

Fairfield Public Schools

A Plan for Racial Balance

Plan Amendment

As Approved by the Board of Education

August 30, 2022

Introduction

The following amendment to the Fairfield Public Schools' *Plan for Racial Balance*, as originally approved on November 15, 2016, previously amended on April 6, 2017, and updated on October 26, 2021, is presented for consideration by the Connecticut State Board of Education.

While the district's immediate racial balance concerns are focused at the elementary level, the effort to promote greater racial balance and equity will of necessity impact the district's secondary schools. This will include equity training, school climate improvement and adjustments to K-12 feeder patterns.

1. Amendment Process

Date	Action
By September 8, 2022	Board of Education submits Plan Amendment to the State Board of Education,
Fall of 2022 (date TBD)	Board of Education representatives meet with State Board of Education to discuss approval of the proposed Plan Amendment.

2. Engaging the community:

Date	Action
June 9, 2022	Board of Education conducted meeting with members of the McKinley School community.
Between August 15 and September 30, 2022	Plan community conversations re: racial balance, academic excellence, and facility utilization.
Between October 1 and December 1, 2022	Conduct multiple community conversations re: racial balance, academic excellence and facility utilization.
Ongoing	Continued community engagement through components of the Plan.

The programmatic and attendance zone changes envisioned in this Plan Amendment will be of interest to families and staff members throughout the district. Therefore, the Board of Education and the Superintendent will initiate a series of community conversations on the subjects of racial balance, academic excellence and facility utilization in fall of 2022. Sessions will be conducted in various locations throughout the town, in both “in person” and “virtual” formats, with translation services available.

3. Equity Training for the Board of Education and District Staff

Date	Action
Between September 15 and December 15, 2022	Plan equity training workshops for presentation to the Board of Education and all district staff members.
Between February 1 and May 15, 2023	Conduct equity training workshops for the Board of Education and for all district staff members.

Achieving racial balance and educational equity throughout our school district will require a heightened level of understanding and commitment from our governing board, our district leadership, our school principals and faculty members. To that end, a series of educational equity training workshops for the Board of Education, school administrators and staff members will be developed during the fall semester of the 2022-23 school year, with implementation to begin during the winter and spring of 2023.

4. Improving School Climates for All Children:

Date	Action
By February 1, 2023	Conduct district-wide Equity Review

Simply moving students from one school to another is not a sufficient response to the challenges of racial and socio-economic equity and student success. The district must assure that all students are safe, nurtured and learning, regardless of the school that they attend. Therefore, by February 1, 2023, the Superintendent will review the steps that the district is currently taking to assure that all students are welcome and academically successful, regardless of the school to which they are assigned and will recommend improvements, as necessary. This equity review will address issues such as:

- effective instruction;
- assessment of academic progress;
- academic support services for students as needed;
- counseling services;
- service to multi-lingual learners;
- access to advanced courses;
- maintenance of positive school climate;
- staff selection; and
- professional development.

In a related effort, on June 24, 2022, the Board of Education adopted an update to its *District Improvement Plan* which calls for all students to:

- acknowledge, explore and value the importance of diversity;
- acquire an understanding and appreciation of other cultures; and
- engage in culturally responsive curriculum and develop a sense of belonging to the Fairfield Public School community in order to create more equitable opportunities and outcomes.

The Plan also calls on the district to:

- close the opportunity gap for underperforming subgroups;
- reduce barriers for admission to rigorous courses;
- participate in faculty recruitment, hiring and retention efforts to promote hiring practices that result in diverse groups of qualified candidates.

5. Intra-District Magnet School:

While it is unlikely that a magnet school program would have a substantial impact on the district’s racial balance status, the Board of Education will consider the desirability of establishing one or more magnet school programs in the district as a means of expanding educational options for students and encouraging families to enroll their children in schools outside of their immediate neighborhoods. Magnet possibilities include an International Baccalaureate program or a Dual Language program.

