

Out-of-Assigned-District  
Student Placement Policy

**APPLYING FOR OUT-OF-ASSIGNED DISTRICT SCHOOL PLACEMENT**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY:**

The Newton Public Schools considers applications for students to transfer to schools outside of their home district. It is the goal of the school system to grant to the degree possible requests for out-of-assigned district placements. Impact on enrollment, staffing and space availability now and in the future are key considerations. Out-of-assigned district placements for students who wish to attend a school in Newton other than his/her district school are limited. Such placements will be made on a space available basis only. In addition to Newton residents, members of NTA Units A, B, C, D, E, NESAs, or the Custodial union may also apply for placement of their children in a Newton Public School. Parents of METCO Program students are not required to apply for out-of-assigned district placement; however their initial assignment in the district is governed by the procedures in this policy.

The process for placements is as follows:

**Application Process:**

- **Application Forms:** Applications for the following school year must be submitted on forms which are available in the Elementary Education Office (Grades K-5) or the Deputy Superintendent's Office (Grades 6-12) at the Education Center. Parents/guardians requesting out-of-assigned district placements should call the Elementary Education Office (Grades K-5) at 617-559-6105 or the Deputy Superintendent's Office (Grades 6-12) at 617-559-6115 for information. Applications are also available on-line at [www.newton.k12.ma.us/outofassigneddistrict.com](http://www.newton.k12.ma.us/outofassigneddistrict.com).
- **Meeting with the Principal:** The parent/guardian will complete the application and will make an appointment to talk with the principal of his or her home school. The principal will review the application with the parent/guardian and fill out the 'Reason for Request' section of the application. The principal will sign the application and the parent/guardian will be responsible for returning the completed form to the Education Center. Application forms must have the written statement section completed in order to be considered. If the principal signs the form, this in no way indicates that the placement is sanctioned or guaranteed.

- **Application Submission:** Completed applications, signed by the in-district principal, can be submitted no earlier than March 1 in the school year preceding the desired registration and no later than May 1. Those received after May 1 and before Labor Day may, under special circumstances, be considered for placement after all other placement decisions have been made. Applications may be mailed in or brought to the Education Center.
- **Decision Timeline:** The goal is to announce out-of-assigned district decisions as close to June 1 as possible. Students approved for out-of-assigned district placement should understand that the course assignment process has begun prior to June and that they may not receive their first choices in course selection.

## Space Availability

Approval for out-of-assigned district placements is subject to space availability in the requested school and grade, and for all subsequent grades as well. Expected class, team and school sizes will be based on the most recent projections by the School Department. Size will be considered for both the requested year and for any future year for which the School Department provides projections.

1. At the elementary school level, there will be no out-of-assigned district placements for classes that may reasonably be expected based on enrollment projections to be greater than 22 students in Grades K-2 and greater than 24 students in Grades 3-5, unless such a placement would result in lowering class size in the sending school and at the same time create more equitable class sizes between the two schools.
2. At the middle school level, there will be no out-of-assigned district placements to a middle school if the placement may reasonably be expected to result in a team size greater than 94 students, unless such a placement will result in more equitable team sizes between the two schools. In addition, if the differential between Newton North and Newton South High Schools is projected to be above 170 students during the school year that these middle school students will begin attending high school, then out-of-assigned district decisions will be made to ensure the differential does not increase.
3. At the high school level, there will be no out-of-assigned district placements if such placement will or may reasonably be expected to result in an enrollment differential between the two high schools of greater than 170 students. If the differential is above 170 students, out-of-assigned district decisions will be made to ensure the differential does not increase. Students from families who live in the Newton North/Mason-Rice one mile zone may attend Newton North regardless of the differential between Newton North and Newton South.
4. Note the class size, team size, and high school differential guidelines may be changed by the School Committee if fiscal and space constraints require larger class sizes. This change may be made annually before the placement decisions are made by the school administration.

## Buffer Zones

Optional (or choice) zones within the City of Newton will be renamed buffer zones to more accurately reflect their meaning. A buffer zone is a defined area for which individual addresses may be assigned to one of two elementary schools. Parents/guardians of students residing in a buffer zone must request either one of the two designated elementary schools in the zone. The requests will be granted based on space availability. Students in these zones do not have a designated home school until such time as they are assigned a school.

## Placement Guidelines

Applications will be considered in the following priority order. If more students with the same priority designation apply for the same school and grade than there are spaces available, a lottery will be used to determine which of those applications are approved. Applications submitted after May 1 will not be included in the lottery.

### 1) **First Priority:**

All students from the Cabot Elementary School will be districted to Day Middle School. For a transition period to be determined, Cabot students who had Bigelow Middle School as their feeder school prior to the 2013 redistricting and whose placement would result in siblings attending Bigelow at the same time and who have siblings at Bigelow Middle School as of the time of the redistricting will have "First Priority" in the Placement Guidelines for the out-of-assigned district policy for requests to go to Bigelow. The other priorities listed in the Placement Guidelines will remain in the same order as is currently the case, except each will move "down" one priority because of the new "First Priority" described above (i.e. the previous "First Priority" will become the "Second Priority", the previous "Second Priority" will now be the "Third Priority", and so forth).

2) **Second Priority:** Students who live within the Newton North/Mason-Rice one mile zone are districted to go to Brown Middle School. If a family within this zone applies for an out-of-assigned district placement to either Day or Bigelow Middle School, they will get first preference for approval. At the high school level, students within this zone may attend Newton North if they choose to do so, regardless of the differential between North and South.

3) **Third Priority:** Any placement that would result in two siblings attending the same school at the same time.

4) **Fourth Priority:** Applications from Cabot students who request to attend Day or Bigelow Middle School on an out-of-assigned district basis.

- 5) **Fifth Priority:** Any buffer zone request.
- 6) **Sixth Priority:** All other out-of-assigned district requests.

The School Committee Policy for out-of-assigned district placements is mutually exclusive of placement decisions made for programmatic needs including Special Education or other Student Services.

METCO students are accepted into the Newton schools prior to and separate from the out-of-assigned district decision-making process. However, the assignment of individual METCO students to specific schools is made in consideration of the above process.

### **Subsequent Assignments**

- Once a family in an elementary buffer zone has been assigned a school for one child, other siblings who follow will also be enrolled in that elementary school unless the parent/guardian requests a different elementary school. Their request for a different school will be considered on a space available basis.
- Once an out-of-assigned district placement is approved, the student will follow the feeder pattern for the new school through middle and high school. The family does not need to request any further out-of-assigned district placements for that child, but does retain the right to return to its “home” school at the beginning of a new school year. Similarly, once children of staff and students in the METCO program are placed, the assigned elementary placement becomes their home school, and they will follow that school’s feeder pattern.

### **Conditions of Approval**

- Parents/guardians will be responsible for transporting their child to the out-of-assigned district school.
- Once an assignment is offered and accepted, the child must remain in the school requested for the duration of the school year.

*On December 13, 2001, the School Committee issued an out-of-district policy statement that required a review of that policy during the 2010-2011 school year. This document reflects that review.*