NEWTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

100 Walnut Street, Newtonville, MA 02460

AREA CODE (617) 559-9025

M e m o r a n d u m

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TO: David Fleishman, Superintendent
              School Committee

FROM: Sandra Guryan, Deputy Superintendent/Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: October 14, 2014

RE: Student Assignment Process

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A key aspect of the Long-Range Facilities Plan for Newton elementary schools is the assignment of students to match the new capacities of the first three schools which are now in the implementation phase of the plan. Angier, Zervas, and Cabot school buildings will each be larger than their current assigned populations, with Zervas and later Cabot expansion designed to address district enrollment capacity issues in this phase.

The Long-Range Facilities Plan for elementary schools will, in the shortest implementation scenario, take until 2031 or later, and thus student assignment plans should be addressed in phases to match the construction and renovation timing. The initial phase for the first three schools will be addressed immediately, and the second phase, which hopefully will include several mid-range projects (Peirce and Williams), will come next. The next two major planned projects (Lincoln-Eliot and Ward) should follow for the third phase, which may also include mid-range projects at Countryside, Mason-Rice, and possibly other schools. A study will be conducted on the needs of the district's preschool program to determine facility implications and a possible project to develop space for that program.

The proposed process for student assignment planning and decision making will focus on Phase 1, and may then be used as a model for Phase 2 and beyond. Enrollment forecasting and data as well as GIS mapping information will be a key element in the process. School enrollment projections are being brought up to date for this purpose, with a report to be presented to the School Committee in late November 2014. Enrollment data will also be used to ensure optimum balance of middle and high school enrollment feeder patterns. Regular communications will be another key element in the process.

Angier, which will open in January 2016, will likely have an enrollment close to 430 students in the current district, or within 35 students of the planned enrollment capacity for the school of 465. The student reassignment plan will include options to address this,

including leaving the open capacity for move-ins or students from buffer zones. Buffer zones in general will be reviewed in the overall study of student assignment.

Cabot is planned to open in late 2018 or early 2019 if the current schedule meets all of Newton's and the MSBA's requirements. At that time the current Cabot district will likely generate an enrollment of close to 400 students. This will allow 80 additional students to attend, and capacity will be reviewed as part of the Phase 1 of student assignment changes.

As planned, Zervas School will have the most open capacity with the current district. With a likely population of 335 students in 2017, an additional 150 students may be reassigned to the new school as an outcome of the planning process.

In order to be ready for an initial group of students to be assigned to Zervas for September 2017, the student assignment review process will need to commence this fall of 2014.

The proposed process laid out below with recommended timeline includes the creation of a student assignment working group, consultants to be utilized as needed, the development of criteria for the evaluation of options, and regular school committee updates, public communication and multiple opportunities for public input.

PROPOSED STUDENT ASSIGNMENT PROCESS AND TIMELINE
PHASE I (ANGIER, ZERVAS, CABOT)

October 2014	School Committee Meeting October 14, 2014 • Presentation of proposed student assignment study – scope, timeline, process, communications, public input
November 2014	School Committee Meeting November 14, 2014 • Approval of overall process for working group • Composition and charge of Student Assignment Working Group • Review communications plan School Committee Meeting November 24, 2014 • *Review 2014-15 Enrollment Analysis Report* Procure consultants Appointments to Working Group
December 2014	School Committee Meeting December 15, 2014 • *Review update of Elementary Long-Range plan* • Discussion of evaluation matrix (similar to MSBA evaluation matrix tool) for student assignment options Consultants begin Initial Communication • Letter to community; Website page for updates

January 2015	**Working Group Convenes** • Review charge, process, background information and data • Meeting schedule and timeline for Working Group • Develop communication plan • Review / refine evaluation criteria and begin to review initial options • Confirm public forum dates **School Committee Meeting January 26, 2015** • *Enrollment Planning and Class Size Analysis* • Update on Working Group progress
February 2015	**Working Group Meeting** • Continue to review and evaluate options • Schedule informational meetings at schools **School Committee Meeting February 26, 2015** • Update
March 2015	**First Public Meeting** • Present data and working assumptions; Preview criteria for evaluating options; Receive feedback **Working Group Meeting** • Continue to review and evaluate options
April 2015	**Working Group Meeting** • Continue to review and evaluate options **School Committee Meeting April 13, 2015** • Update
May 2015	**Working Group Meeting** • Continue to review and evaluate options **Second Public Meeting** • Present preferred options • Receive feedback on options • Discussion-Evaluation of options **School Committee Meeting May 27, 2015** • Update
June 2015	**School Committee meeting June 15, 2015** • Discussion of final options • Vote on approved option
September 2015	**School Committee Update** • Communication of student assignment changes • Online resource for information on school assignments