

# NE Choice Outcomes 2018

The first round of Denver Public Schools' school choice for 2018 has concluded, and we have the local outcomes. Fortunately, this year most students in the district and in our neighborhoods received their first choices. District-wide, it was a record-setting year for choice, with 27,000 students participating, up from 23,000 last year. In part, this was due to moving the choice window a month later

than usual, allowing families a little more time to research schools and participate, according to Brian Eschbacher, executive director of planning and enrollment for DPS.

We have combed through the data and are bringing you snapshots of where students in our distribution area wanted to go and where they were assigned, along with notable trends.

District-wide, of the Kindergarten, 6th and 9th graders who participated in choice:

**81%** received their first choice,  
**92%** their first or second choice and  
**94%** their first, second or third choice.

## HIGH SCHOOL

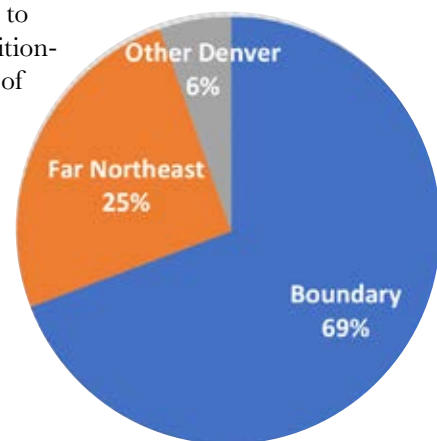
### Match Rates Northeast Denver

Match rates in northeast Denver were similar to the district as a whole, with the exception of the East boundary, where 100% of students received their first or second choice, presumably because that choice was East, the most-requested high school in Denver.

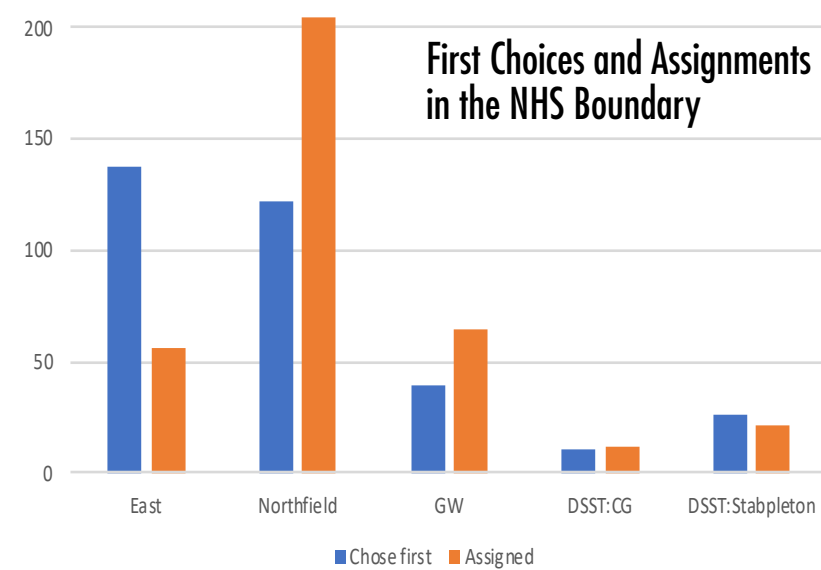
	1st Choice	1st or 2nd Choice	1st, 2nd or 3rd Choice
District	80%	93%	95%
East	95%	100%	100%
GW	78%	93%	96%
Northfield	75%	99%	100%

### Who will be in the incoming class?

After assignments were made, a record 205 boundary students were assigned to Northfield and an additional 91 from other areas of the city. Eschbacher expects some attrition from the boundary and/or additions from other areas so that the entering class will have 35% students from outside the boundary, as it is supposed to have.



### What were the first choices and assignments in the Northfield High School boundary this year?



About 95% of the 388 students in the NHS boundary participated in choice this year. Even though East was still the first choice of Northfield boundary students, it was close this year. Of the 367 participating, 137 selected East first and 122—or one third—chose Northfield first, with smaller numbers choosing other local schools.

