

STUDENTS

ATTENDANCE – Schools of Choice Seat Assignment

The District shall assign elementary and middle school students using the Champaign Schools of Choice Program based on the following parameters. This student assignment system allows all families to access the diverse program offerings across the District and promotes diversity within our schools.

- Choice eliminates the need to continually redraw boundaries due to changes in the housing patterns throughout the District.
- Choice offers parents and students an assurance that once students are enrolled in a school, they may remain in that school through the highest grade available.
- Choice promotes academic excellence in all schools.
- Choice reduces the need for involuntary bussing and promotes Socio-economic (SES) diversity in the schools.
- Choice allows the District to monitor class size at each building.

Parents/guardians shall indicate, in rank order, their top five (5) different choices for each of their children's elementary school assignments. Parents are encouraged to rank all 11 elementary schools in order of their preference to ensure their student is assigned a seat as soon as possible prior to the start of school. Ranking fewer than five schools will significantly increase a student's chances of becoming unassigned to a school following the initial school assignment results. The availability of seat assignments decreases significantly closer to the start of school, and all parents are encouraged to register their student during the designated registration period to take full advantage of the Choice program.

As student assignments are being made, the following criteria shall be utilized:

1. Projected District-Wide School Enrollments – The Superintendent will make an annual determination as to the number of students who can be assigned at each grade in each school of choice. This annual determination will be based on the projected District-wide enrollment of each grade, the average class size at each grade, and the number of enrollment strands that can be accommodated in each school. This determination will include programmatic needs (i.e. ESL/bilingual education and special education/IEP).
2. Siblings – Preference will be given first to siblings, foster children, and minors residing in the same residence with their guardian.
3. Proximity -- Every student has a proximity school. For many families it is a school or schools within 1.5 miles of their home. If a student does not live within 1.5 miles of an elementary school, they will be given proximity to their designated closest school as determined by the District's transportation system. Proximity is applied to the applicant's first choice only.

4. Socioeconomic Status Guidelines - Socioeconomic Status (SES) is determined by a student's eligibility for free and reduced price food services. Eligibility shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines and family-size income standards set annually by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and distributed by the Illinois State Board of Education. The current District poverty rate, or percentage of low-SES students, plus or minus 15 % is used as a guide when assigning students to elementary schools.
5. Exceptions – Exceptions to the SES guidelines may be authorized by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis for good cause.

Seat assignments will be held for the first five student attendance days of each school year. Families who intend to utilize the assigned seat at the chosen school must have their child(ren) enrolled and in attendance by the specified date. Failure to notify the administrators of the applicable schools prior to the end of the aforesaid five (5) school day period will result in the loss of seats in chosen schools. Open seats after said five (5) day period will be reassigned to students on the waiting list in accordance with the above guidelines.

Those families who have been recognized by the District to have extenuating circumstances (i.e., family emergency, educational sabbatical, temporary job assignment) preventing student attendance for any academic year must inform the administration at the chosen schools if student(s) will be absent from their chosen school(s) and if they plan for the student(s) in their family to return to the District in the following year. Assignments held for extenuating circumstances will be reserved for a maximum of one (1) year.

Unassigned Students

In the event that a family does not receive any of its choices, the following steps will be implemented:

1. The Family Information Center will contact the parent/guardian by phone and send a follow-up letter.
2. The Family Information Center staff will present the family with a list of schools that have available seats based on the criteria above.
3. Parents will then be requested to make a selection from the list of available seats. The District does not assign students without the consent of the parents.
4. Applicants who do not receive an assignment to any of their choices will be placed on the wait lists for all of their ranked school selections. Applicants will be placed on the computer-generated wait list according to the criteria listed above. This method will place all applicants with siblings at the top of the wait list, followed by the applicants with proximity, taking into account SES guidelines, and then the applicants without priority to the school.
5. Upon parent's acceptance of a seat in their second, third, fourth, or fifth choice school, the student will remain on the waiting list for their first choice school only. If offered a seat at a ranked school other than the parent's first choice and declined, the student will be removed from that school's wait list.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Kindergarten registration will be conducted between the months of January and March at the Family Information Center in accordance with applicable District Policies.

MAGNET REGISTRATION FOR KG-5

Registration for Magnet Schools KG-5 will be held between the months of January and March. Students will be selected for Magnet Schools KG-5 based on the same criteria used for the regular computer assigned lottery.

NEW STUDENT/TRANSFER (Students entering grades 1-5)

The student transfer period for the following school year will be held annually during the month of May. These transfer assignments will be made once programmatic needs have been met. Failure to request a new school assignment during the transfer period will result in the student remaining at their current school for the subsequent academic year.

