

ATTENDANCE AREAS, REDISTRICTING, AND RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES

- I. Section 4-109 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland provides that with the advice of the county superintendent, the county board shall determine the geographical attendance area for each school. COMAR 13A.02.09 sets forth the regulations governing the closing of schools. Pursuant to this law and regulation, and consistent with the authority granted to the local boards of education in Section 4-108 of the Education Article to maintain a reasonably uniform system of public schools designed to provide quality education and equal educational opportunities for all children, the Board of Education of Talbot County hereby adopts the following policy to be applied to the redistricting and closing of schools in Talbot County.
- II. The Board of Education seeks to provide school facilities that address changing enrollment patterns and sustain high quality educational programs to meet its instructional objectives and expectations.
 - A. The Board of Education fulfills this responsibility through the facilities planning process.
 - B. The academic achievement of all students in a safe and orderly learning environment through partnership with the Talbot County community is of primary importance to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.
- III. Enrollment in the Talbot County Public Schools is not static. The fundamental basis of this policy is to provide a sound educational environment for all children in the community and to address population changes.
 - A. The number of students, their geographic distribution, the demographic characteristics of the student population, and the need to meet the needs of all students are important considerations in making decisions on attendance areas and the closing of schools.
 - B. Attendance areas and the closing of schools are also affected by factors including birth rates, student enrollment trends, student relocation both inter and intra-county, the need to serve non-English speaking students, the age or condition of buildings, transportation, the availability or need for educational programs, school system finances, the impact on the community, residential development, overcrowded conditions in existing schools, and the under-utilization of existing schools.

- IV. The Board of Education and the Superintendent recognize their responsibility to give adequate notice to the community of proposed redistricting and closing of schools, and to hear suggestions and reactions from the community prior to redistricting or closing schools. At all times, the Superintendent and Board shall render decisions based on equal educational opportunity for all children rather than the personal desires of any one group.

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