <li>• Should put the money into teachers, <u>not</u> transportation.</li> <li>• 'Contiguous and compact' does not always happen.</li> </ul>			
9. CMS does not follow the existing principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Contiguous and compact' does not always happen.</li> </ul>			
10. Neighborhoods are split.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of sense of community.</li> </ul>			
11. How often are boundaries reassessed (to address overcrowding)?				
12. Reassignments impact students' ability to continue in special programs.				
13. Families should have a choice of a guaranteed seat either (a) close to home or (b) close to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close proximity to home can inhibit parent involvement for working parents.</li> </ul>			

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**Guiding Principle 3: We will make effective use of all of our school buildings. Determination of capacity must consider the need for room for differentiated staffing and special-needs programs. We will consider smaller schools within schools, innovative scheduling and different grade configurations as methods to use schools efficiently. We will develop a school overcrowding policy.**

Issues	Clarification	S	U	G
1. Differentiation: don't do it by geography				
2. Small schools, support of.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't continue to band aid over a bad system.</li> <li>• Add more magnets.</li> <li>• When there are more students it's less personalized.</li> <li>• Smaller schools give a better education.</li> <li>• Elementary less of a problem, however, when moving to middle and high school, schools are larger and more of a problem.</li> </ul>			
3. Differentiated staffing model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be differentiated grade grouping (K-6, or K-8).</li> <li>• Make sure terminology is clear (i.e. what is a small school).</li> <li>• What is a measure of success in a small school?</li> <li>• Is space configured and used properly.</li> </ul>			
4. Large schools aren't always bad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be very effective when students have orientation, grouped/team teachers, prepare students for future environments (i.e. college). Replicate what is being done right. Look at each and every student.</li> </ul>			
5. Communication is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to staff that may have valuable info or expertise or utilization.</li> </ul>			
6. Teach children, high quality education, don't lose sight of what's in the best interest of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't lose sight that this is what we do.</li> </ul>			
7. Capacity of buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is current capacity of buildings?</li> <li>• Do we need more or fewer mobiles?</li> <li>• What is the growth outlook?</li> <li>• Are we closing schools?</li> </ul>			
8. Building construction and utilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are buildings constructed to last long term? Is it cost effective to keep them long term.</li> <li>• What is the cost to keep mobiles?</li> </ul>			

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Issues	Clarification	S	U	G
9. Building utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boundaries, distance to schools?</li> <li>• Identify utilization status.</li> <li>• Concern expressed over closing new buildings.</li> <li>• Make sure media has accurate and clear information.</li> <li>• Utilize what we have before building new.</li> <li>• Year round schools and other models to optimize building capacity.</li> </ul>			
10. Financial consideration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with all stakeholders support and tie capital funding with operating (cost to staff and maintain new schools).</li> </ul>			
11. Climate control in buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More effectively monitor and control AC and heating.</li> </ul>			
12. Renovate older schools – as important as building new schools.				
13. Student achievement link.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link student achievement to the specific principal – how the principal supports student achievement.</li> </ul>			
14. Geographic distribution of programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve geographic distribution of successful curriculums (ie. IB and other magnets) by replicating these programs in multiple locations.</li> </ul>			

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<b>Guiding Principle 4: We believe that a diverse educational environment enhances learning. Therefore, diversity should be fostered, although it should not be forced. We will focus on strengthening schools in naturally diverse areas.</b>				
Issues	Clarification	Dots	U	G
1. What is the end goal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equitable distribution of opportunities. Honor the cultures and capital of all students.</li> </ul>	15		
2. We've had these principles and we're still segregated.		7		
3. Students feel all horizons are open to them.		2		
4. What is the definition of "forced"?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity cannot be forced. Students segregate themselves.</li> <li>Teachers have to plan activities that celebrate diversity. There can be diversity of course offerings.</li> <li>There can be physical, ethnic, linguistic diversity.</li> </ul>	2		
5. What is the definition of "diverse education"? What is CMS's definition of "diversity"?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opinion- Diversity is not always race. Diversity can be how lines are drawn, income, marriage, etc.</li> <li>Diversity has a lot to do with race.</li> <li>Diversity deals strongly with tolerance.</li> <li>Diversity makes us globally competitive.</li> </ul>	2		
6. Is there a diversity curriculum?		2		
7. What can the school board/school system legally do to diversify the schools that are not diverse?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School board should explore extracurricular programs for diversity</li> <li>Foreign-language programs made our school diverse; now they are gone.</li> </ul>	2		
8. Does diversity really mean that black schools need to be strengthened?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity is one of the "jewels" of CMS—that is why a teacher moved to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district.</li> </ul>	1		
9. Is it possible to achieve diversity without 'forcing' diversity (pertaining to demographics)?				
10. What are we doing to enhance natural diversity?				
11. I want my children to be in a diverse school.				
12. You can't force diversity with the students within a school.				
13. Build diversity with students through curriculum.				
14. IB students are segregated—not exposed to diversity. This is an irony.				
15. No diversity leads to segregation.				
16. Why split guiding principles 4 and 5?				

