

OPEN ENROLLMENT

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- *Resident student* means a student who lives within the District boundaries and attends the school in the designated attendance area, or a student who is homeless, and who attended a school in the District at the time of becoming homeless. Residence is defined as a person's true, fixed and permanent home and place of habitation. It is the place where he intends to remain and to which he expects to return when he leaves without intending to establish a new residence elsewhere.
- *Resident transfer student* (also referred to herein as "within District open enrollment student") means a resident student who is enrolled in or seeking enrollment in a school that is within the District boundaries but outside the attendance area of the student's residence. Eligible children of District employees are included in this category.
- *Nonresident student* (also referred to herein as "out of District open enrollment student") means a student who resides in this state but lives outside the District boundaries and who is seeking enrollment in the District.

Open Enrollment Application Options

District resident students may apply for open enrollment in schools outside of the District or in other schools within the District.

Within District open enrollment students and out of District open enrollment students may apply for enrollment in schools within the District subject to the procedures that follow. Students in unorganized areas may file a Certificate of Educational Convenience with the District in order to secure their status as resident students at the school designated by the District.

Information and Application

The Superintendent shall prepare a written information packet concerning the District's application process, standards for acceptance or rejection, and policies, regulations, and procedures for open enrollment. The packet will be made available to everyone who requests it. Packets will be available no later than December 1 of each year and thereafter at the District office and at each school.

The information packet shall include the enrollment application form and shall advise applicants that they must submit enrollment applications on or before January 15 of each year to be considered for enrollment during the following school year. If January 15 falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline becomes the next working day after January 15. Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered after students whose applications were submitted by the deadline are enrolled.

Capacity

The Superintendent shall by November 1 of each year, estimate how much excess capacity may exist to accept transfer students. The estimate of excess capacity shall be made for each school and grade level and shall take into consideration:

- Board-approved staffing levels and loads.
- Resident students in assigned school attendance areas, including those issued Certificates of Educational Convenience and those required to be admitted by statute. This category includes eligible children of District employees.
- Resident transfer students who were enrolled in the school the previous year.
- Nonresident students who were enrolled in the school the previous year.

Once decisions have been made regarding acceptance of students who have applied for admission under open enrollment prior to January 15, enrollment projections for the subsequent school year will be adjusted appropriately. The enrollment projections will be considered the school capacity for decisions regarding students who apply for admission after January 15. Again, among students who apply for admission after January 15, District residents will be given preference over non-residents.

When the projected enrollment of a school exceeds the school's published capacity, the school will be declared "closed" to open enrollment. Applications for open enrollment may be accepted in case the enrollment should drop below capacity.

Eligibility

Students who apply for open enrollment status in the District must:

- Understand that enrollment is subject to the capacity limit established for the school and/or its grade levels.
- Agree to provide their own transportation. Limited transportation is available for students outside the District boundaries.
- Agree to abide by the District's Uniform Code of Student Conduct and the school's rules.
- Agree to regular and punctual attendance as for all students.
- Secure athletic eligibility for transfer students. Athletic eligibility of transfer students is regulated by the Arizona Interscholastic Association.

Providing false information will result in the application being denied.

Time-Lines

By December 1. An application packet will be available no later than December 1 of each year and thereafter at the District office and at each school. The packet will include information about the open enrollment process in the District and an application form.

By January 15. Each school shall accept completed applications submitted by emancipated students or the student's parents or legal guardians by January 15 for enrollment during the following school year.

By February 15. No later than February 15, the school shall notify the emancipated student, parent, or legal guardian in writing whether the applicant has been accepted, placed on a waiting list pending the availability of capacity, or rejected. If the student's application is rejected, the school shall state the reason for the rejection in the notification.

Time-line waiver. Applications for open enrollment received after the January 15 deadline will be dated, filed, and considered only after students whose applications were submitted by the deadline are enrolled. Any change requested after the school year begins will be considered under the administrative transfer process. An administrative transfer is a transfer recommended by the sending and receiving principals when it is in the best interest of the students and approved by the Superintendent. Administrative transfers can take place at any time during the school year.

Open Enrolled students who request to return to their home school will automatically be enrolled at that school.

Enrollment Priorities

If the Superintendent has determined that there is excess capacity to enroll additional students, such students shall be selected on the basis of the following priority categories:

- Category 1: Siblings of students accepted for open enrollment in the 2006-07 academic year or thereafter, whose enrollment will be concurrent with their sibling's at the same school. This category will also include children of regular benefited SUSD employees.
- Category 2: Students who are not enrolled in the school during the current school year.

Within these categories, within District open enrollment applications are given priority over out of District open enrollment applications.

Late applicants will be considered as outlined in the time-line waiver section of this policy.

Note: If a category contains too many students at a site to allow acceptance of the entire group, the District will accept students from Category 1 on a first come, first serve basis. The District will then use a lottery to select Students from Category 2.

Status of Open Enrolled Students

Once the District approves an open enrollment application, it is not necessary to reapply for open enrollment to the same school in subsequent years unless the student wishes to change schools, or there has been a break in the student's enrollment at the school. The District shall treat open enrolled students the same as resident students for purposes of continued admission to the school in which the student is open enrolled, and admission to the schools into which that school feeds. Thus, once open enrolled, students may elect to follow the feeder pattern established by the District for the school in which they open enrolled.

NOTE: All siblings of students who were open enrolled in a school before the 2006-07 academic year and continuously thereafter, may enroll at the same school, provided that a sibling will still be enrolled there when they arrive. Such siblings will be enrolled regardless of whether the relevant school or grade level is determined closed due to capacity.

Exceptions to Eligibility and Revocation of Open Enrollment Status

A school is not required to admit a student who has been expelled by any school during the period of expulsion or who is not in compliance with a condition of disciplinary action imposed by any other school or with a condition imposed by the juvenile court pursuant to A.R.S. 8-301. Acceptance for enrollment may be revoked upon finding the existence of any of these conditions.

A school shall not admit a nonresident or resident transfer student if the school has been notified by the District or the nonresident school district that the admission of the student would violate a court order of desegregation or an agreement with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights directed toward the remediation of alleged or proven racial or ethnic discrimination.

Adopted:

LEGAL REF.: A.R.S. 15-816 *et seq.*

CROSS REF.: JF – Student Admissions

JFAA- Admission of Resident Students

JFAB – Admission of Nonresident Students

JG – Assignment of Students to Classes and Grade Levels