



August 4, 2017

CONFIDENTIAL
MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Michael J. Martirano, Ed. D.
Interim Superintendent

Subject: Free and Reduced-Priced Meals (FARMs) Data Differences

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you about the data differences used by School Planning and Food and Nutrition Services. As described at the joint Board of Education and County Council meeting on July 17, 2017, School Planning and Food and Nutrition Services do not recommend comparing FARMs data provided on the school profiles (Food and Nutrition Services) to the Attendance Area Adjustment reports (School Planning office).

The information provided is not comparable for three primary reasons:

1. At the elementary school level, the school profile includes Pre-K with the FARMs percentages, if students receive a lunch by Food and Nutrition services. School Planning uses K-12 data;
2. School Planning analyzes students who “live in” attendance areas versus Food and Nutrition Services reports those students who attend the school. For purposes of School Planning, out of district students (those who live in one attendance area, but go to another attendance area) are counted within their home school because School Planning has no way of predicting student reassignments; and
3. The time in which the data is pulled from our student database (April versus October and April versus end of year).

However, after speaking with community members, staff was better able to assess the concerns presented regarding the FARMs data used for the Attendance Area Adjustments. Therefore, we are further investigating other possible underlying reason(s) for the differences in numbers. Staff is researching every input from Synergy, the Geographic Information System (GIS) and our redistricting software to see how the data is aggregated and reported.

We will continue to keep the Board up to date as this research progresses.

Copy to: Executive Staff
Board of Education Office