

P10-08-002 School Attendance Zones

(Revised August, 2019)

The Planning Office shall recommend to the Superintendent the boundaries for school attendance zones. Recommendations shall be based on factors such as population characteristics, program needs, capacities of available facilities, transportation patterns indicated by the Department of Pupil Transportation and legal advice when appropriate.

The recommended zones are subject to modification by the School Board and all school zones must be approved by the School Board and may not be changed without approval.

Refer to Regulation R10-08-002, "Objectives and Procedural Guidelines for the Establishment of School Attendance Zones," and Regulation R6-03-011, "School Assignments/Variance Procedures."

R10-08-002 OBJECTIVES AND PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ZONES

(Revised May, 2015)

A. Objectives for Establishing School Attendance Zones

1. To achieve the efficient utilization of present and projected school facilities.

Determining Factors:

- a. the current and projected student population growth within census tracts within school zones;
 - b. the Division's plans for new school construction;
 - c. the feasibility of plant expansion and/or renovation to provide comparable educational facilities; and
 - d. the placement of special programs that affect regularly formulated capacity figures for a school building (e.g., special program rooms with average capacities of less than the average classroom).
2. To further implement the grade-level organizational goals of K-5 Elementary Schools, 6-8 Middle Schools, and 9-12 High Schools.
 3. To maintain the concept of geographic zoning which encourages the participation and involvement of geographically contiguous communities with a school.
 4. To provide all students with the best physical learning environment possible through the uniform and equitable utilization of facilities according to the Division's educational program needs.

B. Procedural Guidelines to be Used When Attendance Zones are to be Altered

1. Provisions should be made to assure the continuity of a child's progress in K-12. This continuity should seek to avoid having a family with children in two different schools at the same educational level except for the placement of children in special programs.
2. Implementation of a rezoning plan over a span of several years would be preferable if it has the effect of minimizing the need for additional boundary

changes for a community in the near or immediate future (e.g., the possibility of phasing in certain changes to avoid additional changes when new school construction is completed).

3. Major roads and natural boundaries will be used whenever feasible as zone lines.
4. All reasonable efforts should be made to assure contiguous geographic zones that minimize the separation of clearly identifiable community components (e.g., apartment units, residential subdivisions, etc.).
5. All legal and judicial guidelines for the maintenance of a unitary school system will be adhered to strictly.
6. Efforts will be made to establish walking schools and reasonable walking zones.
7. Efforts will be made to assure an efficient system of Division-provided transportation.

P6-03-011 School Assignment/Variance Procedures (Revised August, 2007)

Except as stated below and in the accompanying regulation, a student must attend the school within the zone of residency unless he/she has been accepted to either a regional or divisionwide educational program in Henrico County Public Schools. Exceptions to the above will be made only after investigation and subsequent recommendation is initiated through the variance application process.

Students whose parents or legal guardians are employed full-time and live in Henrico County may attend the school where their parent or legal guardian works, on a space available basis as determined by the principal of the requested school. Qualifying parents or legal guardians must initiate the variance application process pursuant to the related regulation. Under no circumstances may non-resident employees enroll their children in the schools where they work. See Code "H" under R6-03-011, "School Assignment/Variance Procedures."

R6-03-011 SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS/VARIANCE PROCEDURES (Revised September, 2019)

I. In-County Variances

Students in Henrico County are expected to attend the school which serves the geographical area in which they live unless they have been accepted to either regional or division-wide educational programs (i.e., specialty centers, exceptional education programs). Placements based on academic programs or exceptional education services are not variances and will be handled by the appropriate director of Elementary, Secondary, or Exceptional Education. Siblings of students accepted into academic programs or placed in exceptional education programs may not attend the school out of their residential zone unless they are also placed or accepted into a special program at that school.

Parents may, however, request variances for their children to attend a school other than their home school only for certain specific and special circumstances, as indicated in the variance "codes" below. Variance requests must be accompanied by full residency documentation. Any approved variance is contingent upon the parents providing

transportation to and from school, the student's regular and prompt attendance (i.e., unexcused absences, unexcused tardies, or excessive early dismissals), adherence to school rules, regulations, and HCPS policy by both the student and parents.

