
DC Student Assignment and School Boundary Review Process

2/12/14

Goals of Initiative

Develop student assignment and school choice policies that provide families with clarity, predictability, and access to high quality school options at locations that make sense for them.

- To clarify rights and responsibilities of families and schools regarding access to public schools
- To update feeder relationships between schools to ensure a robust pipeline of students into the middle and high schools
- To ensure boundaries align to DCPS facility capacity and projected population of students
- To explore opportunities to bridge student-assignment and choice policies across DCPS and charter schools

DC Advisory Committee on Student Assignment

Committee of 23 community members and District agency representatives, with a charge to:

- Review current citywide policies on attendance zones, feeder patterns and school choice
- Formulate guidelines and principles for public school assignment and choice policies and practices
- Listen to the community and serve as insightful interpreters of public sentiment, concerns, and questions
- Develop recommendations and scenarios for revised DCPS attendance zone and feeder patterns
- Make recommendations on how to bridge student-assignment and choice policies across DCPS and public charter schools

Public Engagement Process and Timeline

Focus Groups provide input into principles and values

Working Groups vet policy scenarios being considered by the Committee

EngageDC.org an online forum to share and comment on ideas and concerns

Citywide community meetings provide feedback on *Preliminary Report and Recommendations on Student Assignment and Choice* released in May.

Online survey provides feedback on *Preliminary Report and Recommendations on Student Assignment and Choice* released in May.

Current Challenges

Challenging Landscape for Families

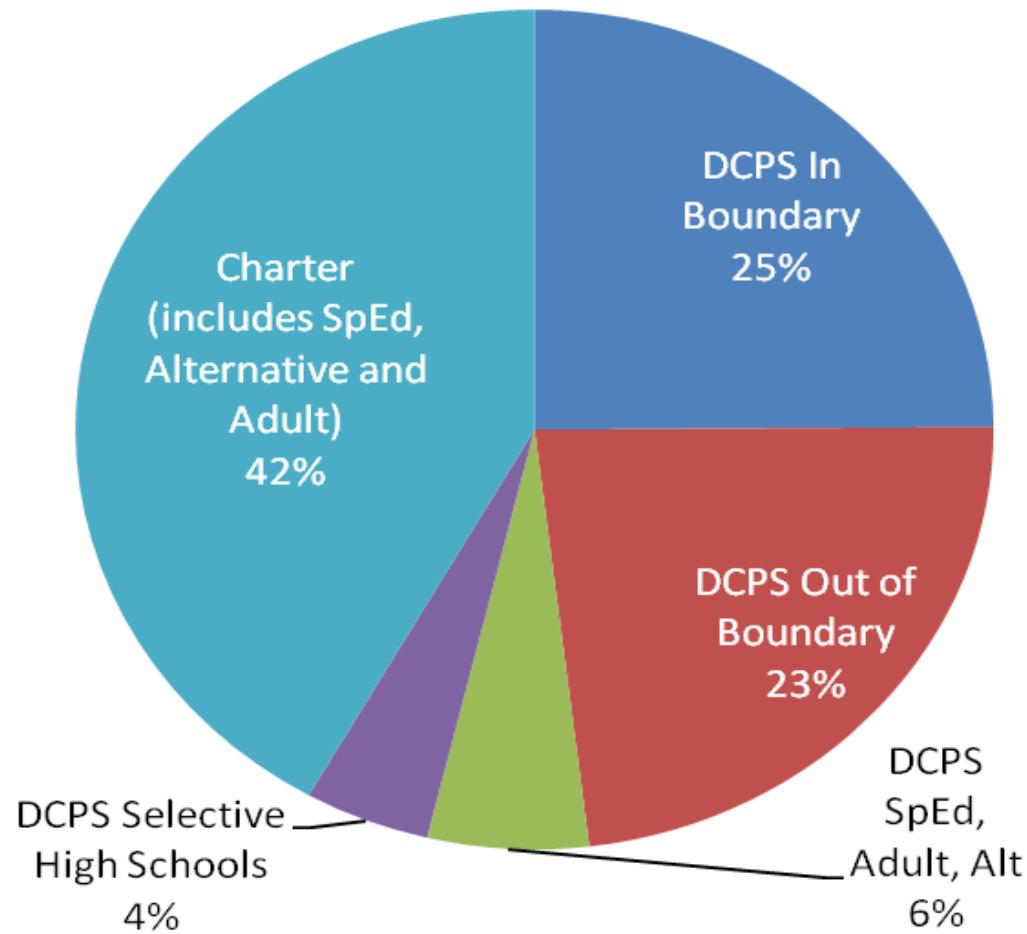
- 31 neighborhood schools closed and boundaries consolidated since 2007 (58 DCPS schools closed since 1996)
- Lack of programmatic continuity for DCPS and PCS
- Uncertainty about the quality of school options, particularly secondary schools
- Over crowded schools
- Under-utilized schools
- Low chances for lottery access to high demand schools
- Only lottery based early childhood seats
- High threshold for selective admissions DCPS high schools
- Little sector-neutral guidance for families making public education choices
- Lack of confidence that parents/community can affect school quality

