



SD-IL-0001-0012

Rockford Public Schools
Department of Desegregation

Middle School Reconfiguration

Controlled Choice Middle School Assignments Results for the 1999-2000 School Year

For Release: March 25, 1999

The Comprehensive Remedial Order (CRO) requires that the District 205 middle school grade structure be reconfigured from a 7-8 grade structure to a grade 6-7-8 configuration. The middle school reconfiguration which will satisfy a part of the mandate of the CRO by allowing for the assignment of a larger number of elementary students to West Zone elementary seats, also will provide numerous educational advantages for middle school students. One of the most significant advantages for these students is the opportunity for a three-year experience at the middle school level, which allows staff to become more familiar with the individualized learning needs of students and provides a longer transition period for high school. Also, the 6 through 8th grade structure is the middle school structure that is most often used nationwide.

Due to facilities limitations, the District was unable to make this structural change until (a) the Ellis Arts Academy children vacated the Kennedy Middle School, which is needed for use as a middle school, and (b) the new Rockford Environmental Science Academy (RESA) is completed. The construction of RESA is expected to be completed in July of 1999 and will be occupied for the 1999-2000 school year. Construction is underway at the Kennedy Middle School facility, which will be ready for occupancy in August of 1999.

The Department of Desegregation has completed the 1999-2000 Early Assignment batch of students entering middle school in grades six and seven. Following are significant factors that impacted the results of this process.

1. It was necessary to reduce the assignable capacity at the seventh grade level. Instead of the 450 seats at the 7th grade that have been available during the prior two years, a capacity of 300 was established in order to

have enough room to house three grades as opposed to the two grades that are currently housed in Flinn, Eisenhower, Lincoln, and West Middle Schools.

2. The capacity at the sixth grade also had to be established at 300 in order to accommodate the impact of the reconfiguration. Without reducing seats at the 7th grade and establishing an assignable capacity of 300 at the 6th grade the enrollment in these schools would have exceeded the program capacity in these schools.
3. **The possible retention rate of current middle school students is a factor in reducing first choice assignments. The retention rate is anticipated to approach 8 percent, further limiting the number of seats available for the assignment of the incoming 6th and 7th grade students.**

Grade 6 Assignments

As shown in **Table A**, the Department of Desegregation assigned a total of 1,790 students to a Grade 6 school for the 1999-2000 school year. Of these newly assigned Grade 6 students, 1,075 or 60.1% are desegregation majority and 715 or 39.9% are desegregation minority. At this time, approximately 91% of the projected Grade 6 students have been assigned for the next school year, including 1,749 who were **early** assigned primarily to a school of choice and 41 **late** applicants.

Early Assignments

- The Department of Desegregation has **Early** assigned 1,749 students to a Grade 6 school for the 1999-2000 school year. As shown in **Table A**, 1,055 or 60.3% of these students are desegregation majority and 694 or 39.7% are desegregation minority.
- Overall, 97.1% of the students were assigned to a school of choice, only 2.9% were administrative assigned, and 81.6% were assigned to their first choice school.
- 90.7% of the students were assigned to their first or second choice schools.

- 111 students were assigned to the Gifted Program at West Middle School. Of these students 71 or 64% are desegregation majority, and 40 or 36% are desegregation minority, which is 5% below the District minority grade 6 percentage of 41%. The Gifted Program is not in compliance with the CRO at Grade 6.

Late Assignments

- The Department of Desegregation also assigned 41 **late** applicants to a Grade 6 school for the 1999-2000 school year. Of these students, who applied **late**, only 26.8% were assigned to their first choice school as compared to 81.6% who applied **early**.
- Overall 85.4% were assigned to a school of choice, including 24.4% who received their second choice school, and 14.6% received administrative assignments as compared to any 2.9% who applied early.