The following timeline is intended to ensure operational and instructional planning and effectiveness:

Submit variance requests for high school students by February 15 for the following school year.

Submit variance requests for elementary and middle school students by April 15th for the following school year.

Exception: The parents of a child who move into Henrico County after February 15 or April 15, as applicable, shall enroll the child in his or her zone school and shall have 30 calendar days following the date the student first enrolls in the zone school to submit a completed variance request. Any such request shall be submitted to the principal of the zone school.

Transportation may be provided in the case of variances granted for curricular reasons, such as ROTC, or in extraordinary hardship circumstances where the parent or childcare provider is unable to provide transportation due to a debilitating medical condition that prevents driving. Variances may be revoked if these contingencies are not adhered to. Students may not be revoked after the end of the 3rd marking period unless special circumstances exist, such as a significant disruption to the school posed by the student's continued attendance, as determined by the principal and his/her instructional director.

Before a variance is revoked, the principal should notify the parent and student in writing of the conditions of the variance that are not being adhered to, and that the student's variance is at risk of revocation. After written notification, if the parent or student continues any noncompliance with the variance requirements, the principal may revoke the variance. The principal's, or designee's, decision regarding a revocation is final and may not be appealed.

Variances may only be granted for one year at a time, on a space-available basis as determined by the principal of the requested school, and only for the following reasons:

CODES:

- A. High School students who move from one school zone to another within Henrico County may be permitted to remain until graduation only if the move occurred after completion of the tenth grade. Younger siblings are not eligible for this variance. Students in 5th or 8th grade who move from one school zone to another within Henrico County may be permitted to remain at the school where they attended 4th or 7th grade, respectively, through the end of the school year. Younger siblings are not eligible for this variance.

All other students moving within the county may be permitted to complete the semester in which the move occurred if they are a "student in good standing," defined as being in compliance with school rules, regulations, and HCPS policy.

- B. Academic and administrative placement - primarily used by the Superintendent's designee and/or Directors in unusual circumstances where other guidelines do not apply.
- C. A childcare variance is available only in grades K-5, and only when the care provider is a family member, and/or when a documented hardship (i.e., family break-up, documented financial difficulty, shift or other work schedule for which childcare is difficult to obtain) exists for which other reasonable childcare provisions are not available. Both parents (or in the case of a single-parent home, the parent who lives in the home with the child) must provide documentation of full-time employment to qualify for a family member childcare variance to attend the school in the zone where the family member childcare provider lives. Consideration may be given for secondary students whose single parent works a night shift (leaving the student otherwise unattended overnight), or for students who are unable to care for themselves due to a documented disabling condition. Transportation to the home (or facility) of an after school care provider by HCPS is not permitted.
- D. Documented student medical considerations will be forwarded by the principal to the Superintendent's designee to be reviewed and evaluated by the School Health Services Supervisor, the Superintendent's designee, and/or designated school or central office staff, who will determine whether the student's health issues require additional supports and services. Under these medical circumstances, the committee would determine whether the home school is able to provide the appropriate support or medical environment. The variance form, a letter from a doctor (medical doctor for health concerns or a mental health professional for mental health issues), and a release of information form should be forwarded to the Superintendent's designee to be processed. If approved, the alternative school placement will be determined by the Superintendent's designee based upon proximity to the parent's home and available space in nearby schools.
- E. Residents planning to move to a new school zone within the county will be permitted to attend the new school of their planned residence if:
1. they present a legally binding construction contract signed by all parties and free of contingencies, indicating completion of a house in the requested zone within 90 calendar days of the opening of school or application, or
 2. they present a legally binding contract, signed by all parties, for lease of an apartment or house within the requested zone within 90 calendar days of the opening of school or application. Letters of intent will not satisfy this requirement.
- F. Reserved
- G. Reserved
- H. Henrico County Public Schools students, whose parent is permanently employed by HCPS and who is a resident* of Henrico County, may attend the school where their parent works if space is available as determined by the principal of the requested school, whose decision is final. For employees not assigned to a particular school, the employee may request a variance to the school that is nearest to the school in which the employee works. The employee must have primary or shared physical custody of their child. Under no circumstances may non-resident employees qualify for this variance code. Students attending a school where their parent works may not move to any of the feeder pattern schools in

that zone. Under no circumstances may the student's presence result in unacceptable interference with the employee's work performance, or with the work performance of other employees. *Refer to Policy [6-03-003](#), "Residents."

