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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 **any of** the
31 following 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. The extenuating circumstances
66 must be extremely significant for
67 students beyond the elementary level.

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

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

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

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83 ~~(a)~~(ii) a significant health issue

84 with unique care requirements
85 (e.g., frequent medical
86 appointments far from the student's
87 home school and/or the
88 parent/guardian's work location).

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

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95 b) **Family Moves** ~~When a family moves within Montgomery~~
96 ~~County, preference to remain in the original school~~
97 ~~will be considered to complete the current school~~
98 ~~year only.~~

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100 Students whose families have moved within
101 Montgomery County, **during the school year**, who wish
102 **their student** to continue attending their former
103 home school may request a COSA without
104 demonstrating a unique hardship. Such requests
105 **should may** be **submitted immediately after the**
106 **family moves**, and **such requests will be granted**
107 **considered** for the remainder of the current school
108 year only, with the exception that students in
109 Grades 11 or 12 may be granted a COSA to stay
110 through high school graduation.

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c) Siblings

- (1) When a ~~younger~~ sibling seeks to attend the school where an ~~older~~ sibling will be enrolled in the regular/general school program, or a special education program, during the year the ~~younger~~ sibling seeks to enroll.
- (2) **For elementary school students only, ~~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~~ **and (1), (2), and (3) above do** not apply if a boundary change has occurred.
- (5) **For the purpose of this policy, siblings include step-brothers and sisters, and half-brothers and sisters.**

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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 -

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

(b) the staff member is a Montgomery County resident, and the student is otherwise eligible to enroll in MCPS;

(c) the request is accompanied by a plan for childcare or other supervision

169 during all times during the staff
170 member's duty day.

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172 (2) If the student's enrollment in the school in
173 which the staff member works becomes an
174 impediment to the staff member's ability to
175 perform their duties satisfactorily, the
176 student transfer may be rescinded.

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178 (3) The superintendent of schools may establish a
179 process and timeline for consideration of such
180 requests, as well as limit eligibility based
181 on staff performance or conduct concerns.

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183 (4) MCPS staff who do not work in one of the
184 schools identified in this section may
185 otherwise apply for COSAs for their children
186 in accordance with requirements of this policy
187 and related regulations.

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189 2. COSAs are subject to the following procedures:

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191 a) COSA applications are to be submitted between **the**
192 **first school day in February and the first school**
193 **day in April** ~~February 1 and April 1~~ of the school
194 year preceding the year of the desired transfer.
195 Every effort will be made to notify
196 parents/guardians and students of the decision

197 regarding their COSA request by May 31. COSA
198 requests submitted after ~~April~~**the first school**
199 **day in April** will not be accepted unless the student
200 is a new resident of Montgomery County or there is
201 a bona fide emergency or event that could not have
202 been foreseen prior to ~~April~~**the first school day**
203 **in April**. Documentation supporting this situation
204 must be supplied.

205
206 b) **High school** ~~§s~~ students who receive an approved COSA
207 out of their current feeder pattern must attend the
208 new school for one calendar year to be eligible to
209 participate in athletics. A waiver from this
210 restriction may be requested.

211
212 c) Parents/guardians accepting a COSA assume
213 responsibility for transportation, and recognize
214 that student parking is regulated on a school-by-
215 school basis.

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217 d) Reassignment from one consortium school to another
218 after lottery assignments are finalized for that
219 year are handled through the Division of Consortia
220 Choice and Application Program Services, based on
221 a unique hardship.

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223 e) **The COSA application will be approved or denied**
224 **after considering:**

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- (1) the reasons for the request;
- (2) for students receiving special education services, whether the IEP can be implemented at the requested school;
- (3) applicable staffing and services available at the requested school;
- (4) school capacity, including grade level and cluster capacity, and other issues that implicate the ability of the school to admit new students; and
- (5) if the requested school has a utilization rate of less than 80 percent, the request may receive special consideration after factoring in any issues of capacity at the grade or cluster level.