Transfer requests made for the following school year must be made during the new student/transfer period. Siblings will be given priority for placement prior to the new student/transfer lottery. The computer assignment process is based on seating availability and Schools of Choice guidelines. Families who do not receive their first choice school during the computer assignment process will have their student placed on a waiting list for that school.

“Same School Year” Transfers will be processed in accordance with the Schools of Choice assignment policy on a first come first served basis at the Family Information Center.

New students who transfer to the District must enroll in the assigned school for the assigned seat within three (3) days after notification of such assignment by the Family Information Center.

If students have a change of address during the school year, parents may request a transfer for such students to a different school which has available seats or such students may remain in the same schools.

WAITING LIST

Applicants will be placed on the computer-generated wait list according to the criteria listed above. This method will place all applicants with siblings at the top of the wait list, followed by the applicants with proximity, taking into account SES guidelines, and then the applicants without priority to the school.

The waiting list will remain in effect until the last scheduled attendance day of the first semester.

Exceptions to these guidelines may be authorized by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis for good cause. When students on the waiting list are offered a seat, their parents or guardians must notify the Family Information Center within 24 hours if the student will take the available seat.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT DECISION

If families have procedural concerns about the assignment process, they may complete a Review of Choice Assignment form at the Family Information Center, which must be forwarded to the four (4) member Review Panel for consideration. The Review Panel will be composed of two (2) Champaign School District Administrators and two (2) community representatives from the Schools of Choice Committee. The Review Panel will review procedural concerns which are presented and render decisions in accordance with District policy by majority vote of those present. The Review Panel will act upon all review requests within ten (10) working days. In the event no majority opinion is rendered, decisions will be made by the Central Office Administrator overseeing Schools of Choice. An appeal of the Central Office Administrator overseeing Schools of Choice decision may be made to the Assistant Superintendent of Achievement and Curriculum and Instruction within five (5) working days of receipt of a decision. An appeal of the decision of the Assistant Superintendent of Achievement and Curriculum and Instruction may be made to the Superintendent within three working days of receipt of a decision. The Superintendent's decision on such matters shall be final.

Nonprocedural concerns must be addressed through the District's complaint process (500.17/R).

STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

Principals (or their designee) shall notify the Family Information Center of student withdrawals within 24 hours of the school's confirmation that students have left the District.

STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

1. The Special Education administrative staff will provide information necessary so that parents of students who receive Special Education services make informed decisions when requesting to have children transferred to another school.
2. If a student who receives Special Education services can only receive the required services in one school due to programmatic needs, the student shall be pre-assigned to that school, in accordance with the Special Education administrative staff's recommendation for services.
3. If documented Special Education services indicate that a student who receives Special Education services should not be transferred into any school that the student's parents have selected, the Special Education administrative staff and the Family Information Center administrative staff shall notify the student's parent of this determination.

STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE ESL/BILINGUAL SERVICES

1. The ESL/bilingual education administrative staff will provide information necessary so that parents of students who receive ESL/bilingual education services make informed decisions when requesting to have children transferred to another school.
2. If a student who receives ESL/bilingual education services can only receive the required services in one school due to programmatic needs, the student shall be pre-assigned to that school, in accordance with the ESL/bilingual education administrative staff's recommendation for services.
3. If documented ESL/bilingual education services indicate that a student who receives ESL/bilingual education services should not be transferred into any school that the student's parents have selected, the ESL/bilingual administrative staff and the Family Information Center administrative staff shall notify the student's parent of this determination.

SCHOOLS OF CHOICE SEAT ASSIGNMENT – ELEMENTARY “CLUSTERS”
(GRADE 6 THROUGH 8)

Middle School children will be assigned to schools based on the District’s cluster model. Any Middle School students new to the District will be assigned based on seat availability and the Schools of Choice guidelines.

The District shall assign students entering Kindergarten for and following the 2015-16 school year to its three middle schools as follows:

Elementary “Cluster” Groups

- Edison: Carrie Busey, South Side, Bottenfield, and International Prep Academy
- Franklin: Dr. Howard, Garden Hills, Barkstall, and Booker T. Washington
- Jefferson: Westview, Robeson, Kenwood, and Stratton.

