

# Community Engagement Forum

## Government Center

**NOTE:** Issues/clarifications are not listed in priority order unless specified within each guiding principle.

**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. What is meant by special/alternative programs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want stability for special education students/pre-school kids and magnets.</li> <li>• Define alternative programs.</li> </ul>			
2. We have no clear schedule for assigning and identifying boundaries, which negatively impacts families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a plan to make boundaries predictable.</li> <li>• What are the factors that go into a plan?</li> <li>• Review boundaries every two or so years.</li> <li>• Can we build upward to create more density to existing schools?</li> </ul>			
3. We need more transparency/openness in the boundary process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>			
4. Where is the guiding principle regarding education? We need to get all schools up to standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insert education/achievement into the guiding principles.</li> </ul>			
5. (We heard this theme most often) Our student assignment process lacks stability – boundary lines change too often. Have every kid attend the school closest to their home. Stability and predictability equals reliability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can we – for Title I schools – ensure equity vs. stability?</li> </ul>			
6. Does CMS <i>really</i> look at growth patterns and trends when adjusting boundaries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the answer is yes, then CMS should use growth patterns and trends in a practical way.</li> </ul>			
7. What happens to stability when the demographics change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't hurt students at an existing school and don't hurt existing schools. Constant boundary changes equal parent apathy.</li> </ul>			
8. Partial magnet students should remain at their school through terminal year when boundaries change.				
9. Equitable treatment for all schools creates stability.				
10. How do we guarantee equity?				

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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
★ Too many subjective issues to give this principle great weight.				
1. School to school inequities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ★ Resource inequities such as human, financial, materials, parent involvement, volunteers, community partners, technology</li> <li>• Where you can afford to live dictates home school quality</li> <li>• Student achievement is more important than proximity</li> <li>• Teachers prefer to work at schools with adequate resources or close to their own homes</li> <li>• Teacher experience – lack of balance from one school to the next; unhealthy concentration of inexperienced teachers in some schools.</li> <li>• Diversity drives away inequities.</li> <li>• Some neighborhoods are not naturally diverse.</li> <li>• Find a way to drive equitable resources (some schools can raise funding to provide for their own resources)</li> <li>• Diversity starts on the school board; representatives tend to represent their own</li> </ul>	<p>9</p> <p>1</p>		
2. Like living close to home school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections to community (a village); Like knowing other families and children</li> <li>• Neighborhood school doesn't necessary guarantee community connections</li> <li>• Bell schedules don't always work for families</li> <li>• Bell schedules are less challenging when children attend their home school</li> </ul>	2		
3. School closest to home is not 'home school'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhoods are split</li> <li>• Why can't there be more than one home school choice?</li> <li>• Full magnet school may be closest in proximity, but is not available as 'home school'</li> </ul>	1		

