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OPEN ENROLLMENT

The District has an open-enrollment program as set forth in A.R.S. 15-816 and A.R.S.15-816.01 et seq. The open enrollment program described in this policy shall be placed on the District website and made available to the public on request.

No tuition shall be charged for open enrollment, except as authorized by applicable provisions of A.R.S. 15-764, 15-797, 15-823, 15-824, and 15-825.

School District policies shall include the information required by A.R.S. 15-816.01 (I) that is needed to request enrollment and that is consistent with guidance and state and federal law regarding pupil privacy and civil rights, and information regarding the provision of transportation or resources for transportation.

The policies must be easily accessible from the home page on each school's website and be available in English and in Spanish or in any other language used by a majority of the populations served by the school or School District.

A school district shall update on each school's website the school's capacity and whether the school is currently accepting open enrollment students, by grade level, at least once every twelve (12) weeks unless there are no changes to report for the individual school.

If a school has any other separate capacity by specialized program, the information required pursuant to this subsection shall also be posted by specialized program.

Schools shall accept pupils throughout the school year as capacity allows. Pupils who are denied access due to capacity shall be informed that they are on a wait list and of the details regarding the process prescribed in A.R.S. 15-816.01(E).

Pupils shall be selected as seats become available.

A school district shall enroll at any time any resident pupil who applies for enrollment to the school district.

A school district shall give enrollment preference to and reserve capacity for all of the following:

- A. Resident pupils.
- B. Pupils returning to the school from the prior year.
- C. Siblings of pupils already enrolled.

A school district may give enrollment preference to children who:

- A. Are in foster care.
- B. Meet the definition of unaccompanied youth prescribed in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (P.L. 100-77; 101 Stat. 482; 42 United States Code Section 11434a).
- C. Attend a school that is closing.

If a school remains open as part of a boundary change and capacity is available, students assigned to a new attendance area may stay enrolled in their current school.

A school district may give enrollment preference to and reserve capacity for all of the following:

- A. Pupils who are children of persons who are employed by or at a school in the School District.
- B. Resident transfer pupils and their siblings.
- C. Pupils who meet additional criteria established and published by the School District Governing Board.

If remaining capacity at a school, as determined by the School District Governing Board, is insufficient to enroll all pupils who submit a timely request, the school or School District shall select pupils through an equitable selection process such as a lottery (but not limited to a lottery), except that preference shall be given to the siblings of a pupil selected through an equitable selection process such as a lottery.

Except as provided in A.R.S. 15-816.01, a school that is operated by a school district may not limit admission based on any of the following:

- A. Ethnicity or race.
- B. National origin.
- C. Sex.
- D. Income level.
- E. Disability.

F. Proficiency in the English language.

G. Athletic ability.

Definition

Resident transfer pupil means a resident pupil who is enrolled in or seeking enrollment in a school that is within the school district - but outside the attendance area - of the pupil's residence.

Nonresident pupil means a pupil who resides in this state and who is seeking enrollment in a school district other than the school district in which the pupil resides.

Enrollment Options

District resident pupils may enroll in another school district. Nonresident pupils may enroll in schools within this District, subject to the procedures that follow.

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.

The information packet shall include the enrollment application form and shall advise applicants that they must submit enrollment applications on or before January 20 of each year to be considered for enrollment during the following school year.

Capacity

The Superintendent shall annually estimate how much excess capacity may exist to accept transfer pupils. The estimate of excess capacity shall be made for each school and grade level and shall take into consideration:

- A. District resident pupils, including those issued certificates of educational convenience and those required to be admitted by statute.
- B. The enrollment of eligible children of persons who are employed by the District.
- C. Resident transfer pupils who were enrolled in the school the previous year.
- D. Nonresident pupils who were enrolled in the school the previous year.

The Governing Board shall make the final determination of excess capacity. The excess capacity estimates shall be made available to the public in January of each year.

Enrollment Priorities

If the Governing Board has determined that there is excess capacity to enroll additional pupils, such pupils shall be selected on the basis of designated priority categories from the pool of pupils:

- A. Who have properly completed and submitted applications; and
- B. Who meet admission standards.

