



March 9, 2017

Dear Alderwood, Shuksan and SQHS Families,

Earlier this school year, Bellingham Public Schools shared information about the growth happening in [north Bellingham](#), and its current and future impact on school enrollment. Families also received information to apply for consideration to serve on the [Attendance Areas PreK-12 Standing Committee](#).

Our committee of students, parents and staff has been meeting weekly this winter. One of the issues we've been studying is the attendance area between Squalicum and Bellingham high schools. Enrollment is currently about 245 students more at Squalicum, and SQHS is running out of room; Bellingham High School is currently under-enrolled. Balancing enrollment among our high schools creates better course choices/schedules and opportunities for students.

Our proposal is to adjust most of Birchwood Elementary School's attendance area to go to Bellingham High School instead of Squalicum (see enclosed map). We have met and communicated with the affected families and have had extensive conversations with our committee about whether to include your household in this change. At this time, we are not recommending a change in your school attendance area of Alderwood/Shuksan/Squalicum. However, because you live very close to the newly proposed Bellingham High School attendance area, we are closely monitoring your neighborhood and may be recommending a middle or high school change for this area in the future.

We have opened a [special transfer request process](#) for families living in the affected areas to request a transfer by March 15 to remain at Squalicum. If we receive a large number of transfer requests from current Squalicum families to remain at Squalicum, we may also consider transfer requests for students living in your attendance area to attend Bellingham High School next school year. For transfer requests outside of attendance areas, students and families need to provide their own transportation to and from school.

Another one of the issues we've been working on is how to create more enrollment space at Cordata because the school is now full. In the future, areas around Cordata are predicted to continue to grow. We have been thoughtfully considering how to make this adjustment, and are proposing that some students living in Cordata's attendance area move to Alderwood, Parkview and Northern Heights starting in August (see enclosed map).

The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of both changes in attendance areas happening nearby. Again, your household is not affected at this time and you do not need to take any action as a result of this letter.

If you have questions or need more information, please visit bellingshamschools.org/attendance-areas-committee or call (360) 676-6512.