Challenging Landscape for DC

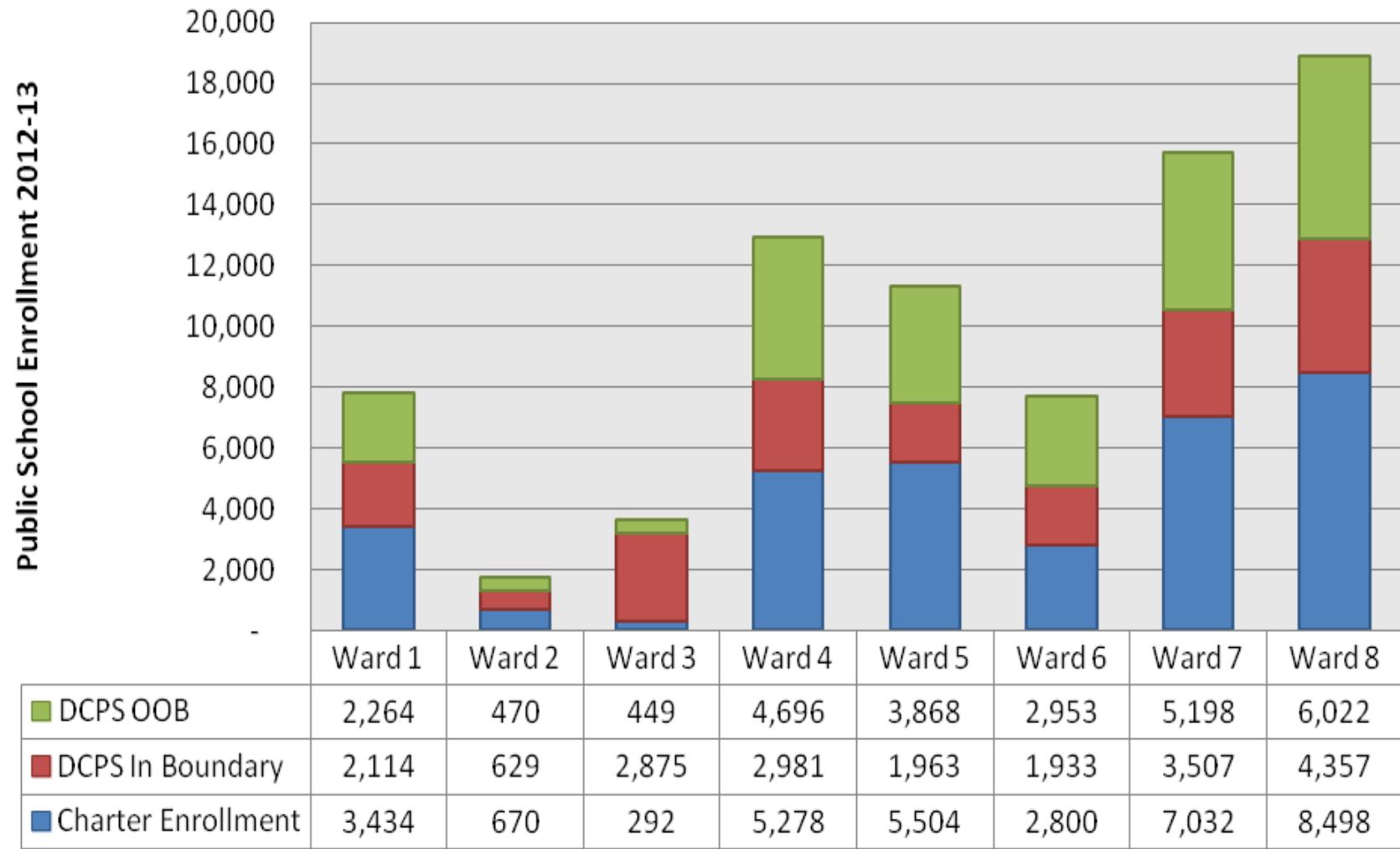
The last comprehensive review of policies was done in 1968. Since then:

