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2 Related Entries: JEE-RA, KLA, KLA-RA
3 Responsible Office: Chief Operating Officer
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6 Student Transfers
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9 A. PURPOSE
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11 To explain the limited circumstances under which students may
12 be granted a transfer, referred to as a Change of School
13 Assignment (COSA), to attend a school other than their home
14 school or the school assigned in accordance with their
15 Individualized Education Program (IEP)
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17 B. ISSUE
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19 Students are expected to attend the school within the
20 established area in which they reside (home school) or
21 assigned in accordance with their IEP. Students may submit
22 applications for COSAs from the home school or the school
23 assigned through the IEP process in cases of documented unique
24 hardship, a recent family move within Montgomery County, and
25 in certain circumstances to permit a younger sibling to attend
26 the same school as an older sibling.
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28 C. POSITION

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30 1. A student may apply for a COSA based on the following
31 criteria:

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33 ~~When a documented unique hardship is shown.~~
34 ~~Problems that are common to large numbers of~~
35 ~~families do not constitute a unique hardship.~~

36 a) **Unique Hardship**

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38 **Students may apply for a COSA when extenuating**
39 **circumstances related to their specific physical,**
40 **mental, or emotional well-being or their family's**
41 **individual or personal situation that could be**
42 **mitigated by a change of school environment.**
43 **However, problems that are common to large numbers**
44 **of families do not constitute a unique hardship,**
45 **absent other compelling factors. Documentation that**
46 **can be independently verified must accompany all**
47 **hardship requests, or the request will be denied.**
48 **Examples of such unique hardships include, but are**
49 **not limited to, the following:**

50

51 **(1) Child care**

52 **Parents/guardians must demonstrate**
53 **extenuating circumstances in obtaining age-**
54 **appropriate supervision of school students**
55 **before- and/or after -school because:**

56 (a) their work hours extend significantly
57 beyond the typical hours for available
58 child care programs and activities
59 located within the home school or
60 otherwise easily accessible child care
61 programs; and /or

62 (b) significant financial constraints limit
63 the family's ability to otherwise access
64 child care, or other student specified
65 needs.

66
67 (2) When there are extenuating circumstances
68 involving the physical, mental, or emotional
69 well-being of the student.

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71 (a) Parents/guardians seeking COSAs for this
72 reason should provide documentation of:

73 (i) ongoing treatment by a health care
74 provider of issues related to the
75 student's physical, mental, or
76 emotional well-being that are
77 directly related to or
78 significantly impacted by the
79 school environment;and/or

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81 ~~(a)~~(ii) a significant health issue
82 with unique care requirements
83 (e.g., frequent medical

84 appointments far from the student's
85 home school and/or the
86 parent/guardian's work location).

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88 In the absence of such documentation, evidence
89 of such extenuating circumstances may be
90 obtained through consultation with school
91 staff.

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93 b) **Family Moves** ~~When a family moves within Montgomery~~
94 ~~County, preference to remain in the original school~~
95 ~~will be considered to complete the current school~~
96 ~~year only.~~**Students whose families have moved within**
97 **Montgomery County who wish to continue attending**
98 **their former home school may request a COSA without**
99 **demonstrating a unique hardship. Such requests may**
100 **be considered for the remainder of the current**
101 **school year only, with the exception that students**
102 **in Grades 11 or 12 may be granted a COSA to stay**
103 **through high school graduation.**

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105 c) **Siblings**
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107 (1) When a ~~younger~~-sibling seeks to attend the
108 school where an ~~older~~ sibling will be enrolled
109 in the regular/general school program, or a
110 special education program, during the year the
111 ~~younger~~-sibling seeks to enroll.

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- (2) When an ~~elder~~ sibling attends a magnet, language immersion, or other application program, a COSA may be approved to the regular school program for ~~younger~~ siblings on a case-by-case basis.

- (3) Such approvals **are for elementary school students only and** requires consideration of available classroom space, grade-level enrollment, staffing allocations, or other factors that impact the schools involved.

- (4) Sections ~~e) and d) above~~ **does (1), (2), and (3) above do** not apply if a boundary change has occurred.

d) **MCPS Staff**

- (1) **Consistent with MCPS strategic priorities to encourage and support school-based staff who work in Title I Schools, Innovative School Year Calendar Schools, or Focus Schools, staff based in any one of those schools may request a transfer for their own child to attend the school which they work under the following conditions -**

140 (a) The staff member is assigned to work
141 in one of the above referenced
142 schools for the upcoming school year
143 in a budgeted full-time equivalent
144 (FTE) position that is eligible for
145 leave, retirement, and health
146 benefits coverage;

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148 (b) the staff member is a Montgomery
149 County resident;

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151 (c) the request is accompanied by a plan
152 for childcare or other supervision
153 during all times during the staff
154 member's duty day.

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156 (2) If the student's enrollment in the school in
157 which the staff member works becomes an
158 impediment to the staff member's ability to
159 perform their duties satisfactorily, the
160 student transfer may be rescinded.

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162 (3) The superintendent of schools may establish a
163 process and timeline for consideration of such
164 requests, as well as limit eligibility based
165 on staff performance or conduct concerns.

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167 **(4) MCPS staff who do not work in one of the**
168 **schools identified in this section may**
169 **otherwise apply for COSAs for their children**
170 **in accordance with requirements of this policy**
171 **and related regulations.**

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173 2. COSAs are subject to the following procedures:

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175 a) COSAs applications are to be submitted between **the**
176 **first school day in February and the first school**
177 **day in April** ~~February 1 and April 1~~ of the school
178 year preceding the year of the desired transfer.
179 Every effort will be made to notify
180 parents/guardians and students of the decision
181 regarding their COSA request by May 31. COSA
182 requests submitted after ~~April 1~~ **the first school**
183 **day in April** will not be accepted unless the student
184 is a new resident of Montgomery County or there is
185 a bona fide emergency or event that could not have
186 been foreseen prior to ~~April 1~~ **the first school day**
187 **in April**. Documentation supporting this situation
188 must be supplied.