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Issues	Clarification	Dots	U	G
4. Is this relevant to providing the best education? (3 dots)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your home school is low-performing, you may not have a choice for the best education</li> <li>• Some families can choose diversity and community connections (not all families have that choice)</li> <li>• Every child should be guaranteed the best education with adequate resources</li> <li>• Inequities have not been corrected through the years</li> <li>• The guarantee should be a great public school for every child.</li> <li>• If everything else is equal, guaranteeing a seat in the home school is most cost effective.</li> <li>• When opening a new school, evaluate the old school and make it equitable to the new one.</li> </ul>	1		
5. Neighborhood density is not the same across the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates odd boundaries and neighborhood splits</li> </ul>			
6. Transportation has too much power over bell schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Transportation Dept. It has way too much power over starting time, stops etc and negative effects on school</li> <li>• There has got to be some give in there. They seem to be the least flexible of departments</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. Follow principles that are published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action language and school implication</li> </ul>			
2. Small school survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't want small schools to be eliminated, relationships first. Understand there could be additional costs. Are viable option.</li> </ul>			
3. Closing or consolidation of schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Want clear, well-defined process that is very transparent to the public. Want stability.</li> </ul>			
4. Innovative schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible requirements for seat time and more computers</li> </ul>			
5. Reorganize grade structure within building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades K-2, 3-5 grouping or K-3, 4&amp;5 grouping</li> </ul>			
6. Define utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Want less jargon.</li> </ul>			
7. Define equity and fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at situations from the group as a whole and not individually</li> </ul>			
8. Scheduling uses of building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business partner with Park and Rec, shared space (libraries)</li> </ul>			
9. Maintenance of buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No regular or proactive maintenance schedule.</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	S	U	G
1. Need operational definition of diversity		H		
2. Change the language of guiding principle #4		H		
3. Diversity should be forced.		M		
4. Students should be globally competitive		M		
5. Do we have political will?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To change pupil assignment</li> </ul>	M		
6. All guiding principles should be prioritized		M		
7. Strengthen not just the naturally diverse areas—all areas		L		
8. Education should involve living in a diverse community		L		
9. 2005 guiding principles—Who developed? What community was represented?		L		
10. Diversity guiding principle is weak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Enhance’ is wimpy word.</li> </ul>	L		
11. Teaching people to be diverse is a part of education		L		
12. ‘Forced’ is divisive		L		
13. Can we be successful if schools do it alone?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools need partners, such as the community.</li> </ul>	L		
14. Why private school flight? How do we attract back?		L		
15. Socioeconomics must be considered.		L		
16. Use the research data on poverty		L		
17. Teaching to test scores		L		
18. Who decides magnet location, curriculum?		L		
19. Resources across all schools (such as horticulture)		L		
20. Will you listen or stay the same?		L		
21. Socioeconomic diversity is a good thing.		L		
22. What is Billingsville doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High poverty, good results</li> </ul>	L		
23. Forced diversity causes many issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History in Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district</li> </ul>	L		
24. Language barriers in parent involvement		L		
25. Scores—AYP by subgroup exposes lack of achievement		L		
26. This guiding principle does not mention students being able to learn				
27. Parental				

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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	S	U	G
1. Transportation changes (shuttle stops) and bell times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts enrollment</li> <li>• Impacts resources (fewer students)</li> <li>• Affects decisions on keeping or closing programs (fewer students)</li> </ul>	H H H		
2. Criteria for Evaluating Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs</li> <li>• Strategic Placement - programs are spread too far apart to be effective</li> <li>• Ability to accommodate talent</li> <li>• How our programs compare to others (statewide, nationally)</li> <li>• Definition of a strong program? (rubric)</li> <li>• Period magnet reviews – how often needs to be determined</li> <li>• Measureable goals would help clarify</li> </ul>	H H H H H H		
3. 'Academically distinct' definition too narrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural, environmental and pedagogical distinctiveness excluded</li> </ul>	M		
4. Program waiting lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand should affect decisions on magnet programs</li> </ul>	M		
5. Definition of keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened staff</li> <li>• Appropriately credentialed teachers (licensed, board certified...)</li> <li>• Principal control</li> <li>• Admissions standards coordinated with lottery</li> <li>• Entrance requirements strengthens programs</li> </ul>	M M M M M		
6. Home school transition for those students unable to continue to attend chosen magnet school due to reduced transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will they transition academically, programmatically and personally (friends and teachers)</li> <li>• Home schools need to be stronger for these and all students</li> </ul>	L  L		
7. Magnet program purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is supposed to be accomplished?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Workforce development</li> <li>◆ Learning interests and abilities</li> <li>◆ Future development</li> </ul> </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. ★ Student assignment does not consider student achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ★TOP ISSUE: ensure quality of all home schools</li> <li>• Does diversity improve performance?</li> </ul>			
2. Overemphasis on transportation cost reductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prorate cost of transportation for parent payment, index to EDS</li> <li>• Explore use of public transportation</li> </ul>			
3. Student assignment boundaries not logical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider communities, not just neighborhoods</li> <li>• Been piecemealed</li> <li>• Still feeling effects of the choice plan</li> </ul>			
4. Transportation does not appear to be efficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timing of buses</li> <li>• Maximizing space</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. Not implemented consistently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equity across areas</li> <li>Concerned about misalignment between action and values</li> <li>Not implemented consistently due to transportation challenges</li> </ul>	H		
2. The principle is not realistic				
3. Resources (money, staff, school environment challenges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To the greatest extent possible language is not always financially feasible</li> </ul>			
4. Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To the greatest extent possible transportation should be offered to LEP and EC students</li> </ul>			
5. The principle is a value that needs to be on the table				
6. Separate LEP and EC students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principle should include EC and not LEP</li> </ul>			
7. All students should have the same educational opportunity				
8. On a positive note, inclusion benefits all students				
9. Parents should be given choices				
10. Unfortunate that we have to include the “to the greatest extent possible” clause in the principal				
11. It is unrealistic to think we can accomplish this guiding principle in the area of EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i.e. for self-contained students</li> </ul>			
12. For LEP students this is not relevant. We don’t do anything differently with them.				
13. Why is this even an issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shouldn’t this be a basic right for all students.</li> <li>Isn’t this the law?</li> </ul>			
14. Curriculum differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs to be practiced more effectively</li> <li>All students need highly effective teachers</li> </ul>			
15. Flexible standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need to offer placement choices that meet the needs of individual kids</li> </ul>			
16. The first part of the principle should be eliminated				
17. Equity				
18. The word “assignment” in the principle should be replaced with ‘educational’ opportunity (as directed by the student’s IEP)				