- Significant change in child population
 - Decline from 2000 to 2010
 - Increases projected for 2010-2020
- Significant changes in school supply
- High levels of student mobility within and between schools and region

Citywide Distribution of Enrollment (SY12-13)



Student Assignment and Choice by Ward of Residence



Confusing Attendance Zones

The attendance zones have not been updated following the closing of Meyer Elementary School in 2008. Students living at 1368 Euclid Street, NW have three different schools of right.

 DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Provide an address below to see the school assigned to that address
e.g. 1301 Massachusetts Ave NW

1368 EUCLID STREET NW

All Elementary Schools

All Middle Schools

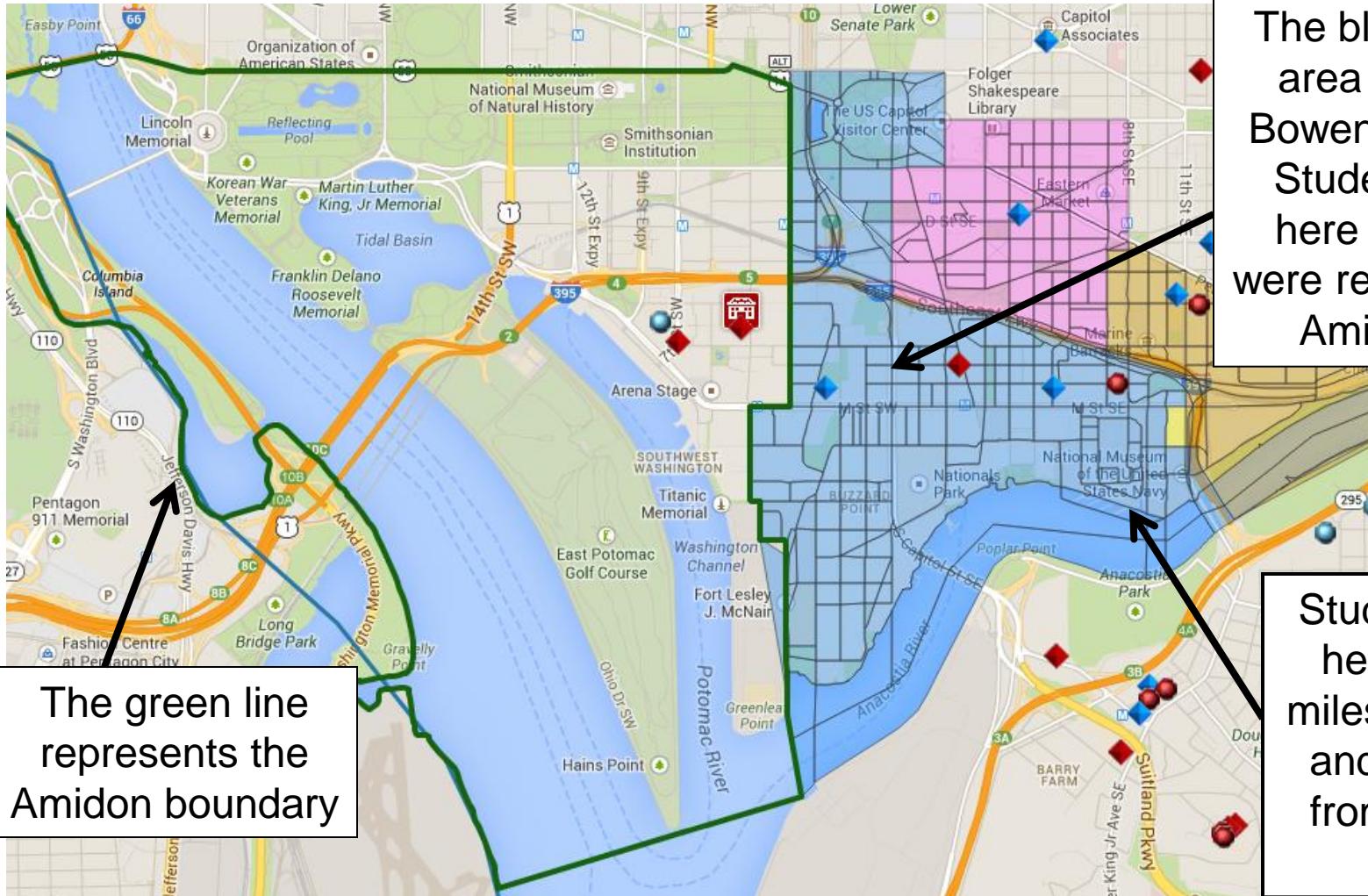
EBIS: Boundary Information System

The following schools are assigned to your address

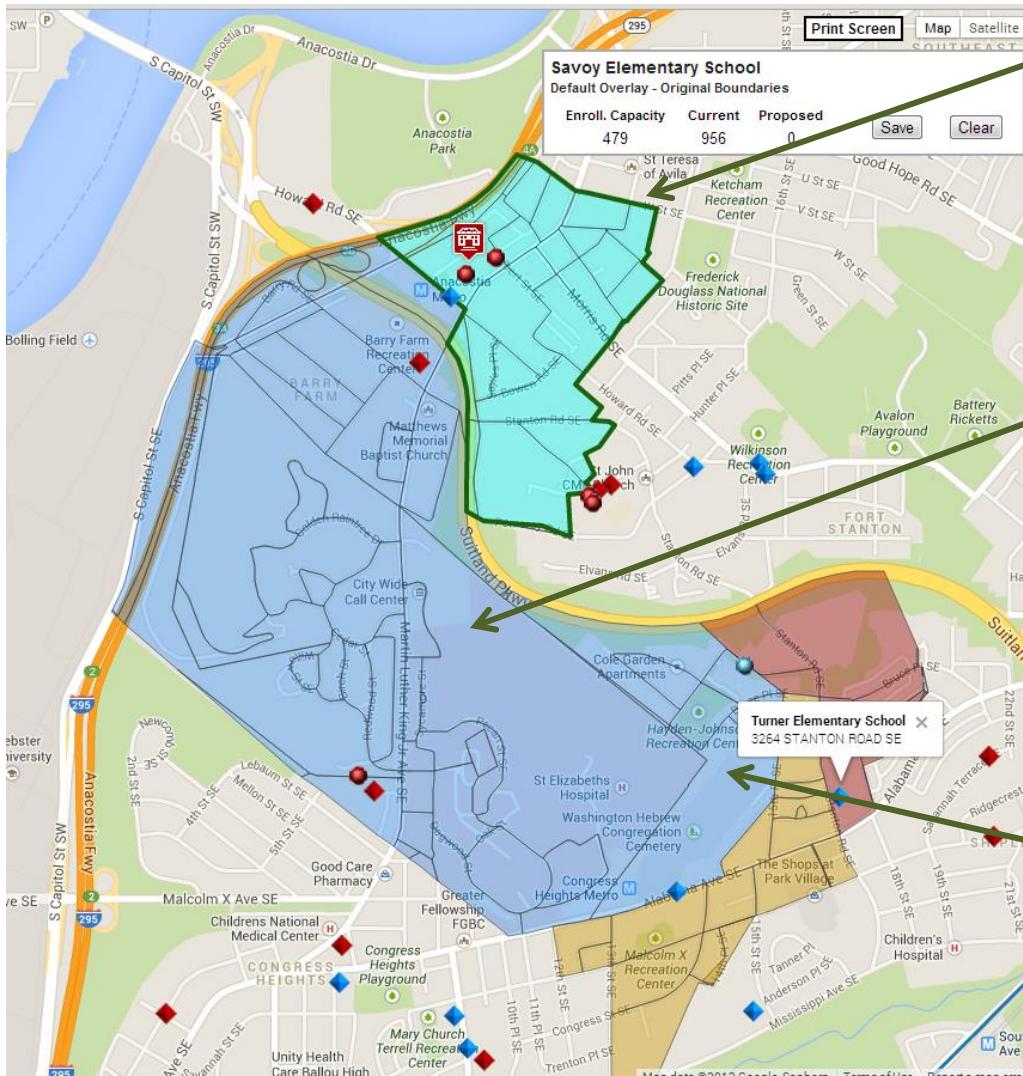
School Type	School Name	School Address	Phone Number	Zoom To
Elementary School	Tubman Elementary School	3101 13TH STREET NW	202-673-7285	
Elementary School	H.D. Cooke Elementary School	2525 17TH STREET NW	202-939-5390	
Elementary School	Garrison Elementary School	1200 S STREET NW	202-673-7263	
Middle and High School	Cardozo Education Campus	1200 CLIFTON STREET NW	202-673-7385	



