STUDENT ASSIGNMENT SERVICES

STREAMLINE SCHOOL OPTIONS PROCESS

SEPTEMBER 2012

Vision: *Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools will provide every student with the foundation of knowledge, skills and character necessary to excel in higher education, work and life.*

We embrace and value a diverse student population and community. Different perspectives and backgrounds form the cornerstone of our strong public education system.

Streamlining the School Options Process

Update to Board Retreat on September 13, 2012

The proposal to streamline the school options process was developed over the past year. The district received input and feedback from parents and school leaders and finalized the process this summer. We are now in the process of implementing the new process that will be used for the 2013-14 school application process this fall.

Community Input:

The proposal has been presented to parents and staff during the following meetings to get input and feedback. During this process the feedback was very positive and we have received several valuable suggestions for ways to further enhance the proposed changes.

- Parent Advisory Council – April 19
- Open Public Meeting – April 26
- Small Focus Group with Parents on April 26 and May 31
- Small Focus Group with Principals on May 30

Presentation to School Board:

Approved changes that will be implemented during the fall 2012 were presented to the School Board during the June 12th meeting.

Policy Updates:

The Student Assignment Options Policy SBO 1.105 and associated procedures were updated to reflect the new process. The policies were presented and approved by Executive Staff on July 30, 2012.

Overview of Changes:

Parents and schools will both benefit from combining the Fall Application (Lottery) and Spring Application (Open Enrollment) processes. This will allow parents to make all of their choices at one time and allow for earlier placement of students for school planning.

Key Improvements:

- Prioritize school choices at the time of application.
- Initial selections will be made using a random selection process.
- Allow applicants to remain on a waitlist for any school that is a higher priority than the school they are selected for admission.

Application and Timeline:

- One application for all processes (paper and online).
- Application period:
  - Fall Application period Nov. 1-30 and selection day on Jan. 12, 2013.
  - Spring (rolling) Application period Dec. 1 through mid-May.
    - Same deadline as the May Verification Letter.
    - Applications will be added to the end of any existing wait list.
  - Students new to MNPS can continue to apply until one week prior to first day.
- Allow a maximum of 7 school options for each student which will provide parental options.
- Upper grade (11th and 12th) applications will continue to operate as the previous Fall Application process and require transcripts for review.

Selection Process:

The initial selections will be made by using a random selection process. The process is designed to allow a student to remain on a waitlist for any school that is a higher priority than the school they are selected for admission. The student would then be removed from the waitlist for any school with a lower priority than the school they were selected.

If a student is selected for more than one school the process will also automatically place the student at the highest priority and remove the student from any lower level priority schools. The process will automatically backfill seats to other students until all seats are filled and students placed in their highest priority school for which they were selected.

Selection Day:

Previously the selection process was conducted during the district's public selection day event, previously known as Lottery Day. The new process requires that the actual selection be conducted prior to the public event on January, 12.

By combining the fall and spring application schools, the number of schools and student selections will be very large and the entire process will need to be changed. This past year we improved the process by moving to Martin. We plan to utilize the technology at Martin to make additional improvements such as scrolling lists on multiple screens to show selections.

Move Sibling and Employee Application Dates:

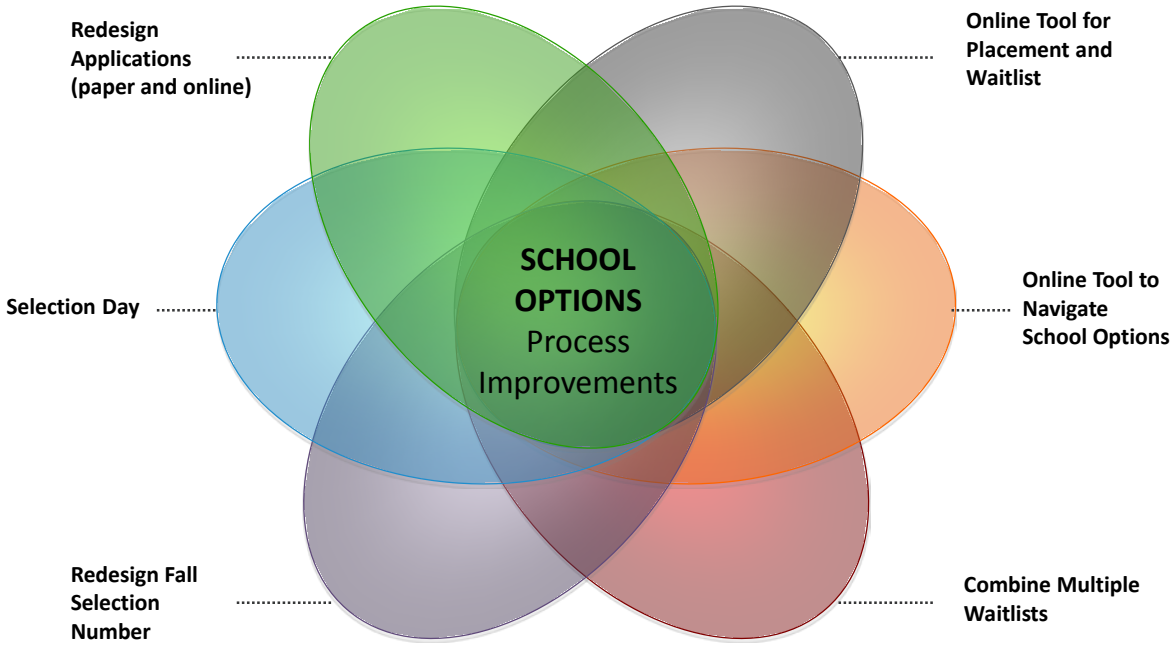
The Sibling and Employee processes were previously during the Spring Application and will be moved to the November, 1 - 30.

Redesign Selection Number:

Redesign the selection number to include student information vs. a random number. This will allow parents to know their number without needing to be sent a card with the number printed. The new selection number will remain prefixed with the school, waitlist and grade. The suffix will be changed to include the combination of the first/last initials and the last 4 digits of the student id number. For example: CT105-WJ1234 – Croft, county wide, grade 5, Wade Jones, student id: 190001234.

Online Tools for Student Placement and Waitlist:
Allow parents to monitor their children's waitlist status and current placement (non-zoned school). The district released a basic version in April, 2012 and a more compressive version will be released following the selection day process.

Online Tool for Parents to Navigate Options:
This site will help parents navigate the school options and easily identify a set of schools that fit the needs/interests of their child and family.

Combine Multiple Waiting Lists:
Previously there were separate wait lists for cluster, GPZ and sibling priorities. While we will continue to maintain these same priorities, the wait lists will be combined into one unified wait list.

Additional Process Improvements