

500: STUDENT ADMISSION AND SCHOOL CHOICE (P)

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POLICY

Student admission is to be guided by the following principles:

- **Access to neighbourhood school:** The admission process should maximize the number of students able to attend their catchment area school in accordance with their wishes
- **Choice:** The admission process should maximize the student's and parent's ability to choose the school and educational program which best meets the student's educational needs
- **Efficient resource allocation:** The admission process should enable school and district staff to plan the allocation of space and instructional resources to best accommodate demand and minimize adjustments required at the beginning of the school year.

The board will develop student admission policy and procedures that balance the principles of access, choice and efficiency.

REGULATIONS

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 "catchment area child" means a person
 - i.) of school age, and
 - ii.) resident in the catchment area of the school
- 1.2 "non-catchment area child" means a person
 - i.) of school age,
 - ii.) resident in the school district and
 - iii.) not resident in the catchment area of the school
- 1.3 "school district child" means a catchment area child or a non-catchment area child.
- 1.4 "non-school district child" means a person
 - i.) of school age,
 - ii.) resident in British Columbia, and
 - iii.) not resident in the school district.

- 1.5 “parent” includes a guardian of the person appointed by court order or under the will of a deceased parent, and does not include a non-custodial parent.
- 1.6 “place of residence”: For purposes of this policy, a student’s place of residence is deemed to be that of the student’s parent, unless satisfactory evidence is produced that the student’s ordinary place of residence during the school year is elsewhere. Parents are advised that proof of residency will be required to determine place of residence and catchment area status.
- 1.7 “previous school year” means the school year previous to the school year for which the person is applying to enroll in an educational program.
- 1.8 “feeder schools” and their associated “receiving schools” are as described by the board’s catchment areas, where the class from the highest grade offered by the feeder school would be enrolled the next year in a designated receiving school unless an application for enrolment elsewhere is accepted, under the district’s enrolment process for continuing students.

2. DETERMINATION OF AVAILABLE SPACE AND FACILITIES

- 2.1 For purposes of section 74.1(6) and (7) of the *School Act*, space and facilities are available in a school to enrol a student or applicant if there is expected, based on reasonable enrolment projections, to be capacity to provide the student or applicant with an educational program appropriate to his or her needs, taking into account physical and educational resources.
- 2.2 The Board of Education delegates to the Superintendent of Schools or his or her designate, the decisions whether space and facilities are available in individual schools and education programs for purposes of section 74.1(6) and (7) of the *School Act*, in accordance with paragraphs 2.1 and 2.3.
- 2.3 Decisions on space and facilities availability will be made in consultation with the principal of the affected school and will be based on program capacity, including consideration of the following factors:
 - i.) the operating capacity of the school
 - ii.) staff assigned to a school by the district
 - iii.) the physical space in which instructional programs operate in the school
 - iv.) the ability of the school to provide appropriate educational programs for the applicant and other students according to grade, instructional level or special circumstances.
 - v.) the needs of other programs located in the school.

- 2.4 If space and facilities are determined to be available, enrolment in education programs in the school will be offered in the following priority order, provided that application deadlines and requirements are met:
- i.) catchment area child who attended the school during the previous school year
 - ii.) other catchment area child
 - iii.) non-catchment area child who attended the school during the previous school year
 - iv.) other non-catchment area child
 - v.) non-school district child.
- 2.5 Wait lists will be established for those not accepted, to be maintained until seven days after school opening each September.
- 2.6 Re-evaluation of space availability will take place periodically until seven days after school opening in September to ensure that the maximum numbers of requests are met at the earliest time possible.

3. TIE-BREAKING

- 3.1. Where there are multiple applications for the same educational program, priority will be determined by the time and date of application.

4.0 ENROLMENT PROCESS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT CHILDREN

- 4.1 Catchment area children who will be continuing at the same school or the related receiving school without a change of educational program are not required to apply. They will be automatically enrolled in the applicable educational program or school, subject to space availability and to meeting program requirements, unless transferred or withdrawn. For priority purposes, they are deemed to have applied at the earliest time available for applications in their category.
- 4.2 Catchment area children currently attending a non-catchment school, and who wish to return to their catchment area school, must inform the catchment area school according to the timelines set out in Section 5.0 below.
- 4.3 Children attending a non-catchment school and who wish to continue at their non-catchment school, must complete the annual Out-of-Catchment Request according to the timelines set out in Section 5.0 below. Enrolment is on a yearly basis and is subject to space availability and to meeting any program requirements. Where

space is not available to continue in the out-of-catchment school, students will be placed in their catchment area school.

- 4.4 School district children who are applying to transfer from one school in the district to another school in the district or to a different education program must first register at their catchment school and then complete and submit an Out-of-Catchment.

Request Form at their school of choice. Enrolment is on a yearly basis and is subject to space availability and to meeting any program requirements.

- 4.5 Proof of Residency will be required to determine catchment area status.

5.0 DATES FOR APPLICATIONS TO ENROL AND ENROLMENT

- 5.1 Before February 1st in each school year, the board will establish dates for submission of applications to enrol and for enrolment (Appendix 1). The board may establish different dates for different grades, educational programs, schools, or categories of applicant.
- 5.2 Applications received after the dates established will be subject to the priority of those applicants who applied within time. Late applications will be prioritized and accepted if space and facilities are available.

6.0 GUARANTEE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- 6.1 School district children who apply for enrolment in an educational program will be provided with an educational program in the district, unless a parent of the student consents to a placement outside the school district.

7.0 COMMITMENT

- 7.1 The district process shall encourage students (if of appropriate age) and their parents to jointly consider the student's educational needs before requesting an assignment to a school other than the current school or the catchment area school.
- 7.2 Applicants may apply for more than one school or educational program but may only be enrolled in one. When an applicant is offered and accepts enrolment in a school or educational program (in or out of the school district), applications for all other schools and educational programs become invalid.

- 7.3 The Superintendent or designate is authorized to enter into reciprocal agreements with other school districts to review wait lists and enrolment information in order to enforce this policy.

8.0 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 Applicants for enrolment must meet all program requirements for the requested educational program.

9.0 DISCRETIONARY ACCEPTANCE: SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED NON-SCHOOL DISTRICT CHILDREN

- 9.1 Enrolment applications from non-school district children may be refused if the child:
- i.) is under suspension from a BC public school or school district, or
 - ii.) has been refused an educational program by a BC public school board under 85(3) of the *School Act* for refusing to comply with the code of conduct and other rules and policies of the board or has failed to apply himself or herself to his or her studies.
- 9.2 Such applications will be referred to the superintendent or designate for a decision on admission. Admissions may be made subject to terms and conditions.

10.0 COMMUNICATION

- 10.1 Application periods and enrolment dates will be communicated to the school communities and to the community at large and may also be communicated to other communities within and outside the school district.

11.0 TRANSPORTATION

- 11.1 Transportation services or assistance will not be extended to students attending outside their catchment area by choice.

Appendix I Timelines for Student Registration

Appendix II Documentation for Student Registration

Appendix III Student Registration Form

Appendix IV Out of Catchment Request Form

Legal References

School Act Section 74.1