Enrollment priorities and procedures for selection shall be in the order and in accordance with the following:

- A. Enrollment preference shall be given to resident transfer pupils who were enrolled in the school the previous year and any sibling who would be enrolled concurrently with such pupils. If capacity is not sufficient to enroll all of these pupils, they shall be selected through a random selection process adopted by regulation of the Superintendent.
- B. Enrollment preference shall be given to nonresident pupils who were enrolled in the school the previous year and any sibling who would be enrolled concurrently with such pupils. If capacity is not sufficient to enroll all of these pupils, they shall be selected through a random selection process adopted by regulation of the Superintendent.
- C. Enrollment preference shall be given to resident transfer pupils who were not enrolled in the school the previous year. If capacity is not sufficient to enroll all of these pupils, they shall be selected through a random selection process adopted by regulation of the Superintendent.
- D. Enrollment preference shall be given to nonresident pupils who were not enrolled in the school the previous year. If capacity is not sufficient to enroll all of these pupils, they shall be selected through a random selection process adopted by regulation of the Superintendent.

Admission Standards

A school district may refuse to admit any pupil who has been expelled from another educational institution or who is in the process of being expelled from another educational institution.

Notification

The District shall notify the emancipated pupil, parent, or legal guardian in writing by April 15 whether the applicant has been accepted, placed on a waiting list pending the availability of capacity, or rejected. The District shall also notify the resident school district of an applicant's acceptance or placement on a waiting list. If the applicant is placed on a waiting list, the notification shall inform the emancipated pupil, parent, or legal guardian of the date when it will be determined whether there is capacity for additional enrollment in a school. If the pupil's application is rejected, the reason for the rejection shall be stated in the notification.

As provided by A.R.S. 15-816.07, the District and its employees are immune from civil liability for decisions relative to the acceptance or rejection of the enrollment of a nonresident student when the decisions are based on good faith application of this policy and the applicable statutory requirements and standards.

Transportation of Students Admitted Through Open Enrollment

A resident transfer student is eligible for District transportation on routes within the attendance boundaries of the school to which the student has been accepted for open enrollment transfer. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians of the resident transfer student to have the student at a designated pickup point within the receiving school's transportation area.

Nonresident open enrollment students are eligible for District transportation from a designated pickup point on a bus route serving the attendance area of the school to which the student has been admitted, or as may be otherwise determined by the District.

The District *may* provide transportation for open enrollment nonresident students who meet the economic eligibility requirements established under the national school lunch and child nutrition acts for free or reduced price lunches:

- A. of not more than thirty (30) miles to and from:
 - 1. the school of attendance, or
 - 2. a pickup point on a regular District transportation route, or
 - 3. for the total miles traveled each day to an adjacent district.

The District shall provide transportation for nonresident transfer students with disabilities whose individualized education program (IEP) specifies that transportation is necessary for fulfillment of the program:

- A. of not more than thirty (30) miles to and from:

1. the school of attendance, or
2. a pickup point on a regular District transportation route, or
3. for the total miles traveled each day to an adjacent district.

Exception

Should there be excess capacity remaining for which no applications were submitted by the date established, the Superintendent, upon approval by the Board, shall authorize additional enrollment of nonresident pupils:

- A. Up to the determined capacity.
- B. On the basis of the order of the completed applications submitted after the notification date established in this policy.
- C. Without regard to enrollment preference.
- D. As long as admission standards are met.

LEGAL REF.:

A.R.S.

8-371

15-341

15-764

15-797

15-816 *et seq.*

15-823

15-824

15-825

15-841

15-922

42 U.S.C. 11301, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001,
as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015

CROSS REF.:

EEAA - Walkers and Riders

IIB - Class Size

JF - Student Admissions

JFAA - Admission of Resident Students

JFAB - Admission of Nonresident Students

JFABD - Admission of Homeless Students

JFABDA - Admission of Students in Foster Care

JG - Assignment of Students to Classes and Grade Levels