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190 b) Students who receive an approved COSA out of their
191 current feeder pattern must attend the new school
192 for one calendar year to be eligible to participate
193 in athletics. A waiver from this restriction may
194 be requested.

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- 196 c) Parents/guardians accepting a COSA assume
- 197 responsibility for transportation, and recognize
- 198 that student parking is regulated on a school-by-
- 199 school basis.
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- 201 d) Reassignment from one consortium school to another
- 202 after lottery assignments are finalized for that
- 203 year are handled through the Division of Consortia
- 204 Choice and Application Program Services, based on
- 205 a unique hardship.
- 206
- 207 e) **The COSA application will be approved or denied**
- 208 **after considering:**
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- 210 (1) **the reasons for the request;**
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- 212 (2) **for students receiving special education**
- 213 **services, whether the IEP can be implemented**
- 214 **at the requested school;**
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- 216 (3) **applicable staffing and services available at**
- 217 **the requested school;**
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- 219 (4) **school capacity, including grade level and**
- 220 **cluster capacity, and other issues that**
- 221 **implicate the ability of the school to admit**
- 222 **new students.**

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~~3. COSAs are not required for a student to attend a school other than their home school under the following conditions:~~

a) 3. Students attending an elementary school on a COSA must reapply for a COSA to attend a middle school other than their home middle school. Starting with students who enter 6th grade during school year 2020-2021, a student attending a middle school on a COSA seeking to attend the high school in that middle school's feeder pattern will have to reapply for a COSA.

b) 4. Students who have been admitted to countywide programs, regional programs, or programs specifically identified by the superintendent of schools in a publication that will be issued annually and distributed broadly to promote equitable access to these programs are not required to obtain a COSA to attend a school other than their home school. MCPS reserves the right to require students to return to their home school if they cease participation in the program.

4. 5. MCPS shall implement a process, separate from the COSA process described in this policy, for the purpose of considering certain academic transfer requests for high school students as described below.

- 251 a) Students may request academic transfers to
252 participate in either:
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- 254 (1) A multi-year sequence of related courses, as
255 defined in the district or school course
256 catalog, that is not available at the
257 student's home school, or
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- 259 (2) A multi-year single course sequence, as
260 defined in the district or school course
261 catalog, that is not available at the
262 student's home school.
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- 264 a)b) Such a process will include deadlines for
265 submission of academic transfer requests that align
266 with MCPS timelines for course registration and
267 staffing needs.
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- 269 ~~(1)~~c) Such transfers will be permitted only if space is
270 available after local students enroll.
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- 273 d) Consistent with the district's strategic
274 priorities, MCPS may also consider adjustments to
275 academic programming at the student's home school
276 in lieu of granting the academic transfer requests.
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278 **MCPS reserves the right to require students to**
279 **return to their home school if they withdraw from**
280 **the course-sequence for which the academic transfer**
281 **request was granted.**

282
283 e) **6.** Any child who has an older sibling who is
284 currently enrolled in a language immersion program, and
285 will continue to be enrolled in that language immersion
286 program the year the younger sibling seeks to enroll,
287 may participate in ~~the~~ a lottery established by the
288 superintendent of schools for admission into the
289 language immersion program. Such lottery shall include
290 a weighting process that takes into consideration
291 factors to include: (a) students who have an older
292 sibling who is currently enrolled in a language
293 immersion program and will continue to be enrolled in
294 that language immersion program in the year the younger
295 sibling seeks to enroll; (b) socio-economic status and
296 poverty; and, (c) other factors as identified by the
297 superintendent of schools, such as, in specific
298 circumstances, a catchment area. Any child who has an
299 older sibling who was enrolled in a language immersion
300 program during the 2017-2018 school year and has an older
301 sibling who will continue to be enrolled in the language
302 immersion program the year the younger sibling seeks to
303 enroll, may enroll in the language immersion program
304 without the necessity of participating in the lottery
305 conducted for admission into that program.

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D. DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. To maintain the stability of school attendance boundaries by promoting home school attendance and respecting the space needs or limitations and staffing allocations of the individual schools.

2. To provide a process for students to receive a COSA when circumstances arise regarding a documented unique hardship, a recent family move within Montgomery County, or certain circumstances to permit a younger sibling to attend the same school as an older sibling.

3. To provide clarity ~~for the relationship between~~**that** the COSA process ~~and~~**is distinct from the admissions processes for** countywide programs, **academic transfer requests, and administrative placements initiated by MCPS staff, the criteria for which are established by the superintendent of schools through administrative regulation.**

E. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This policy is implemented through administrative regulation.

332 F. REVIEW AND REPORTING

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334 This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Board of
335 Education policy review process.

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338 *Policy History:* Resolution No. 288-72, April 11, 1972,
339 amended by Resolution No. 825-72, December 12, 1972, reformatted
340 in accordance with Resolution No. 333-86, June 12, 1986 and
341 Resolution No. 458-86, August 12, 1986, accepted by Resolution
342 No. 517-86, September 22, 1986; reviewed February, 1995; amended
343 by Resolution No. 92-02, March 12, 2002; non-substantive
344 modification, November 16, 2006; amended by Resolution No. 124-
345 17, March 17, 2017; **amended** .