

**I. AUTHORITY OF THE SCHOOL BOARD TO ESTABLISH ATTENDANCE AREAS**

School attendance areas will be established by the School Board and may be changed as the population conditions warrant or capacities of buildings require adjustment of student loads.

School attendance areas will be shown on an official map adopted by the School Board on file in the Office of the Superintendent and available for public inspection.

**II. MITIGATING A CHANGE IN ATTENDANCE AREAS**

When Board action results in changing attendance areas due to the opening of a new school, students affected by the change who will be rising twelfth graders shall be given the opportunity to continue to attend the school in which they are presently enrolled. These students will have the same rights and privileges afforded all other students.

Students affected by the change who will be 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> graders must attend the high school in their attendance area assigned by the School Board with the following exceptions:

- A. Hardship cases.
- B. Cases where students would desire a course offering or activity not available in the other school. A student may apply for exemption to this policy in the following manner:
  - 1. Request for transfer from one school to another shall be directed to the Superintendent in writing explaining reasons for request. The Superintendent or designee will approve or reject the request and notify parents and/or students by letter as soon as possible.
  - 2. Appeals will be made to the Board of Education through the Superintendent.

There will be no transfers between semesters except in hardship cases.

Unless required by Federal law, the school district will not furnish transportation to students outside prescribed attendance areas.

**III. ADEQUATE EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, DESIGNATION OF SCHOOLS AND ATTENDANCE AREAS, DEVELOPMENT OF POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES TO ACCOMMODATE GROWTH, TO KEEP SCHOOLS OPEN, AND TO ELIMINATE AND CONSOLIDATE OR REPURPOSE SCHOOLS**

The Superintendent will submit as required to the School Board recommendations for the establishment, organization and operation of educational facilities. This organization of schools, classes and services will provide adequate educational opportunities for all children in the district.

After considering recommendations of the Superintendent, the School Board will adopt and provide for the execution of plans for the establishment, organization and operation of the schools which will include:

- Designating schools and attendance areas for the ensuing school year(s). Attendance areas for special education students will not always conform to those for general education students.
- Providing adequate educational facilities for all school-age children in the district, as defined in Georgia Law.
- Providing strategies to accommodate growth.
- Providing positive alternative strategies to be implemented within a designated timeframe for those under enrolled schools to increase their enrollment.
- Providing for the elimination/repurposing/consolidation of schools whenever the needs of pupils can better and more economically be served.

**A. Standards for staff and School Board review of attendance areas**

1. Application of student assignment strategies that maintain fair and equal educational opportunities and instructional services for all students throughout the school district with a focus on continual improvement of services and student learning.
2. Stabilization of school attendance areas to the greatest extent possible. Where possible, neighborhood elementary schools will be maintained. Consideration will be given to the demographic changes of the community and the student populations at each school.
3. Opportunity for public input during review process and involvement of the affected community in decisions regarding recommendations for uses of schools no longer needed by the school district.
4. Establishment and maintenance of stable feeder patterns (Innovation Zones) that permit students to move forward together from elementary school to middle school and middle school to high schools to the maximum

extent possible ensuring that educational facilities throughout the school district are equitably equipped and maintained.

5. Application of guidelines and standards for adequate educational facilities, designation of schools and attendance areas, provision for positive alternative strategies for accommodating growth and after due consideration of all factors, elimination and consolidation of schools and/or construction of new schools.
6. The Deputy Superintendent, after receiving input from Zones and Attendance Area Focus Groups (a open group consisting of interested stakeholders) will make recommendations to the Superintendent who, in turn, will make recommendations to the School Board. Principals of schools proposing attendance area changes will transmit a description of proposed changes to the Deputy Superintendent prior to consideration of the proposal by the Attendance Area Focus Group. Staff shall analyze such proposal(s) with regard to any impact on current or future overcrowding status at the sending or receiving school(s). A report shall be transmitted by the Deputy Superintendent to the Principal(s)/ Attendance Area Group stakeholders, in a timely manner, for information purposes. The report will be part of the attendance area process record and will be considered by the Attendance Area Focus Group and the Deputy Superintendent, in their recommendations to the Superintendent.
7. Through the Attendance Area Focus Group, members of the community will be notified of proposed attendance area changes, new school openings and/or recommended school repurposing/closures, prior to School Board action, allowing for full participation of the public.