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

Group 1
1. Require parent and student contracts to ensure significant parental involvement in daily educational life of students.
2. Create magnet programs to compete with private schools. Use a percentage of tuition to aid magnets and a percentage to aid lower-performing schools.
3. Utilize new school buildings with private industry. Steele Creek area needs a new high school and the YMCA wants a new facility. There's an opportunity for collaboration.
4. Where is the mission statement? Needs to be part of the discussion of guiding principles.
Group 2
1. Magnet options provide opportunities for split neighborhoods to try to stay together.
2. Magnet programs were diverse prior to transportation changes; transportation changes may prohibit some families from choosing a magnet.

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### Comments from the open microphone speakers:

1. No capping – what does this mean
2. Parent was not welcomed in school, if you want involved parents they need to be welcomed
3. What community are you talking about?
4. Define diversity and what it really looks like; why wouldn't you want to be diverse?
5. Will you listen or will you keep everything the same?
6. Hasn't seen change, when will you do all students, when will it happen, it should be now
7. There are a lot of schools that are successful and some need support. Look at the successful schools, leverage their success and transfer to other schools.
8. Diversity and equity – primary theme for 15 years and hasn't seen change. We need to be diverse on Dias, why can't they represent all students within CMS. Equities in technology, teachers, textbooks.
9. Every child is not represented, so they cannot be successful.
10. Assignment related to schools and schooling opportunity should be available to all students. Educational opportunities.
11. Must force diversity. How can every student get best education?
12. #1 – all students will be provided a world class education.
13. Advocate for your school. Higher level in district has changed way of school. If you continue with satellite, change start time so parents can get students somewhere at 7:15, they are already at 9.
14. Principles come with price tag. Can we afford them? Ranking is important. Bottom one may not be affordable. Challenges may not be solved by 5 year old principles. How can we raise revenue, change organizational structure, outsource.
15. Diversity and being able to access it. Magnets offer quality education for everyone. Be creative with transportation. Magnets are succeeding, this is what we want. Learn, preserve.
16. 7:15 start at NW. Doing disservice by taking away transportation. Equal opportunities to shine.
17. Students cannot problem-solve. They pass SAT but cannot balance checkbook. Everyone should have opportunity to experience. This is part of education.