Poor Alignment for Walkability



Poor Alignment for Walkability



The green line represents the Savoy boundary before Birney ES was closed in 2008.

Students living in the blue (former Birney ES) boundary were reassigned to Savoy ES.

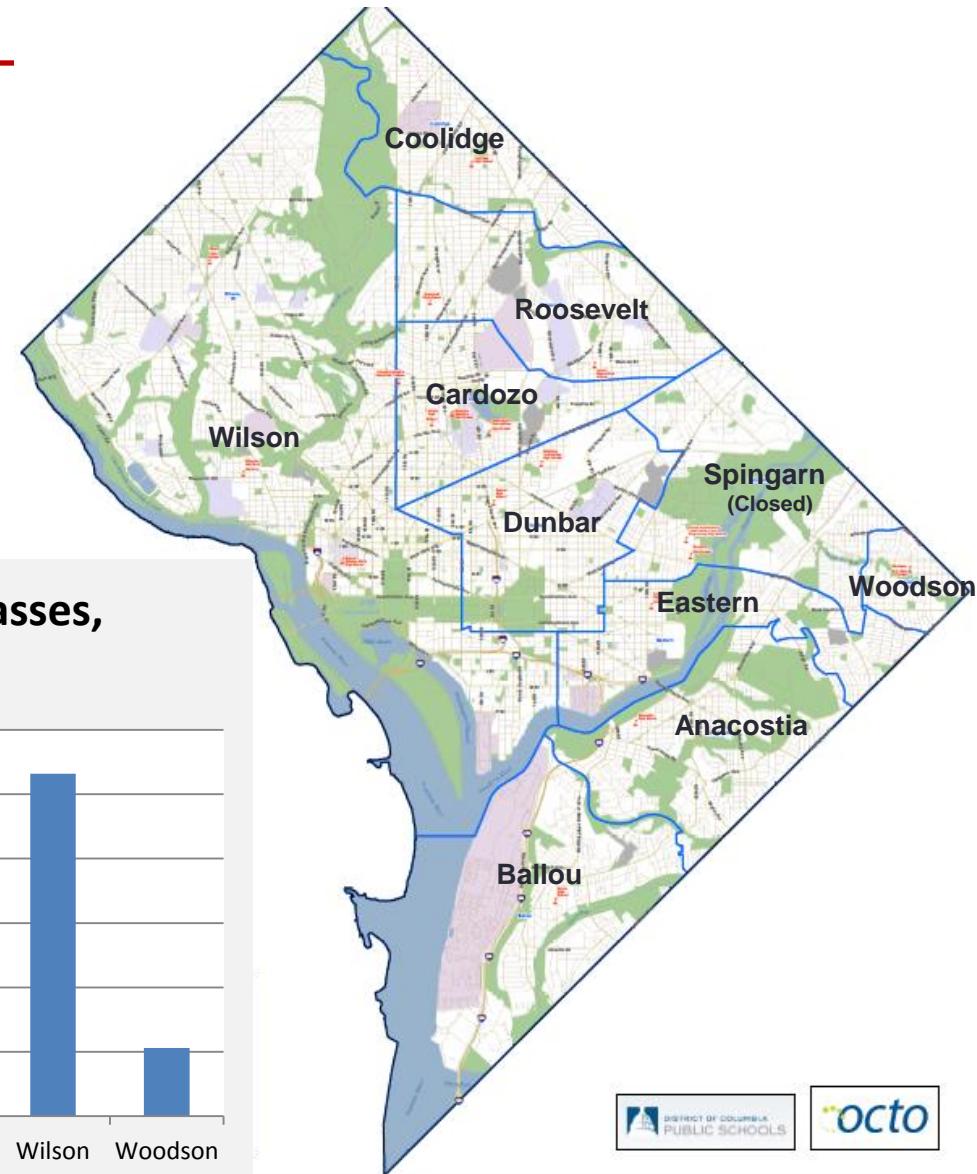
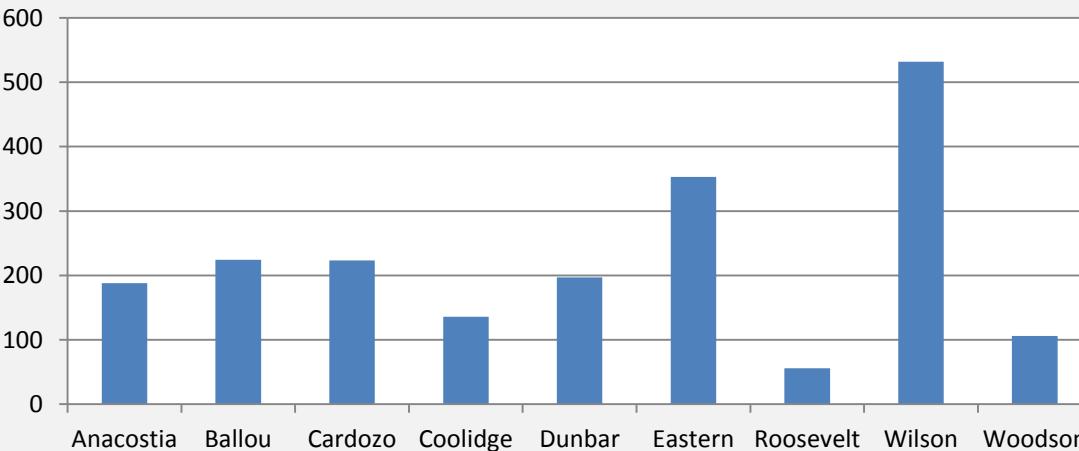
In 2012-13 there were 96 elementary students who lived far closer to Turner ES or to Malcolm X ES, than to Savoy ES.