**B. Standards for school construction and school sites**

1. Relevant factors to consider for new site construction are site acquisitions or disposals, building additions, locations of portables, school site selection policy, financial impact on the School District, cost effectiveness (including capital cost), transportation requirements, and enrollment projections for the affected geographical areas.
2. New plant school/facility construction should be considered when long-range enrollment projections clearly indicate the need for construction of additional facilities. The guidelines for establishment of attendance areas will be considered in the application of this standard.
3. A long-range plan for site acquisition and disposal must be prepared in conjunction with long-range projections of enrollment.

4. All school construction and site acquisition and disposal must comply with State Board Rules and Georgia Statutes.

**C. Standards for review of proposals for addressing school district capital outlay needs and/or overcrowding from municipalities, developers or other individuals/groups/entities**

1. Recognizing that many documented capital needs can only be met through a substantial new source of revenue, the School Board will encourage municipalities, the county, developers, groups, individuals and businesses to submit proposals to the Superintendent addressing critical overcrowding, and/or plans for renovating, building or rebuilding school facilities. All proposals and/or plans must result in substantial economic benefits or savings for the School District, must not delay or defer projects in the five year capital improvement program and must be submitted on or before a date specified by the Superintendent. In evaluating proposals, the following factors will be taken into consideration:
  - a. Community need.
  - b. Economic feasibility.
  - c. Community support.
  - d. Ability to promote diversity.
  - e. Financial incentives/matching dollars.
  - f. Impacts on all equity issues in the District.
  - g. Health and safety factors.
  - h. Potential impact on student achievement.
  - i. Continued requirement to meet critical facility needs district-wide.
2. To the extent that a municipality, county, developer, or other individual/group/entity proposes a plan that will result in substantial economic benefit or savings for the School District, the School Board may consider addressing the capital requirements for facilities that serve that municipality or development earlier than would have been the case through its existing five year capital improvement program.
3. Any plan proposed by a municipality, developer, or other individual/group entity to address School District capital needs and/or school overcrowding will not provide any vesting rights to developers or other individuals/ groups/entities.
4. Where the provision of significant resources by a municipality, county, developer or other individual/group/entity would affect the equitable

distribution of resources district wide, the proposal will be modified to reflect that equity standard.

**D. Standards for the Closing of Schools**

Schools should be considered for closing if they are consistently not educationally effective in relation to other schools in the School District, using one or more of the following criteria:

1. The overall financial impact on the School District, cost effectiveness (including capital outlay), transportation requirements and enrollment projections for the affected geographical areas should be carefully considered as relevant factors.

**E. Standards for Implementation of Attendance Area Modifications**

1. The Deputy Superintendent shall submit to the Superintendent a list of:
  - a. Schools with recommended attendance area changes.
  - b. Schools or area designated for new construction or building additions.
  - c. Schools subject to further review with recommendations for implementation of positive alternative strategies.
  - d. Schools that will be recommended for closing and/or consolidation.
  - e. Any other revisions necessary to ensure the implementation of this policy.
2. When recommendations have been made by the Superintendent to the School Board for a school closing or major attendance area change, the Assistant Superintendent and designated staff will meet with the school personnel, parents, local government(s) and other members of the community, for information on and preparation for the change.
3. When recommendations have been made for strategies to increase enrollment, designated personnel will work with the staff and parents of that school to begin design and implementation of the plan.
2. After final adoption of recommendations by the School Board, the Superintendent will immediately designate personnel to plan with the parents, community and staff of the schools involved ensuring a smooth transition process during implementation of the recommendations.

**E. Standards for the Use of Closed Schools**

1. The Superintendent shall bring, within reasonable time recommendations for surplus or alternative uses of schools by the School Board.
  2. If the system has no further need for the facility, the School Board shall act in accordance with Georgia Law, after receiving recommendations for surplus or alternative use.
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**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**

**REVISED: September 1, 2016**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**