II. Admission of Non-resident Students

The Henrico County School Board policy does not permit attendance of non-resident students. A person of school age shall be deemed a resident of Henrico County when the student meets the definition of residency set forth in P6-03-003, "Residents."

Exceptions to this policy may be granted for the following reasons:

Code I. Students who begin a semester legally enrolled in a Henrico school (with residency documentation showing the move occurred after the beginning of the semester) may be allowed to finish that semester when they move out of the county if they are a student in good standing.

Code J. Seniors who have fully completed the eleventh grade as residents of Henrico County and then move out of the county, may only remain for graduation by paying tuition for the senior year, provided they can graduate with their class in June. Principals should include the following statement in their letter to the parents: "Please contact the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration at 652-3630 to make arrangements for payment." Principals: please copy the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration on your variance approval letter so that tuition payment arrangements can be made with the student's parents or legal guardians. Full tuition must be paid before the first day of school, or before the first day of the second semester if the student has moved during the first semester. A waiver of tuition, when warranted, may only be granted by the School Board. Refer all tuition waiver requests to the Superintendent's designee. Tuition will be prorated by semester as determined by the move dates shown on the residency documentation.

Code K. Students residing outside of Henrico County who plan to move into the county or students who are temporarily moving out of the county pending new home construction or leasing may be granted permission to attend

1. if they present a legally binding construction contract, signed by all parties and free of contingencies, indicating completion of a house in the requested zone within 90 calendar days of the opening day of school or application, or
2. if they present a legally binding contract, signed by all parties, for lease of an apartment or house, within the requested zone within 90 calendar days of the opening of school or application. Letters of intent will not satisfy this requirement.

III. Procedures for Resident Student Variance Requests and Non-resident Student Admission Requests

- A. In accordance with the variance timelines, variance requests must be initiated by the parent through the principal of the assigned residence zone school, aka "home" school. If the student is currently attending school in Henrico County and a

move occurs during the school year, a variance request can be made directly to the principal of the school where the student has been attending, rather than being initiated at the new residence zone school.

1. The principal of the home school will confer with the parent to determine whether or not the variance request meets the variance guidelines. The home school principal will also verify residency (documentation must be submitted with the variance forms), employment, childcare, etc., as provided on the variance application.
 2. If the request does not meet the variance guidelines, it should be denied in writing by the home school principal.
 3. If the request meets the variance guidelines, it will be forwarded to the principal of the requested school for consideration (except in the case of a mid-year move as described in paragraph A above). A variance that meets the guidelines may be denied due to space availability, and/or other circumstances that interfere with the approval, including matters impacting instruction for those students already assigned to the requested school (such as accreditation status), or consideration of other circumstances negatively impacting the applicant student at his or her assigned residence zone school (such as attendance or disciplinary infractions).
- B. When a variance request is forwarded to the Principal of the requested school,
1. the principal of the requested school should discuss the request with the parent and
 - verify documentation and eligibility under the guidelines;
 - verify that no reasonable alternatives exist to permit the student(s) to remain in the home school;
 - may consider space available in the receiving school in determining whether or not the variance is to be approved.
 2. The principal approves or disapproves the variance after appropriate review and communicates the decision to the parent by letter. All routine variance requests must be approved or denied at the school level by Principals. Only non-routine, or medical variances, and/or appeals should be forwarded to the Superintendent's designee.
 3. If the variance request is denied, the letter should include a statement informing the parent that any appeal of the denial must be made in writing within seven (7) working days of the date of denial to the Superintendent's designee.
 4. If an appeal is initiated, the principal will be asked to forward all appropriate information to the Superintendent's designee.
 5. Principals will submit a listing of all variances approved indicating the appropriate code of the variance, the student's home school, and grade level.
 6. Principal variance approvals and denials should not be copied to the Superintendent's designee.

Revised: January, 2018

For the entire Henrico County Public Schools policy and regulation manual, visit this page: <https://webapps.henrico.k12.va.us/policy/>