6. Redistricting:

Date	Action
By December 1, 2022	Board of Education provides a redistricting charge to the administration.
Between December 1 and December 31, 2022	Superintendent engages outside consulting firm to assist in the creation and evaluation of various K-5 redistricting arrangements
Between January 1 and May 30, 2023	Superintendent and staff work with the Board of Education to develop alternative redistricting plans, including analyses of the impact on racial balance for each elementary attendance area.
By May 30, 2023	Superintendent presents redistricting plans for consideration to a committee of the Board of Education (The BoE will determine if this presentation will be to a subcommittee or to a committee of the whole.
By June 30, 2023	Superintendent and committee recommend redistricting plans to the full Board of Education

By September 30, 2023	Board of Education conducts public forums on proposed redistricting plans.
By October 15, 2023	Board of Education discusses proposed redistricting plans at the first Board meeting of the month
By October 30, 2023	Board of Education takes action on a proposed redistricting plan.
August of 2024	New elementary attendance zones take effect.

Based on current projections presented by the Board of Education’s enrollment consultants, some of the district’s K-5 schools are expected to exceed building utilization while others are significantly below target utilization. Redistricting of the district’s elementary school attendance zones will likely be required over the next few years to better utilize our facilities. The district will address the racial imbalance issue while addressing these facilities concerns.

The Superintendent will present district-wide redistricting plans which will bring the disparity in racial composition between any one elementary school and the district-wide K-5 average within the limits required by law. The proposed plans may include use of focused redistricting of new housing developments in the McKinley area. The Plan will assure that students currently receiving bilingual education and other support services at the McKinley School continue to receive such services, regardless of the school to which they are assigned. The Superintendent’s recommended plans will be presented to a committee of the Board of Education not later than May 30, 2023.

The Board of Education will consider the Superintendent’s recommendations along with any comments or recommendations that the committee may wish to make and will provide the public with an opportunity to comment on these plans. At least one public forum on the proposed redistricting options will be held prior to Board action on this matter.

Not later than October 30, 2023, the Board will act upon a redistricting plan which will bring the disparity in racial composition between any one elementary school and the district-wide K-5 average within the limits required by law. New attendance districts will be effective as of the beginning of the 2024-25 school year.

Appendices

1. History
2. Elementary Building Capacities vs. Projected Enrollment for 2022-2023
3. Achievement Data by School & Race/Ethnicity
4. Attendance Data by School & Race/Ethnicity
5. Open Choice Enrollment

Appendix 1: History

Year	McKinley % Students of Color	District % Students of Color	Absolute Imbalance	Actions Taken That School Year
2010-11	43.47%	17.58%	25.89%	Opt-into McKinley Opt-out of McKinley
2011-12	45.70%	18.89%	26.81%	Opt-into McKinley Opt-out of McKinley
2012-13	43.41%	19.00%	24.41%	Opt-into McKinley Opt-out of McKinley
2013-14	45.85%	19.37%	26.48%	Opt-into McKinley
2014-15	49.10%	20.53%	28.57%	Opt-into McKinley
2015-16	47.90%	20.70%	27.20%	Opt-into McKinley
2016-17	53.23%	23.21%	30.02%	Opt-into McKinley Pre-K Program (Burr, Dwight)
2017-18	53.24%	24.85%	28.39%	Opt-into McKinley Pre-K Program (Burr, Stratfield)
2018-19	55.48%	25.63%	29.85%	Opt-into McKinley Pre-K Program (Burr, Stratfield) Increase Open Choice enrollment to 100
2019-20	55.61%	25.62%	29.98%	Opt-into McKinley Pre-K Program (Warde, Stratfield) Maintain Open Choice enrollment at 100
2020-21	56.65%	26.40%	30.25%	Opt-into McKinley Pre-K Program (Warde, Stratfield) Limit Open Choice enrollment to currently enrolled students (74)
2021-22	55.78%	26.55%	29.23%	Opt-into McKinley Pre-K Program (Warde, Stratfield) Increase Open Choice enrollment to 100

Appendix 2: Elementary Building Capacities vs. Projected Enrollment for 2024-2025

School	Year Built	Last Updated	Capacity ¹	2024-2025 Enrollment ²	Enrollment vs. Capacity	Utilization Rate
Burr	2004	N.A.	478	358	-120	75%
Dwight	1962	2000	378	244	-134	65%
Holland Hill	1956	2018	504	353	-151	70%
Jennings	1967	2002	365	269	-96	74%
McKinley	2003	N.A.	504	458	-46	91%
Mill Hill	1955	2021	415	390	-25	94%
North Stratfield	1961	2000	504	458	-46	91%
Osborn Hill	1958	2009	478	437	-41	91%
Riverfield	1959	2015	491	381	-110	78%
Sherman	1963	2012	462	402	-60	87%
Stratfield	1929	2011	480	337	-143	70%
Total			5,059	4,087	-972	81%

Notes:

1. Program capacity, after allowing for special programs.
2. Projected 2024-2025 enrollment, per June 28, 2022, report from SLAM.

