



Office of the Superintendent

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SUPERINTENDENT
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Dear Atlanta Public Schools Stakeholders,

The next round of community meetings has been confirmed for the week of January 30 – February 2. During the meetings, independent demographers will present their next set of scenarios for your consideration and feedback.

Near the end of this cycle, I will make recommendations to the board. I began this process with no preconceived notions; thus, my thinking has evolved. Based on your comments and dialogue with board members and administrators, I am slowly developing a set of guiding principles to help me formulate my final recommendations to the board sometime in March or April. I want to emphasize that what I am releasing today is where my thinking is at the moment. These guiding principles will change based on your further input on the next two scenarios, and as I collect more information from others. As a courtesy, I have shared these guiding principles with the demographers, but they are not obligated to use them as they develop their next set of scenarios.

We continue to implore you to review the next set of scenarios and provide feedback to ensure that we implement plans that are best for our schools, communities, and most importantly, our students. The email address for the demographic study is ApsDemographicStudy@atlantapublicschools.us. I urge you to use this mailbox, instead of my personal one, as I will not have the ability to respond in a timely manner given the more compressed time schedule ahead of us.

Thank you for helping us make a difference in the lives of our students in Atlanta Public Schools.

With warmest regards,

Erroll B. Davis, Jr.
Superintendent

Demographic Study Guiding Principles (01/19/12)

Ranking of Priorities

Priority One

- Propose boundaries that will be functional for 10 years based on forecasted enrollment.
- Attempt to assign students to schools located closest to their homes. Allow K-8 students to walk where possible. The proximity of ES's to MS's should be maximized.
- Attempt to maximize/keep the school feeder concept intact. No more split feeders. Clusters only.
- When evaluating consolidation/closure scenarios and determining which facilities should be retained vs. closed, consideration should be given to minimizing disruption to established educational programming (retain existing IB programs, magnet schools, etc.)
- Ensure student safety and transportation efficiency by using major highway corridors and geographic features as zone boundaries. Give weight to traffic patterns, energy efficiency, etc. Consider time spent on buses.
- Assume NAHS capacity of 2400.
- Minimize impacts on areas that have been redistricted within the last three years.
- Recommend school consolidation/closures in areas where forecasted enrollment does not support multiple schools.
- Attempt to avoid splitting neighborhoods. (Neighborhood boundaries are determined by generally accepted definitions used by the City of Atlanta).

Priority Two

- Favor the retention of newer/larger facilities which have benefitted from recent capital investment in expansion or renovation.
- Retain more accessible, less congested school sites which have better transportation access and can accommodate future long-term expansion beyond the forecast period of this study.
- When consolidating, to the extent possible, avoid closing a high performing school to send children to a lower performing school.
- Don't eliminate an IB school within an IB cluster.
- Retain ES splitting (K-3, 4-5) as a planning tool.
- Consider SPLOST funded school expansions as a planning tool.
- Be careful in moving students from high performing ES's to low performing MS's.
- Balance current utilization of retained buildings to 80% to 90% of capacity.
- In at least one model, minimize the number of transfers across the board.

Priority Three

- Before closing a school, consider the robustness of its partner support.
- No K-8 schools planning until Board reviews/resolves policy issues.
- Eliminate the 9th Grade Academy as a stand alone facility.