## ECE & ELEMENTARY CHOICE OUTCOME See page 24

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

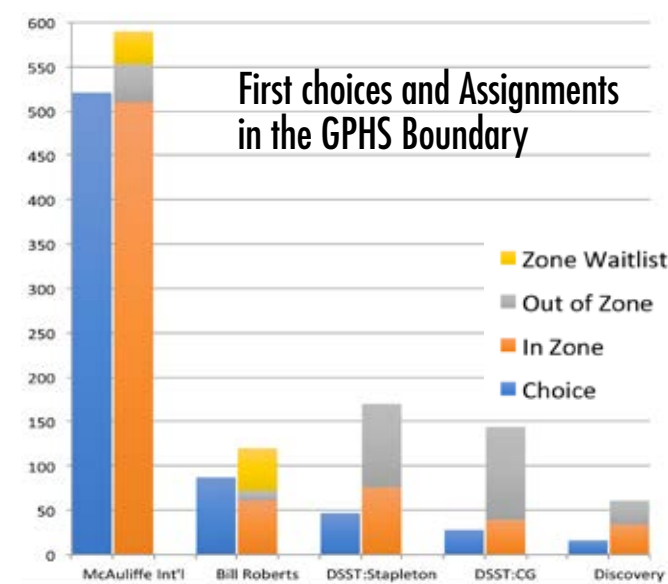
### Match Rates Northeast Denver

Match rates in the Greater Park Hill/Stapleton (GPHS) middle school zone exceeded district averages, but nonetheless some rising 6th graders were disappointed.

6th Grade	1st Choice	1st or 2nd Choice	1st, 2nd or 3rd Choice
District	83%	94%	97%
GPHS	91%	97%	100%

### High Demand for McAuliffe

For the first time since 2015, the largest and most-requested middle school in the GPHS choice zone (and in DPS) was unable to accommodate all the incoming 6th graders in the zone that wanted to enroll. But it wasn't for a lack of trying, as Principal Kurt Dennis will fill "every classroom, every period," next year, by adding a section. "In order to have that additional section, I had to ask two teachers to take on an additional teaching load," he said.

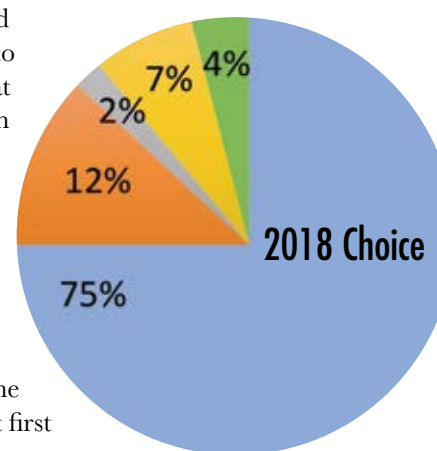
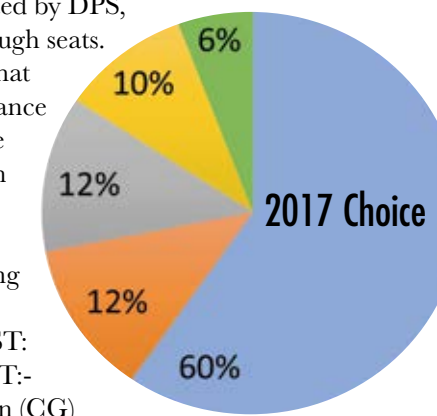


### Imbalance of Seats?

The problem wasn't a "bubble" of students, as some parents had feared. There were only 40 more students participating in choice this year than last, as predicted by DPS, and more than enough seats.

The problem was that there was an imbalance in the choices made by 6th graders, with many more preferring McAuliffe and many fewer choosing Denver Discovery School (DDS), DSST: Stapleton and DSST:Conservatory Green (CG) than in years past.

In fact, DDS and DSST:CG appear to be under-enrolled at this point, with both schools showing fewer students than open seats, and DSST:Stapleton has declined from a 18% first choice rate in 2015 to just 7% of in-zone students choosing it first this year.



### Second Round Choice

A second round of choice begins May 1 and will operate on a first-come, first-served basis through August 31. Families apply directly to their preferred schools using a link on the DPS Choice website. Spots are assigned based on availability, and students are added to waitlists based on time and date of application.

### Community and DPS Response

Many parents in Park Hill and Stapleton have expressed concern about middle school choice results this year, especially around the apparent imbalance of seats in the zone. On social media, some in Park Hill expressed a desire to return to a neighborhood schools model, but most in the greater zone appear to be looking for ways to re-tool the seats to better fit the desires of the community.

With two DSSTs that hold nearly a third of the seats in the zone but appear to interest only 10% of incoming zone students, some have suggested combining the Conservatory Green and Stapleton campuses. Others have talked about getting rid of struggling DDS, freeing up space for a new middle school. But neither scenario seems likely.

Superintendent Tom Boasberg said in an email, "We're very committed to having strong middle schools in the Park Hill Stapleton area and indeed the area's middle schools are the highest performing in the state. ... We have acted to address community concerns around DDS, and are confident the school will regain its strength and become more popular with neighborhood families."

DPS plans to use outside demographers this fall to predict the class sizes for future years, and they will examine the need to open an additional middle school, which would likely be located north of I-70. It could open in an addition to the Inspire Elementary School building, at a campus north of 56th Ave. that has yet to be constructed, or possibly on the Sandoval campus, according to Eschbacher.

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