Appendix 3: Achievement Data by School & Race/Ethnicity

Table 3A: Smarter Balance Assessment Proficiency for ELA & Math – Asian

School/Year	ELA % Proficient			Math % Proficient		
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
Burr	67%	78%	87%	56%	78%	80%
Dwight	80%	83%	100%	80%	83%	83%
Holland Hill	89%	81%	100%	83%	81%	100%
Jennings	50%	63%	100%	50%	75%	88%
McKinley	87%	78%	72%	83%	87%	50%
Mill Hill	78%	69%	67%	78%	85%	92%
North Stratfield	88%	76%	71%	71%	76%	71%
Osborn Hill	86%	87%	85%	93%	87%	92%
Riverfield	80%	83%	100%	80%	83%	100%
Sherman	91%	100%	100%	82%	100%	75%
Stratfield	79%	91%	100%	86%	82%	67%

Table 3B: Smarter Balance Assessment Proficiency for ELA & Math – Black/African American

School/Year	ELA % Proficient			Math % Proficient		
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
Burr	50%	67%	33%	50%	50%	33%
Dwight	67%	71%	40%	67%	71%	40%
Holland Hill	33%	0%	30%	0%	17%	50%
Jennings	43%	63%	60%	43%	75%	60%
McKinley	50%	73%	61%	70%	36%	35%
Mill Hill	75%	80%	100%	75%	80%	*
North Stratfield	*	67%	50%	*	50%	17%
Osborn Hill	50%	100%	100%	75%	67%	100%
Riverfield	*	100%	100%	*	100%	100%
Sherman	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	*
Stratfield	0%	*	33%	0%	*	33%

Table 3C: Smarter Balance Assessment Proficiency for ELA & Math – Hispanic/Latinx

School/Year	ELA % Proficient			Math % Proficient		
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
Burr	71%	75%	71%	79%	83%	71%
Dwight	88%	89%	71%	75%	78%	100%
Holland Hill	49%	53%	58%	47%	58%	52%
Jennings	78%	71%	79%	78%	64%	57%
McKinley	47%	58%	47%	46%	52%	36%
Mill Hill	40%	46%	57%	40%	36%	29%
North Stratfield	64%	80%	43%	57%	60%	33%
Osborn Hill	80%	64%	47%	60%	46%	47%
Riverfield	91%	93%	93%	82%	86%	93%
Sherman	67%	78%	100%	80%	78%	100%
Stratfield	53%	56%	43%	50%	39%	43%

Table 3D: Smarter Balance Assessment Proficiency for ELA & Math – Two or More Races

School/Year	ELA % Proficient			Math % Proficient		
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
Burr	91%	83%	77%	82%	86%	77%
Dwight	100%	100%	90%	100%	100%	100%
Holland Hill	71%	78%	89%	57%	56%	78%
Jennings	75%	67%	100%	67%	75%	83%
McKinley	88%	67%	46%	75%	67%	64%
Mill Hill	75%	78%	88%	75%	89%	88%
North Stratfield	77%	78%	69%	77%	67%	62%
Osborn Hill	82%	89%	75%	91%	100%	83%
Riverfield	100%	56%	90%	75%	44%	100%
Sherman	100%	100%	100%	89%	93%	100%
Stratfield	92%	85%	60%	77%	69%	60%

Table 3E: Smarter Balance Assessment Proficiency for ELA & Math – White

School/Year	ELA % Proficient			Math % Proficient		
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
Burr	85%	85%	80%	78%	79%	69%
Dwight	86%	84%	81%	81%	81%	86%
Holland Hill	74%	71%	72%	67%	70%	74%
Jennings	76%	75%	74%	77%	82%	72%
McKinley	67%	71%	54%	59%	63%	54%
Mill Hill	79%	81%	77%	74%	78%	66%
North Stratfield	79%	79%	77%	75%	71%	72%
Osborn Hill	81%	77%	81%	83%	78%	78%
Riverfield	83%	88%	82%	87%	83%	80%
Sherman	84%	90%	90%	86%	91%	84%
Stratfield	75%	75%	69%	66%	69%	59%

Appendix 4: Attendance Data by School & Race/Ethnicity

Note: Any rate that is represented by an asterisk (*) indicates that the number of students is so low that it requires data suppression to ensure confidentiality.