Stratton Elementary School and Booker T. Washington The following paragraph shall apply only to students entering Kindergarten prior to the 2015-16 school year. Students entering Kindergarten for and following the 2015-16 school year will be assigned pursuant to the cluster model as outlined above. Based on seat availability parents of students attending Stratton and Booker T. Washington will be allowed to rank their preference for their child’s middle school based on (SES), sibling preference, ESL/bilingual and special education program/IEP needs. A computer assignment process will be utilized to make Stratton and Booker T. Washington students’ middle school assignments. Parents will indicate their first, second, and third choices.

1. Projected District–Wide School Enrollments – The Superintendent will make an annual determination as to the number of students who can be assigned at each grade level in each middle school. This annual determination will be based on the projected District-wide enrollment of each grade and the average class size at each grade. This determination will include programmatic needs such as bilingual/ESL and special education/IEP.
2. Socioeconomic Status Guidelines (SES) – Socioeconomic Status (SES) is determined by a student’s eligibility for free and reduced price food services. Eligibility shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines and family-size income standards set annually by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and distributed by the Illinois State Board of Education. The current District poverty rate, or percentage of low-SES students, plus or minus 10% is used as a guide when assigning students to elementary schools.
3. Siblings – Preference will be given to siblings, foster children, and minors residing in the same residence with their guardian. Older siblings may not be automatically assigned to the cluster middle school where an incoming sixth grader is assigned. In all cases for sixth grade sibling transfers, the older sibling must be in attendance during the school year for which the sixth grade transfer request is made.
4. Exceptions – Exceptions to the SES guidelines may be authorized by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis for good cause.

International Prep Academy Students attending the International Prep Academy prior to the 2015-16 school year shall be assigned to Edison Middle School.

STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

1. The Special Education administrative staff will provide information necessary so that parents of students who receive Special Education services make informed decisions when requesting to have children transferred to another school.
2. If a student who receives Special Education services can only receive the required services in one school due to programmatic needs, the student shall be pre-assigned to that school, in accordance with the Special Education administrative staff's recommendation for services.
3. If documented Special Education services indicate that a student who receives Special Education services should not be transferred into any school that the student's parents have selected, the Special Education administrative staff and the Family Information Center administrative staff shall notify the student's parent of this determination.

STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE ESL/BILINGUAL SERVICES

1. The ESL/bilingual education administrative staff will provide information necessary so that parents of students who receive ESL/bilingual education services make informed decisions when requesting to have children transferred to another school.
2. If documented ESL/bilingual education services indicate that a student who receives ESL/bilingual education services should not be transferred into any school that the student's parents have selected, the ESL/bilingual administrative staff and the Family Information Center administrative staff shall notify the student's parent of this determination.

NEW STUDENT/TRANSFER (Students entering grades 6-8)

The student transfer period for the following school year will be held annually during the month of May. These transfer assignments will be made once programmatic needs have been met. Failure to request a new school assignment during the transfer period will result in the student remaining at their current school for the subsequent academic year.

Transfer requests made for the following school year must be made during the new student/transfer period. The lottery computer assignment is based on seating availability and Schools of Choice guidelines. Families who do not receive their first choice school during the computer assignment will have their student placed on a waiting list for that school.

“Same School Year” Transfers will be processed in accordance with the Schools of Choice assignment policy on a first come first served basis at the Family Information Center.

New students who transfer to the District must enroll in the assigned school for the assigned seat within three (3) days after notification of such assignment by the Family Information Center.

If students have a change of address during the school year, parents may request a transfer for such students to a different school which has available seats or such students may remain in the same schools.

WAITING LIST

The waiting list will remain in effect until the last scheduled attendance day of the first semester. When students on the waiting list are offered a seat, their parents or guardians must notify the Family Information Center within 24 hours if the student will take the available seat.

Final Assignment Decision

If families have procedural concerns about the assignment process, they may complete a Review of Choice Assignment form at the Family Information Center, which must be forwarded to the four (4) member Review Panel for consideration. The Review Panel will be composed of two (2) Champaign School District Administrators and two (2) community representatives from the Schools of Choice Committee. The Review Panel will review procedural concerns which are presented and render decisions in accordance with District policy by majority vote of those present. The Review Panel will act upon all review requests within ten (10) working days. In the event no majority opinion is rendered, decisions will be made by the Central Office Administrator overseeing Schools of Choice. An appeal of the decision may be made to the Assistant Superintendent of Achievement and Curriculum and Instruction within five (5) working days of receipt of a decision. An appeal of the decision of the Deputy Assistant Superintendent of Achievement and Curriculum and Instruction may be made to the Superintendent within three working days of receipt of a decision. The Superintendent's decision on such matters shall be final.

Nonprocedural concerns must be addressed through the District's complaint process (500.17/R).

Approved November 10, 2014