

REDISTRICTING QUESTIONS

Public Hearing
January 27, 2009

1. What determined what areas have been redistricted?

To the extent possible we tried to adhere to the four criteria: neighborhood schools, maintain/reduce class sizes, equity of programs space at each school, and K-5 at each school. We also looked at the perimeter of school district lines and the number of students in each neighborhood.

2. What about kindergarten registration? What if you are moved to a school and full day is filled?

The district policy is that if more registrations are received than seats available selection goes to a lottery system at each school. The lottery system is in place and will not occur until redistricting is complete.

3. What were the contributing factors that lead us to begin with Thomson?

Thomson seemed to have the worst case of children in appropriate learning spaces and overcrowded classrooms.

4. Are there more special education students at Thomson than at other schools?

No. The percentage of K-5 special education students in our elementary schools range from approximately 11% to 15% of the school population, with the average being 12.8%

5. Will the students from Village Green be bused or walk to Franklin?

Students will be bused.

6. If you aren't successful in getting modulars, will Kittredge students be moved?

There are no plans to redistrict Kittredge students.

7. Was AYP the reason for shifting students?

AYP was not the driving force for redistricting.

8. Will redistricting affect AYP?

AYP was not a consideration when deciding the redistricting and we do not believe there is not a direct connection between AYP and redistricting.

9. Parents are still very worried because of the shifting of the teachers. By losing four teachers, will that negatively impact the Thomson School?

We as a committee believe the options presented are leaving Thomson in a stronger learning environment.

10. I think we are moving too many students out of the Thomson. Parents can still choose to move to Atkinson, Franklin or Kittredge which would over-crowd the other schools.

Overcrowding and inappropriate learning spaces at Thomson were the initial drivers. We are aware of the possibility that choice can impact overcrowding at other schools and we will continue to monitor all schools.

11. What is the purpose of moving six kids out of Walker Road?

Moving these students further reduces the number of students at the Thomson School.

12. Will Community Programs be building the modulars at Kittredge?

That is the current plan but funding has not been cleared by the Department of Revenue.

13. With the new building at the Atkinson, will there be the same number of kindergarten classes or will Atkinson also go to a lottery?

The new building will be considered part of the Atkinson School. There will be the same number of kindergarten classes at the Atkinson, and like all other schools there will be a lottery if necessary.

14. With the Thomson NCLB status, can families who are re-districted to other schools choose to send their children to Thomson instead of moving to Atkinson?

Under NCLB guidelines, you cannot choice into the Thomson School but you can choice out. The NCLB regulations are available on the school's website www.northandoverpublicschools.com. Under district rules, any family may apply to the school of their choice. A letter needs to be written to the school principal and approved by school administration. Requests are subject to enrollment and space restrictions. This district policy has been in place for many years.

15. Is it correct that Thomson districted families have school choice for at least the next 2 years, until there are 2 years of acceptable MCAS progress?

School choice is available at the Thomson until Thomson school makes AYP for two years in a row.

16. Is school choice INTO Thomson available to the families districted in the RECEIVING schools (i.e. Atkinson, Franklin, Kittredge) (i.e. Students currently in 3rd grade would be able to choose their school setting, OUT OF or INTO Thomson, until they complete their elementary grades?)

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17. Will the summer school initiative, available to Thomson students, be available to those students who are redistricted out of Thomson? If a family uses school choice to opt IN to Thomson, is the child eligible for the summer school initiative

The summer school at Thomson last year was a pilot program. The program is currently under review and the goal, depending on budget constraints, is to expand the program to the Atkinson School as well as offer it again at the Thomson Elementary School. A final decision will not be made on this until the budget is approved.