Table 4A: Chronic Absenteeism Rate – Asian

School/Year	Percent Chronically Absent			
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Burr	*	*	*	27.6
Dwight	*	*	*	*
Holland Hill	*	*	*	*
Jennings	*	*	*	*
McKinley	*	*	0	*
Mill Hill	0	*	*	0
North Stratfield	20.7	*	28	*
Osborn Hill	0	*	*	0
Riverfield	*	*	0	*
Sherman	0	0	*	*
Stratfield	0	*	*	0

Table 4B: Chronic Absenteeism Rate – Black/African American

School/Year	Percent Chronically Absent			
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Burr	0	*	*	*
Dwight	0	0	0	*
Holland Hill	*	0	0	*
Jennings	0	0	0	0
McKinley	*	*	*	17.1
Mill Hill	0	0	0	*
North Stratfield	*	0	*	*
Osborn Hill	0	0	*	0
Riverfield	0	*	0	0
Sherman	*	0	0	*
Stratfield	*	0	0	*

Table 4C: Chronic Absenteeism Rate – Hispanic/Latinx

School/Year	Percent Chronically Absent			
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Burr	*	*	*	*
Dwight	0	0	*	*
Holland Hill	9.7	*	8.5	19.7
Jennings	0	24.1	*	18.8
McKinley	*	*	9.7	30.3
Mill Hill	*	0	*	*
North Stratfield	*	*	*	*
Osborn Hill	0	*	*	*
Riverfield	*	*	*	*
Sherman	*	*	*	*
Stratfield	*	*	0	14.6

Table 4D: Chronic Absenteeism Rate – Two or More Races

School/Year	Percent Chronically Absent			
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Burr	*	*	*	*
Dwight	*	*	*	*
Holland Hill	*	0	*	*
Jennings	*	*	*	0
McKinley	0	0	*	*
Mill Hill	0	*	*	*
North Stratfield	*	0	*	*
Osborn Hill	0	*	*	*
Riverfield	*	0	0	0
Sherman	0	*	0	*
Stratfield	*	*	*	*

Table 4E: Chronic Absenteeism Rate – White

School/Year	Percent Chronically Absent			
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Burr	7.0	7.3	9.9	12.2
Dwight	*	*	7.1	15.3
Holland Hill	6.1	4.1	5.5	10
Jennings	3.2	3.6	4.2	*
McKinley	3.4	6.1	6.0	18.4
Mill Hill	*	*	4.5	*
North Stratfield	3.1	5	5.2	3.9
Osborn Hill	2.3	4.8	5.3	2.5
Riverfield	2.9	2.6	*	3.6
Sherman	3.0	5.3	7.2	8.0
Stratfield	3.4	3.6	4.7	8.5

Appendix 5: Open Choice Enrollment

Table 5A: Open choice seats across levels

School Level	2021-22 Enrollment	Open Seats for 2022-23	Total for 2022-23
Elementary	23	14	37
Middle	37	0	37
High	26	0	26
Total for 22-23SY	86	14	100

Table 5B: Open choice seat across elementary schools, by grade

School/Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Burr	--	2	2	--	--	--	4
Dwight	--	2	2	--	--	1	5
Holland Hill	--	--	--	--	--	--	0
Jennings	--	--	2	2	--	--	4
McKinley	--	--	--	--	--	--	0
Mill Hill	--	--	--	2	2	--	4
North Stratfield	--	--	3	1	--	--	4
Osborn Hill	--	--	2	2	--	--	4
Riverfield	--	--	--	2	--	--	2
Sherman	--	2	--	--	4	--	6
Stratfield	--	2	2	--	--	--	4
Total	0	8	13	9	6	1	37