Imbalance in HS Boundaries and Feeders

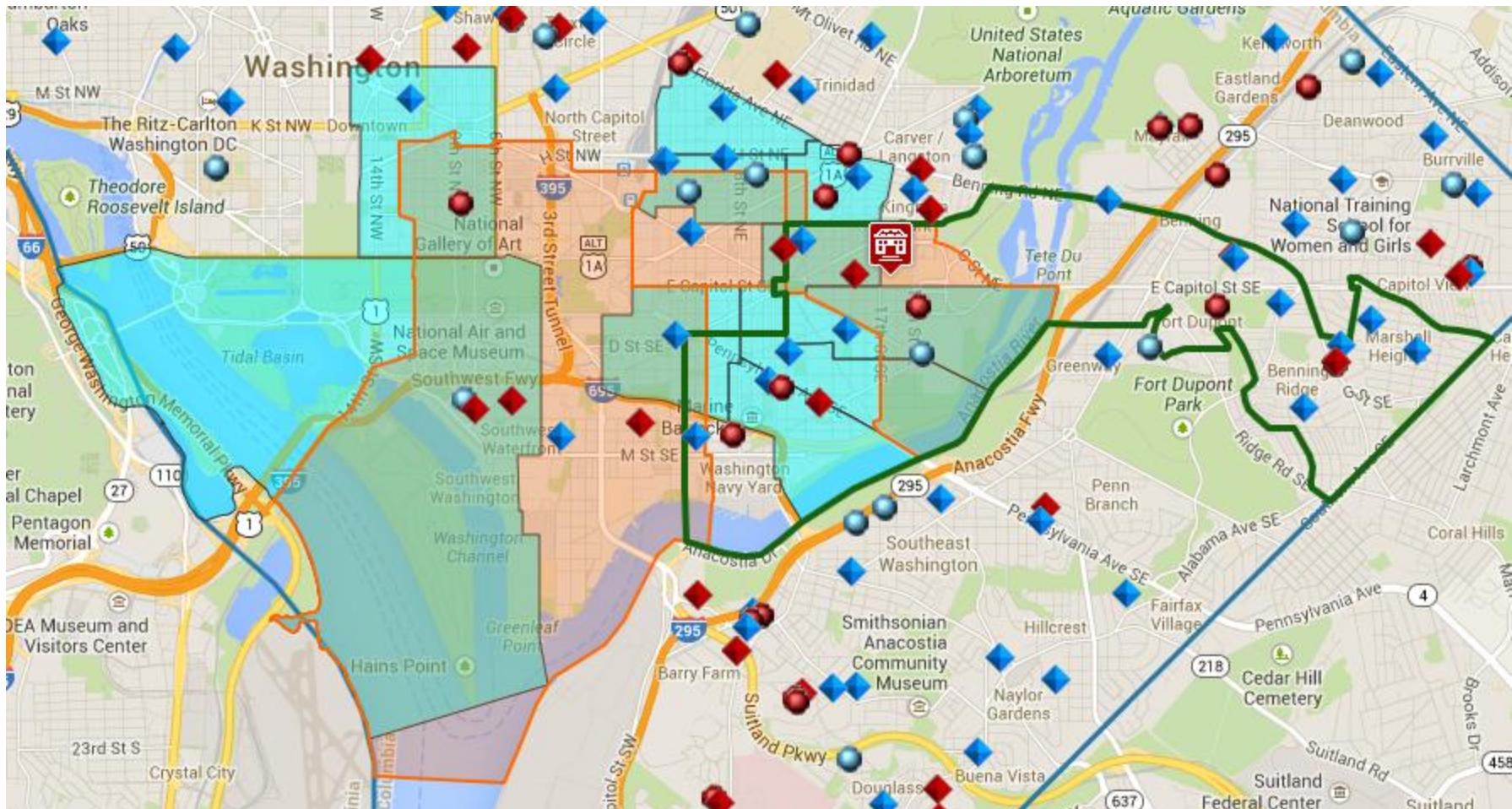
Our current high school attendance zones reflect the housing density and building utilization of the 1970s.