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Issues	Clarification	Dots	U	G
17. What are the advantages for teachers that teach at low socioeconomic schools?				
18. Can teachers meet objectives in low SES schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IB students are segregated and not exposed.</li> </ul>			
19. Are there more discipline problems at low socioeconomic schools?				
20. What can be done to foster more diverse teaching staffing? How much dialogue has occurred to foster more diverse teachers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are going to gravitate towards people who are like them.</li> <li>• The biggest issues in the workforce are dealing with diversity.</li> <li>• Teachers should be empathetic not sympathetic to work with diverse students.</li> <li>• Schools should be given the same resources, facilities, etc.</li> <li>• There can be a mismatch of culture and teacher</li> </ul>			
21. We can diversify through magnets.				
22. What is the end goal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable distribution of opportunities</li> </ul>			
23. Will we strengthen diverse schools at expense of non-diverse?				
24. Can teachers meet learning objectives in low SES schools? Are there more discipline problems in low SES?				

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**Guiding Principle 5: Magnet programs should be strengthened. Magnet schools should offer academically distinct programs. Ineffective magnet programs should be eliminated, and additional strong magnet programs should be considered. Magnets should be strategically placed to make effective use of facilities and offer reasonable access to students from all parts of the county. Magnet programs should offer diverse learning environments. Consideration will be given to establishing prerequisites and/or merit-based admission to some magnets. Consideration will be given to establishing magnet zones; this would not allow a student to choose a magnet outside of his/her zone. The sibling guarantee should be maintained except for programs with merit-based admission.**

Issues	Clarification	Dots	U	G
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access is limited for some students (Zones, transportation)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increases segregation</li> <li>➤ Harms program (reduced student enrollment, weakens program and puts it at risk for closure)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lotteries limit access, too</li> <li>• And how do they work when there are admission standards?</li> <li>• Limited capacity, limits access.</li> <li>• Is capacity determined by demand or seats?</li> <li>• Placement of magnets limits access</li> <li>• Should be more evenly spread around the district and more programs added in areas currently underserved (i.e. North Zone)</li> <li>• Partial or “school within a school” programs could increase accessibility</li> <li>• New/more programs increase access (and could be more cost effective)</li> </ul>	H		
Strong magnets should be added, expanded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be expanded to meet demand</li> <li>• Admissions standards/screenings are essential as are continuation requirements</li> <li>• Student motivation, desire to participate should be considered</li> <li>• For each weak magnet to be closed, a strong magnet should be considered</li> <li>• Subject matter knowledge should be shared/spread to non-magnets</li> <li>• Programs for relocation consideration risk loss of certification</li> </ul>	H		

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Issues	Clarification	S	U	G
Terms needing clarification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ineffective</li> <li>• Effective</li> <li>• Strategically placed</li> <li>• Purpose of magnets</li> <li>• Strong magnets</li> <li>• How these items are/should be measured (cost, demand)?</li> <li>• What criteria are being used?</li> <li>• Academically distinct should be clarified               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Each program should be considered on its own merit</li> <li>➤ Is talent development a true magnet when it's offered at non-magnet schools?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	M		
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does it make sense to have magnets in middle schools? (Program seems to go against middle school environment)</li> <li>• Improved home school may reduce the need for magnets</li> </ul>	L		

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**Guiding Principle 6:** The student assignment plan should be simplified. Relevant costs and benefits of the plan must be carefully weighed and costs should be reduced if at all possible. Transportation costs and travel time for students should be minimized. The sibling guarantee should be maintained. Consideration will be given to reducing the size of the non-magnet zones and eligibility for transportation. Because actual non-magnet choice options have been limited, consideration will be given to providing non-magnet choice only through No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and a staff-operated transfer process for open seats.

