

LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS DULLES SOUTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ZONE PROCESS

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

[Posted 23 October 2023](#)

Q1. I am from Westbury Glen, one of the neighborhoods slated to move from Goshen Post to Hovatter next year. I had a few questions I was hoping to get answered.

- Will our rising kids have the opportunity to attend an open house at Hovatter to get familiar with the school prior to the school year starting?**
- Would it be possible to keep kids from both Hovatter and Henrietta on the same bus so that siblings can ride together?**
- I assume that equipment like chrome books that were distributed by Goshen would be turned in at the end of the school year and they would get new at their new school (want to set expectations for my child that he may not have a chrome book over the summer!)**
- What is the enrollment process? Are the transitioning kids automatically enrolled for their new school or do we need to enroll them fresh?**
- As much as possible it would be easier on parents for the two elementary schools to operate together. As in joint activities and things like that. Otherwise it will be impossible to keep up with demands across both schools with multiple children!**

A1. The [Staff Plan](#), presented to the School Board on October 19, 2023, does recommend the Westbury Glen community (in Planning Zone DS06.6) be assigned to Henrietta Lacks Elementary School/Hovatter Elementary School, beginning fall 2024 (2024-2025 academic year).

It is anticipated that once elementary school attendance zone changes have been adopted by the School Board (scheduled for December 12, 2023), there will be a welcome event for families new to the Henrietta Lacks Elementary School/Hovatter Elementary School community. The school principals will work together to facilitate the fall 2024 transition for students and families.

Students attending Henrietta Lacks Elementary School will ride the same buses as students attending Hovatter Elementary School. Henrietta Lacks Elementary School and Hovatter Elementary School will have the same bell schedule.

Any elementary school students transitioning to a new elementary school in the fall (2024-2025 academic year) will keep their LCPS-issued device and bring their device with them to the new school. Students retain access to their devices year-round and will only return their equipment for upgrades/replacements as they enter third, sixth, and ninth grades. For additional information, please review the [LCPS Student Device handbook](#).

Current LCPS students, reassigned to a different school next year, will not need to re-register. School staff from the student's current school will transfer the student's records to the new school; only new students to LCPS will need to [register](#) before the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.

[Ms. Boyd](#), Principal of Henrietta Lacks Elementary School, has shared that she and [Ms. Mercer](#) (Hovatter Elementary School Principal) have been collaborating and envisioning the many ways the two schools might work together, beginning next fall. Some ideas include potential shared school events, classroom buddies between the two schools, shared spirit days, combined fundraisers, etc. Again, once any elementary attendance zone changes have been adopted by the School Board, additional information will be shared with families of rezoned students to ease any transition concerns and welcome the students and their families to their new school communities.

Q2. I would like to register and speak at the meeting tonight [October 23, 2023], but the website says registration is closed. Can someone please let me know how to register?

A2. Guided by [Policy 2520, Participation by the Public](#), advance speaker sign-up closes at noon on the date of the identified public hearing. However, in-person registration to speak at any of the [three scheduled attendance zone public hearings](#) will be accepted between 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. each hearing night, at the Loudoun County Public Schools Administration Building (21000 Education Court, Ashburn). The School Board's [Citizens Participation page](#) provides additional information on the sign-up process.

Q3. Is there a good way to sign up for an email list to make sure we are aware of these kinds of things? We only found out about this a bit ago.

A3. While [messaging](#) was sent earlier this month to all elementary school communities identified for inclusion in this attendance zone process, LCPS does not currently have a 'Notify Me' or LISTSERV option as new information is posted on the [Dulles South Area Elementary School Attendance Zone Process webpage](#). However, all attendance zone meetings outlined on the School Board's [adopted calendar](#) are open to the public, and interested citizens are encouraged to attend. The attendance zone meetings will also be broadcast live on Comcast channel 18 and Verizon Fios channel 43, as well as viewable via [simultaneous webcast](#) from the LCPS website. Throughout this attendance zone process, information and data regarding the attendance zone changes will be accessible from LCPS' [Dulles South Area Elementary School Attendance Zone Process webpage](#).

Strong community engagement is an important component in an attendance zone change process and the School Board and staff welcome involvement from Loudoun residents. Members of the public may share their thoughts and concerns with the School Board and staff by speaking at the public hearings, attending the work sessions, and/or providing written comments. Copies of all written remarks received by the Division of Planning & GIS Services (lcpsplan@lcps.org or 21000 Education Court Ashburn, VA 20148) will be provided to the School Board and Superintendent.

Posted 24 October 2023

Q4. My [REDACTED] currently attends Elaine Thompson [Elementary School] [REDACTED], I wanted to understand if we'll be rezoned or staying up for next year. Our address is [REDACTED] High Falls Ct, Ashburn 20148.

A4. Based on the [Staff Plan](#), presented to the School Board on October 19, 2023, The Meadows community (in Planning Zone DS09.4), which includes High Falls Court, would remain in the Elaine E. Thompson Elementary School attendance zone.

Please continue to follow the attendance zone process. Attendance zone information and data, as it becomes available (including other potential attendance zone plans being considered or reviewed by the School Board), will be posted on the [Dulles South Area Elementary School Attendance Zone Process webpage](#).

