



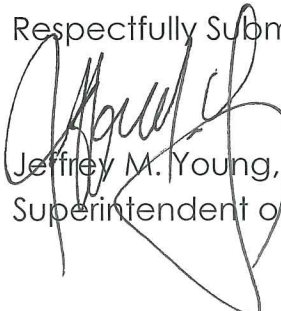
March 3, 2015

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Approval of a 2015-16 Kindergarten Assignment Band

Recommendation: That the School Committee approve a 2015-16 Kindergarten Assignment Band of +/- 9% to the District's JK-5 October 1, 2014 percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch compared with full pay lunch students, further, that all students be assigned to a seat in a school in this lottery. In assigning all students, the Superintendent shall have flexibility to exceed the cap of 50 kindergarten age students per school after the lottery is run. In so doing, the integrity of the waitlist shall be honored. The October 1, 2014 percentage for paid students was 55% and free/reduced students was 45%.

Supporting Data: Attached Document

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey M. Young, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Background

The January registration period for admission into JK/K in September of 2015 had 542 registrations which represents a decrease of 10% from the previous year. It should be noted that the decrease was anticipated and birth records from three and four years prior to the September 2016 school year indicate that there will be an increase in registrations next January. Difficult January weather may have also contributed somewhat to the decrease.

As the School Committee will recall, in May of last year a small number of amendments were made to the Controlled Choice Policy that had been revised in November of 2013. These amendments eliminated the requirement for separate assignment, by SES, for JK & K students. While well intentioned, the requirement for separate JK/K assignments by SES of the November 2013 Controlled Choice Policy proved unworkable.

The JK/K lottery for 2015/2016 school year will be run in conformance with the amendments made last May.

The Controlled Choice Policy states that “after reviewing the composition of applicants for kindergarten, the Superintendent will have the flexibility to propose to the School Committee a plus or minus percentage point range that is sufficient to allow the assignment of applicants.”

For the 2015/2016 school year there will be a total of 914 JK/K seats available. The total of currently registered rising JK students and newly registered JK and K students equals 926. This means that as of this moment we are 12 students over seat capacity.

Additionally, as the table below shows, there is an issue with sufficient seats to meet the distribution of students by SES within various settings of the plus or minus percentage band. As can be seen, even with the recommended plus or minus percentage of 9%, there will be an initial shortfall of 28 paid seats (and an available 16 free seats) to go along with the overall shortfall of 12 seats.

SES Variance	Max Paid Avail	Min Free Avail	NET Paid	NET Free
7%	567	347	-46	34
8%	576	338	-37	25
9%	585	329	-28	16
10%	594	320	-19	7
11%	603	311	-10	-2

Once the lottery is run, any unassigned students will be assigned by random number ranking with input from parents to a kindergarten at a school without a waitlist. Once all students are assigned the waitlist movement process will begin. This means that initially a school with 80 kindergarten seats may have 90 assigned JK/K students. We know from experience that the combination of withdrawals from this year’s applicants and the withdrawal of current JK students that there should be sufficient seats for late registrations and that all schools will not exceed capacity. The assignment process is identical to the one used successfully last year.