Grade 7 Assignments

The Department of Desegregation assigned a total of 1,840 students for a Grade 7 school for the 1999-2000 school year. Of these newly assigned Grade 7 students, 1,119 or 60.8% are desegregation majority and 721 or 39.2% are desegregation minority. At this time, approximately 93% of the projected Grade 7 students have been assigned, including 1,789 who were **early** assigned primarily to a school of choice and 51 late applicants

Early Assignments

- As shown in **Table B**, the Department of Desegregation **early** assigned 1,789 students to a Grade 7 school for the 1999-2000 school year. Of the **early** assigned students 1,092 or 61% are desegregation majority and 697 or 39% are desegregation minority.
- Overall, 94.8% of the **early** Grade 7 applicants have been assigned to a school of choice, including 78.5% to their first choice school, 11.0% to their second choice and 5.3 % to their third or fourth choice schools.

- As discussed above, only 78.5% of the **early** Grade 7 applicants were assigned to their first choice school, as compared to 89.6% in the current 1998-1999 school year. The 11% decrease in first choice assignment is due primarily to Grade 7 retentions and the significant under selection of the Kennedy Middle School which received only 56 first choices.
- While the vast majority of students were **early** assigned to a school of choice, 94 or 5.2% received administrative assignments, including 47 desegregation majority students and 47 desegregation minority students.

Late Assignments

- **Table B** indicates that 51 students who applied late were also assigned to Grade 7 schools for the 1999-2000 school year. Of those **late** applicants, 27 or 52.9% were desegregation majority and 24 or 47.1% were desegregation minority.
- Only 19.6% of the **late** applicants were assigned to their First choice school and 41.2% received administrative assignments.

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Table 'A'

1999 - 2000 Early and Late Assigned - 6th Grade as of 3/24/99

EARLY Assigned to Choice School	By Ethnic Group					
	Deseg Majority		Deseg Minority		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
1st	840	79.6%	588	84.7%	1428	81.6%
2nd	131	12.4%	29	4.2%	160	9.1%
3rd	40	3.8%	29	4.2%	69	3.9%
4th	28	2.7%	14	2.0%	42	2.4%
Total Choice Assigned	1039	98.5%	660	95.1%	1699	97.1%

Administrative Assignments	16	1.5%	34	4.9%	50	2.9%
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Total Early Grade 6 Assigned	1055	60.3%	694	39.7%	1749	100.0%
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Priority First Choice Assignments	Deseg Majority		Deseg Minority		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sib/Prox	21		13		34	
Sib	81		30		111	
Prox	156		84		240	
Total Grade 6 Priority Assigned	258		127		385	

LATE Choice Assignments	Deseg Majority		Deseg Minority		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
1st	5		6		11	26.8%
2nd	5		5		10	24.4%
3rd	4		2		6	14.6%
4th	4		4		8	19.5%
Choice Assigned	18		17		35	85.4%
Late Administrative Assignments	2		4		6	14.6%
Total Applicants	20	48.8%	21	51.2%	41	

Total Grade 6 Assigned	1075	60.1%	715	39.9%	1790	
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**Middle School Reconfiguration
Table 'B'**

1999 - 2000 Early and Late Assigned - 7th Grade as of 3/24/99

EARLY Assigned to Choice School	By Ethnic Group					
	Deseg Majority		Deseg Minority		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
1st	816	74.7%	588	84.4%	1404	78.5%
2nd	158	14.5%	39	5.6%	197	11.0%
3rd	35	3.2%	13	1.9%	48	2.7%
4th	36	3.3%	10	1.4%	46	2.6%
Total Choice Assigned	1045	95.7%	650	93.3%	1695	94.8%

Administrative Assignments	47	4.3%	47	6.7%	94	5.2%
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Total Early Grade 7 Assigned	1092	61.0%	697	39.0%	1789	100.0%
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Priority First Choice Assignments	Deseg Majority		Deseg Minority		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sib/Prox	13		12		25	
Sib	43		27		70	
Prox	202		54		256	
Total Grade 7 Priority Assigned	258		93		351	

LATE Choice Assignments	Deseg Majority		Deseg Minority		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
1st	5		5		10	19.6%
2nd	4		4		8	15.7%
3rd	3		3		6	11.8%
4th	4		2		6	11.8%
Choice Assigned	16		14		30	58.8%
Late Administrative Assignments	11		10		21	41.2%
Total Applicants	27	52.9%	24	47.1%	51	

Total Grade 7 Assigned	1119	60.8%	721	39.2%	1840	
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