

School Choice Definitions

- **School Choice** – Is a request to enroll in any public school that has not reached capacity. If no seats are available at the requested school(s), application will automatically be included in lottery. (Previously referred to as Controlled Open)
- **Hardships** - When student has documented economic or medical condition, hardship request may be submitted to attend school other than student's home-zoned school.
- **Transportation** - Unless otherwise stated, for all reassignment and school choice options, transportation must be provided by parent/legal guardian. Depending on seat availability, requests for bus transportation may be honored on existing routes. Priority will be given to home-zoned students.
- **Capacity Defined** - A school shall be at capacity for non-home-zoned students when school has reached 95% of permanent student stations as recommended under Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) and/or has reached grade-level capacity.
- **Eligibility for Participation** - In addition to public school choice programs available under Florida law and District policy, a parent of student under age 18 or an eligible student living in District or in any other Florida district, who is not subject to current alternative school placement, expulsion or suspension, may enroll in District school that has not reached capacity. Such placement is subject to maximum class size pursuant to F.S. 1003.03 and Section 1, Art. IX of Florida Constitution.
- Consideration of applications will be based on current capacity of each school in District. Only Controlled Open Enrollment Applications for schools with available capacity will be considered as eligible for lottery. Once school has reached capacity, hardship applications will not be accepted.
- **Magnet Programs/Schools** – Student from any school zone may apply for up to three Board-approved magnet schools or programs.
- **Sibling Support** – The sibling must be attending the school the same year as the requested reassignment. Students assigned for sibling support may remain at assigned school until they change levels.
- **Grandfathering** – The last 2 years of elementary (4th or 5th grade), last 2 years of middle (7th or 8th grade) or last 2 years of high school (11th or 12th grade).
- **Employee Choice** – Parents/guardians employed at least half-time by Board may request that their child/children attend another school. Unfortunately, substitute teachers and temp service employees do not qualify.
- **McKay Choice** – Is based on the availability of the program(s), services and classroom capacity. The student must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan.
- **Review of Applications** - Once Controlled Open Enrollment Application deadline has passed and applications have been sorted into classification groups, Superintendent or designee will review all fully completed applications to ensure that information is accurate and correct and that school(s) listed in application have available capacity. Approved applicants will be notified in their parent portal account and must register with approved school on or before June 28. Failure to register by deadline indicated in written notification will result in automatic revocation of District's approval of application.
- **Lottery** - After close of application period, District will conduct lottery. Lottery is NOT first come-first served – it is based on randomly assigned number. Lottery will not be required in event of fewer applicants than available seats.
- **Appeals** - Appeal of school choice denial will only be accepted in cases of hardship as set forth in District policy. Appeal of denials due to capacity not accepted.
- **Timelines** - Students granted school choice, reassignment or controlled open enrollment request must register with approved school on or before June 10 to attend approved school the following school year. Registered student must be in attendance at approved school on first day of new school year, unless parent has notified the School Choice Office in advance. Failure to timely register or attend first day of school will result in cancellation of school choice, reassignment or controlled open enrollment approval.