

# Somerset Public Schools Buffer Zone Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is a buffer zone?**

A buffer zone is an area surrounding a neighborhood school district that serves two elementary schools. Chace Street (north end) and North will share buffer zones; as will Chace Street (south end) and South share buffer zones. Buffer zones are designed to keep class sizes equitable across the district, by allowing the school administration discretion to assign students to either of the schools in their buffer zone. Class size and whether or not there are siblings are considered when making a school assignment. Please review the Somerset District Map to view where Buffer Zones are located.

## **Who does the buffer zone apply to?**

The buffer zone only applies to new families moving into the district, and incoming kindergarten students who do not have an older sibling already enrolled. Buffer zones do not apply to students who are already attending a specific school. When applying the buffer zone policy, as long as the student remains in their current address, no student will have to move from the current school they are already attending.

## **I have multiple children, and I live in a Buffer Zone. Will they be assigned to different schools?**

Once a family receives a buffer assignment, siblings are always assigned to the same school, as long as the family continues to reside at the same address.

## **How were buffer zones created?**

Somerset Public Schools created a redistricting committee to discuss the current enrollment data, enrollment projections, mapping of addresses of new enrollments, and collaboration with the bus company considering feasibility with transportation, were all considered when creating buffer zones.

## **When are school assignment decisions made?**

The timing of a school assignment depends upon when you register. Each student must have submitted all required documents before they can be considered for a final school assignment.

The registration periods listed below are for students completing all required steps of registration with the Somerset Public Schools during that period:

### **Incoming Kindergarten and New Registrations Fall enrollment:**

<b>If you complete registration:</b>	<b>You will be notified of your school assignment by:</b>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By April (first K screening)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By June 15th</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By May</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By July 1st</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By August 1st</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between July 1st and August 28th</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the first day of school</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After School Begins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a rolling basis until school starts</li> </ul>

- **New to the District mid-year:**  
If you move into Somerset after the school year has started, decisions on placements are made upon completion of the registration documentation requirements. These assignments are as close to the effective date of the lease, or actual closing of the purchase of a home/condo, as possible. Advance decisions cannot be made because of fluctuations in enrollments. The administration will notify you with a school placement and appropriate contact information for your assigned school.
- **Changed address to new school zone:**  
If you move within Somerset, you must notify the Somerset Public Schools of your new address. If your new home is in a buffer zone, depending upon the time of year of your move, a decision will be made to facilitate your student's continued education in Somerset.

**How will I be notified of a school assignment?**

You will be contacted by the administration by email or letter as outlined above.