~~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

253 ~~students who enter 6th grade during school year 2020-~~
254 ~~2021-2022, a~~ student attending a middle school on a
255 COSA seeking to attend the high school in that middle
256 school's feeder pattern ~~will have to reapply for a COSA.~~
257 ~~Starting with students who enter 3rd grade in 2021-2022,~~
258 ~~students in a middle school immersion program must apply~~
259 ~~for a COSA in order to attend a -high school other than~~
260 ~~their home school, including the high school in that~~
261 ~~middle school's feeder pattern.~~

262
263 ~~b)~~ 4. Students who have been admitted to countywide
264 programs, regional programs, or programs specifically
265 identified by the superintendent of schools in a
266 publication that will be issued annually and distributed
267 broadly to promote equitable access to these programs
268 ~~are not required to obtain a COSA to attend a school~~
269 ~~other than their home school.~~ MCPS reserves the right
270 to require students to return to their home school if
271 they cease participation in the program.

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273 ~~4.~~ 5. MCPS shall implement a process, separate from
274 the COSA process described in this policy, for the
275 purpose of considering ~~certain~~ academic transfer
276 requests for high school students as described below.

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278 a) Students may request academic transfers to
279 participate in ~~either~~:

281 (1) A multi-year sequence of related courses, as
282 defined in the district or school course
283 catalog, that is not available at the
284 student's home school, or

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286 (2) A multi-year single course sequence, as
287 defined in the district or school course
288 catalog, that is not available at the
289 student's home school.

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291 a)b) Such a process will include deadlines for
292 submission of academic transfer requests that align
293 with MCPS timelines for course registration and
294 staffing needs.

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296 ~~(1)~~c) Such transfers will be permitted only if space is
297 available after local students enroll.

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300 d) Consistent with the district's strategic
301 priorities, MCPS may also consider adjustments to
302 academic programming at the student's home school
303 in lieu of granting the academic transfer requests.

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305 MCPS reserves the right to require students to
306 return to their home school if they withdraw from
307 the course-sequence for which the academic transfer
308 request was granted.

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e) 6. Any child who has an older sibling who is currently enrolled in a language immersion program, and will continue to be enrolled in that language immersion program the year the younger sibling seeks to enroll, may participate in ~~the~~a lottery established by the superintendent of schools for admission into the language immersion program. Such lottery shall include a weighting process that takes into consideration factors to include: (a) students who have an older sibling who is currently enrolled in a language immersion program and will continue to be enrolled in that language immersion program in the year the younger sibling seeks to enroll; (b) socio-economic status and poverty; and, (c) other factors as identified by the superintendent of schools, such as, in specific circumstances, a catchment area. Any child who has an older sibling who was enrolled in a language immersion program during the 2017-2018 school year and has an older sibling who will continue to be enrolled in the language immersion program the year the younger sibling seeks to enroll, may enroll in the language immersion program without the necessity of participating in the lottery conducted for admission into that program.

D. DESIRED OUTCOMES

- 336 1. To maintain the stability of school attendance
337 boundaries by promoting home school attendance and
338 respecting the space needs or limitations and staffing
339 allocations of the individual schools.
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- 341 2. To provide a process for students to receive a COSA when
342 circumstances arise regarding a documented unique
343 hardship, a recent family move within Montgomery County,
344 or certain circumstances to permit a younger sibling to
345 attend the same school as an older sibling.
346
- 347 3. To provide clarity ~~for the relationship between~~that the
348 COSA process ~~and is distinct from the admissions~~
349 ~~processes for~~ countywide programs, ~~academic transfer~~
350 ~~requests, and administrative placements initiated by~~
351 ~~MCPS staff, the criteria for which are established by~~
352 ~~the superintendent of schools through administrative~~
353 ~~regulation.~~

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355 E. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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357 This policy is implemented through administrative regulation.

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359 F. REVIEW AND REPORTING

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361 This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Board of
362 Education policy review process.

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365 *Policy History:* Resolution No. 288-72, April 11, 1972,
366 amended by Resolution No. 825-72, December 12, 1972, reformatted
367 in accordance with Resolution No. 333-86, June 12, 1986 and
368 Resolution No. 458-86, August 12, 1986, accepted by Resolution
369 No. 517-86, September 22, 1986; reviewed February, 1995; amended
370 by Resolution No. 92-02, March 12, 2002; non-substantive
371 modification, November 16, 2006; amended by Resolution No. 124-
372 17, March 17, 2017; **amended** .