Posted 1 November 2023

Q5. I was wondering if any decisions have been made on where the current 1st grade class at Hovatter (who were the first class to be moved to Pinebrook for kindergarten in 22-23) will be for second grade. Will they move to Henrietta Lacks in Fall 24 and then back to Hovatter in Fall 25?

A5. Grade 2 students (2024-2025 academic year only) will attend Hovatter Elementary School, rather than Henrietta Lacks Elementary School. For Henrietta Lacks Elementary School's inaugural year, the school will serve Kindergarten and Grade 1 students only. This reflects [action taken by the School Board on October 10, 2023](#).

With the start of the 2025-2026 academic year, Henrietta Lacks Elementary School will serve Kindergarten through Grade 2 students; Hovatter Elementary School will serve Grade 3 through Grade 5 students.

Q6. My child will be entering fifth grade next fall. Will she have to change elementary schools if our neighborhood gets zoned to Hovatter Elementary School?

A6. School Board [Policy 8160](#), *Exceptions to School Assignment Due to Attendance Zone Change*, states students who will be entering grade five "at the time of the implementation of an attendance zone change may be granted permission by the School Board to voluntarily remain at their current school of assignment in order to provide greater educational continuity for those students and/or to avoid recurring school changes for the student."

In late January/early February 2024, following School Board action on any elementary school attendance zone changes associated with the opening of Henrietta Lacks Elementary School (scheduled for December 12, 2023), Planning & GIS Services staff will contact parents/guardians of any current grade 4 student who has been zoned to attend a different elementary school for the 2024-2025 academic year for interest for their child to remain at/finish elementary school at his/her current school.

Q7. I [live in Hartland and] have two kids in Elaine Thompson School – 2nd grade and Kindergarten. Is there a way to send them both to same school? Why can't Hartland community kids go to one school, that is in proximity?

A7. If the Hartland community is rezoned and assigned to the Henrietta Lacks Elementary School/Hovatter Elementary School attendance zone, your Kindergarten student would attend Henrietta Lacks Elementary in the fall and your Grade 2 student would attend Hovatter Elementary School. They would ride the same bus to/from school but be attending school in separate buildings. Please see the response to above **Question 1** for more information on how the two schools will be planning events and collaborating as one community.

The [Staff Plan](#), presented to the School Board on October 19, recommending the rezoning of the Hartland community (Planning Zone DS08) to Henrietta Lacks Elementary School/Hovatter Elementary School was not made lightly; however, the current and projected over enrollment of Elaine E. Thompson Elementary School has to be addressed. In a partnership with Virginia Tech, graduate students have developed a data platform ([Redistrict](#)) for public use during this elementary school attendance zone change process; the site provides the same data posted on the [dedicated attendance zone webpage](#), including student counts by planning zone and school capacity information. Parents and community members are encouraged to utilize this tool to create alternate elementary school attendance zone plans to share with the School Board, for their consideration.

Q8. In regards [to the response to above Question 6] to 5th graders remaining at Thompson, does the division provide transportation or will that be thought of as a special permission request where the family will provide transportation?

A8. As noted in School Board [Policy 8160, Exceptions to School Assignment Due to Attendance Zone Change](#), parents/guardians of any student granted an exception for the 2024-2025 academic year, to finish grade 5 at their current (2023-2024) zoned elementary school, must commit to providing transportation for the student to/from school for the year. Bus transportation may not be provided by Loudoun County Public Schools.

This student exception process is different from the special exception process that is guided by School Board [Policy](#) and [Regulation](#) 8155, *School Assignment*.

[Posted 26 November 2023](#)

Q9. Parents are asking about the possibility of a matriculation plan where the students who started at ETE [Elaine E. Thompson Elementary School] can remain there through 5th grade—ideally, the rising 4th and 5th graders, but especially the 5th graders. Is this an option that is already available during an attendance zone process, or a possibility?

A9. The only policy that addresses exceptions specifically due to an attendance zone change is [Policy 8160, Exceptions to School Assignment Due to Attendance Zone Change](#), and at the elementary level focuses only on rising grade 5 students. See also the response to Questions 6 and 8.

[Posted 3 December 2023](#)

Q10. Can LCPS put cottages/trailers on campus for overcrowding, instead of moving students from Elaine Thompson Elementary?

A10. Staff does not recommend modular classrooms for long term overcrowding, especially when there is space to move the students to an existing school. If the School Board were to decide that modulares are an acceptable solution for Elaine E. Thompson Elementary School, there is not time to design, gain approvals and install modulares for the 2024-2025 school year.

Q11. Some of my neighbors have been discussing re-aligning the districts, so that Arcola Elementary is back to capacity (returning Meadows and Nicholson Farm), and Hartland stays at Elaine Thompson. This would likely solve cluster alignment. How many kids does Nicholson Farm and Meadows send ETE? How many Hartland students go to ETE?

A11. Attendance zone changes are made by the reassignment of planning zones, not individual neighborhoods. The Nicholson Farm and Lenah Woods communities are in planning zone DS08.5; The Meadows community is in planning zone DS09.4.

In September 2023, planning zone DS08.5 had 79 resident elementary (K-5) students and DS09.4 had 72 resident elementary (K-5) students. Hartland, in planning zone DS08, had 289 resident elementary (K-5) students. This information is posted on the [dedicated attendance zone webpage](#): [Dulles South Resident Students \(Kindergarten - Grade 5\), by Planning Zone](#).