

## A2 OPEN SCHOOL CLASS PLACEMENT POLICY<sup>1\*</sup>

1. **The goal of the class placement process is to ensure classes which are balanced** by number, gender, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity, special needs, academic levels and behavior/social issues, while placing all students with a teacher who meets their needs. *In the effort to meet all of these goals, it is recognized that a certain number of students, although their needs will be met, will not be assigned to the teacher whom the family considers their “first choice.”*
2. In the spring, each family is given a form to fill out regarding their child’s class placement for the following year. **These forms are the primary source of parent input.**
3. **All parent input must be put in writing and given to the office.** This includes not only parent input forms but also letters, etc. No teacher has the authority to accept a request or make a class placement. Verbal requests and input will not be honored. *Note on privacy expectations: Input forms are kept in the office in a box, teachers and office staff have access to forms. Staff and teachers will see what is written.*
4. **Families are strongly discouraged from naming specific teachers in their requests, pro or con.** It is more helpful in placement to know the specific learning style and needs of the child, because **it may not be possible to honor requests for or against specific teachers.**
5. **Current teachers make preliminary placement recommendations** for each of their students for the following year based upon their experience with the student and their knowledge of the Ann Arbor Open School program.
6. **A committee of school staff then examines these preliminary placements** for issues of balance (as described in #1). The committee also compares the recommended placement for each student with all written information shared by the family. Based upon these examinations, and in further consultation with the current teacher, changes may be made.
7. **Children who have been with a teacher for one year and whose teacher will be teaching the next grade will automatically be assigned to the same teacher unless a request is made otherwise.** These requests should be put in writing and explain the reasons the family believes the change is in the best interest of the child.
8. **In the event that the recommendations of the committee and the information shared by the parents appear to conflict, the parent will be contacted** and invited to meet with the principal and the current teacher. These meetings will be scheduled only if the parental description of the child’s needs is in conflict with what the committee recommends for the child. Such meetings will not typically be scheduled if the sole conflict between the placement committee and the parent involves a parental request for or against a specific teacher.
9. **The principal finalizes class lists** at the end of August based upon enrollment and staffing changes which occur over the summer. Class lists are mailed home in accordance with district policies.
10. **No classroom changes are made during the first two weeks of school,** nor will changes be discussed before that time. The only exception is in cases where a bona fide mistake is made in the class list. Examples of a mistake include students being placed in the wrong grade, moved out of a class in the second year of a cycle without it being requested, or students not being moved when it was requested.
11. **At the end of the first two weeks of school, any family who believes their child cannot be successful in their current class placement may call the office and request a meeting with the principal and classroom teacher.** The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether the child’s needs can be met in the current classroom and to address any concerns the parent may have. If the teacher and the parent cannot agree, the principal will make the final determination of the child’s class placement following this meeting.

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<sup>1\*</sup> Adopted by the Ann Arbor Open staff in consultation with the Ann Arbor Open Coordinating Council, January, 2003.