Issues	Clarification	S	U	G
1. <b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Efficiency:</b> future of the shuttle stop plan?</li> <li>• What are transportation costs per pupil?</li> <li>• Use of CATS and cabs for magnets and NCLB specifically</li> <li>• Too complex</li> <li>• Amount of time on buses problematic</li> <li>• Shifting costs to parents</li> <li>• Can the system help develop a carpooling effort at affected schools?</li> </ul>			
2. <b>Equity &amp; diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Must be key to any student assignment plan</b></li> </ul>			
3. <b>Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Shuttle stops</b>, especially where ages/grades are mixed</li> <li>• Neighborhood schools</li> <li>• Status/future of alternative schools and programs</li> </ul>			
4. Student assignment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Simplify</b></li> <li>• <b>Share with the public the line- item costs of student assignment options</b> (i.e. transportation)</li> <li>• Define and communicate success</li> <li>• Stability</li> <li>• Clearly define sibling guarantee</li> <li>• Reconfigure grade levels (K-8, K-12?)</li> <li>• Impact on individual students</li> <li>• Start over from scratch</li> <li>• Cost should be deciding factor</li> <li>• Diversity must be considered</li> <li>• Ensure fairness of process <u>and</u> results</li> </ul>			

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Issues	Clarification	S	U	G
5. Role of magnet schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access to magnets</li> <li>• Consider location of magnets</li> <li>• 'Mini-magnets' within high schools?</li> <li>• Special focus v. fleeing home school</li> <li>• 'Real' cost of operating magnet programs must be clearly communicated Regionalizing some programs is a good idea, while regionalizing others may lead to dilution of talent</li> </ul>			

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<b>Guiding Principle 7: To the greatest extent possible, students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency will be offered the same assignment opportunities as those given to other students.</b>				
Issues	Clarification	S	U	G
1. Meet the needs of student learning		H		
2. What does offered mean?		H		
3. Once assigned, how does CMS handle the needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher training---When LEP students are in regular classes do teachers know how to support them?</li> <li>• There should be mandatory training for all teachers in working with LEP students</li> </ul>	H		
4. Qualifier not on any other principle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does it mean?</li> <li>• Why is it necessary</li> <li>• Laws support not having a qualifier</li> </ul>			
5. One size doesn't fit all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students at varying levels of proficiency</li> </ul>			
6. With assignment, the word 'same' takes away from the individual				
7. Educational program vs. same assignment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same assignment opportunities not necessarily the best for the individual child</li> </ul>			
8. Want a variety of opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited opportunities available currently</li> <li>• Assignment not meeting needs</li> </ul>			
9. Unclear about which students the principle includes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With a 504 plan?</li> <li>• What types of disabilities are included in this principle</li> </ul>			

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### Other concerns (from situation appraisal groups):

#### Group 3

1. Transportation, should consider magnet, literacy and facilities.
2. Pre-K education: students are being turned away, increase capacity and get input from teachers and parents.
3. Motivate teachers and students.
4. What population studies have been done to level out the school? Help underutilized and over utilized schools.
5. Education cost – increase revenue, more of an infrastructure cost.
6. Student achievement must be the number one goal; should be part of all goals.
7. More focus on core academic programs within traditional schools.
8. Average kid not addressed.

#### Group 6

1. Bring the proposed changes back to the public prior to implementation
2. 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 12<sup>th</sup> graders should never be on the same bus
3. Alternative certifications, like a physician's assistant in medicine

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### Comments from the open microphone speakers:

1. Student assignment should be consistent, not flexible, based upon clear criteria and should consider municipal boundaries.
2. Make effective pedagogy used at neighborhood schools available to others.
3. Improve communication by giving parents a choice to use e-mail as their primary communication.
4. Recycle.
5. Cost reduction consulting business.
6. Student transferred from Hopewell to West Charlotte; believes Hopewell is a better educational environment.
7. Northwest School of the Arts parent believes magnet options should be expanded.
8. Grandparent of a magnet student in a diverse school: don't do anything to harm magnets.
9. Concern about magnet transportation.
10. Follow guidelines as they are written; does not believe they were followed in the North Meck redraw.
11. Re-segregation of schools. Why are we afraid to integrate? Aren't we 'forcing' segregation?
12. Maintain magnet transportation.
13. NWSA graduate in support of magnets.
14. Those who choose home schools are just as important as those who choose magnet schools.
15. Piedmont parent - school funding should be considered 'infrastructure' and as such should be consistent, not vary from year to year.
16. Thank you to the Board for listening about the timing of decisions.
17. Adaptation to learning styles is now the purview of the magnet schools.
18. NWSA graduate - supports the alternative pedagogy offered at magnets.
19. NWSA graduate - program offered her success that was not available in neighborhood schools.