

Academic Success for All

Red Clay's Vision for Inclusive Schools

Recommendations for School Board Action (Revised February 2014)

SUMMARY

Since the 2011–12 school year, Red Clay has invested three solid years of planning and preparing for a districtwide shift toward more inclusive education. Inside are our recommendations for school board action, developed based on feedback we received from parents, teachers, and other stakeholders along the way.

Recommendations for School Board Action

In July 2012, Red Clay committed to a long-range plan for improving outcomes for all students by 2016. We defined a shared vision for inclusive education, founded on the core belief that *all schools* should have the capacity to deliver a full continuum of services to students with disabilities and English language learners, and *all students* should have the option to attend schools close to home, in inclusive classrooms with students from their own neighborhoods.

After two years of community input and rich dialogue with stakeholders at every level, we developed the following set of recommendations for change. We extend a special thanks to the many individuals who contributed to this plan—including parents, teachers and support staff who devoted countless hours to attending presentations, engaging in candid discussions, and participating in professional training all to support the shift toward a more inclusive Red Clay.

Our recommendations for school board action are as follows:

1. **Transition of ELL Middle School Students, SY 2014–15.** It is recommended that middle school ELL students transition to their attendance zone school in SY 2014–15.¹
2. **Transition of The Central School Students, SY 2014–15.** It is recommended that students currently attending The Central School transition to their attendance zone school in SY 2014–15.
 - a. *School Choice Option.* Students currently attending The Central School may utilize the school choice process to attend a school other than their attendance zone school in SY 2014–15. (School choice applications from these students will be accepted and processed according to the provisions for good cause late applications.)^{2,3}
 - b. *Meadowood Program Option.* Parents of students currently attending The Central School may utilize the IEP team process to discuss their child’s unique needs and to determine the appropriate setting for their child. If the IEP team determines that the attendance zone school would not be the appropriate setting for that student, the student will have the option to attend the Meadowood Program at H.B. du Pont Middle School (grades 6–8) or McKean High School (grades 9–12) in SY 2014–15.⁴
3. **Transition of ELL Elementary School Students, SY 2015–16.** It is recommended that elementary school ELL students transition to their attendance zone school in SY 2015–16.
 - a. *School Choice Option.* Elementary school ELL students currently attending Baltz Elementary School, Lewis Dual Language Elementary School, Marbrook Elementary School, and Mote Elementary School may utilize the school choice process to remain at their current school, or to attend a school other than their attendance zone school in SY 2015–16.⁵

4. **Expansion of the Meadowood Program (K–5), SY 2015–16.** It is recommended that the Meadowood Program be expanded to include a second elementary K–5 site in SY 2015–16, to be located at Richardson Park Elementary School, with enrollment open to a broader population of students with disabilities, including those transitioning from Richardson Park Learning Center.^{4,6,7}

5. **Transition of Richardson Park Learning Center Students, SY 2015–16.** It is recommended that students currently attending Richardson Park Learning Center transition to their attendance zone school in SY 2015–16.
 - a. *School Choice Option.* Students currently attending Richardson Park Learning Center may utilize the school choice process to attend a school other than their attendance zone school in SY 2015–16.⁸

 - b. *Meadowood Program Option.* Parents of students currently attending Richardson Park Learning Center may utilize the IEP team process to discuss their child’s unique needs and to determine the appropriate setting for their child. If the IEP team determines that the attendance zone school would not be the appropriate setting for that student, the student will have the option to attend the Meadowood Program at either Forest Oak Elementary School or a new site to be located at Richardson Park Elementary School in SY 2015–16 (as recommended above).^{4,6}

6. **Transition of Students with Disabilities in Pre-Kindergarten, SY 2015–16.** It is recommended that students with disabilities in pre-kindergarten be assigned to the pre-kindergarten program closest to their home (Richardson Park Elementary School, Warner Elementary School or the Meadowood Program), in SY 2015–16.

¹ In December 2013 and January 2014, middle school ELL students at A.I. Middle School and Conrad Schools of Science were notified of the district’s plan for transitioning students to their attendance zone school in SY 2014–15. Families were informed of the school choice option and had the opportunity to utilize the school choice process during the regular school choice application window.

² The school choice option was communicated to parents and students at The Central School in the winter of 2013. This option will be discussed with them again at meetings scheduled for the spring of 2014.

³ In accordance with school board policy, students who submit good cause late applications will be offered enrollment or wait list status on a space-available basis. Students making school choice application to Cab Calloway School of the Arts or Conrad Schools of Science must meet the admission criteria of that school. School choice applications that are not covered in the good cause provisions may be considered for special permission. Special permissions will be granted in extenuating circumstances where the provisions of the choice enrollment process are not applicable. An application and an explanatory document outlining the reasons given for the request must be submitted to the Superintendent, whose decision shall be final. For more information, see Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education Policy 8013, available at www.redclayschools.com/pages/RedClay/Parents_and_Students/Choice.

⁴ For over 25 years the Meadowood Program has successfully worked with students with moderate to severe disabilities. The program is positioned to handle additional student enrollment at the secondary level (grades 6–12) in SY 2014–15 and at the elementary level (grades K–5) in SY 2015–16. Resources identified in the student’s IEP will follow the student to whichever educational option is chosen.

⁵ Transportation services for these students will be determined pending school board action on the district’s plan for attendance zones, scheduled for the spring of 2014.

⁶ Through conversations with staff, parents and community members, it became evident that limiting the option of the Meadowood Program to Forest Oak Elementary School for grades K–5 was not ideal for many families who live in the northern part of the district. The proposed addition of the cluster site at Richardson Park Elementary School would allow for the program to serve more students, including those whose unique needs are better met in the structure of the special program.

⁷ Currently, the Meadowood Program for grades 6–8 is housed at H.B. du Pont Middle School, a location that presents some challenges to parent engagement due to limited public transportation options in the area. The district will explore the possibility of expanding the Meadowood Program to a second middle school site, or a more conveniently located site, for SY 2016–17.

⁸ Students will be informed of their attendance zone school by November 2014, in advance of the school choice application window.