Feeder patterns create structural imbalances in enrollments

**# of Students in Feeder 8th-Grade Classes,
SY 2012-13**



Poorly Aligned Feeder Schools: Eastern



The green line represents the Eastern HS boundary. The pink, gray and blue shaded areas represent a school attendance zone that is currently in the Eastern feeder pattern.

Highlights of our Work to Date

Focus Group Feedback

- Held focus groups across all 8 wards
- 171 participants
- Participants rated the following values as highest priority
 - Equitable Access to Quality Schools
 - Predictability
 - Strengthening Neighborhood Schools (ES and MS)

Policy Briefs

Policy Brief #1: DC Student Assignment and Choice Policy

- *Provides a brief history of student assignment in DC and a factual overview of current student assignment and school choice policy*

Policy Brief #2: Student Assignment Policies in Other Cities

- *Provides an overview of the policies related to assigning students to schools in seven other cities, highlighting key issues and principles involved.*

Policy Brief #3: DC Landscape for Student Assignment and School Choice

- *Provides basic data and information on city and neighborhood population and demographics, school characteristics, school-facility infrastructure, and school attributes that may be variously considered as causes or effects of student assignment and choice.*

Highlights of Policy Brief #3

- Early childhood reflects greater racial diversity than secondary
 - *NH White students from SY12-13: 17% in K, 11% in 5th, 7% in 8th*
- D.C. has walkable DCPS neighborhood elementary schools
 - *Only 2,350 elementary age students live further than .55 miles from a DCPS age-appropriate school.*
 - *Ward 6 families travel an average of .76 miles to their DCPS elementary school/1.76 miles to their PCS elementary school - less than the city average.*
- On average, elementary age students within one school boundary attend 64 different elementary schools
- Most 5th grade DCPS students do not attend their designated destination school
 - *Between 2010-2013, an average of 39% of the rising 6th graders enrolled in their designated destination middle schools*

What is Next?

- DME attending meetings across the city to talk with community and parent groups
- Ongoing work with DCPS on program planning and alignment
- Committee members engaging their communities
- Committee will begin to develop concrete policy scenarios for the public to consider
- Working groups will begin in late March
 - Sign Up Online at www.dme.dc.gov or call 202-478-5738
- For questions, please contact:
 - Dme.studentassignment@dc.gov
 - 202-478-5738

Discussion Questions

- Do the values prioritized by focus groups resonate with you?
- What role should feeder patterns play in this process? (geographic, programmatic, or both)
- Do you think about student assignment policy differently at the elementary, middle and high school grade levels?