

# STUDENT REGISTRATION, ENROLLMENT AND PLACEMENT

## Background

Eligibility for student registration, enrollment and placement is subject to the terms set out in legislation and District procedures.

The District encourages students to attend their catchment area schools while also enabling students and their families to make choices to attend other schools in the District as required to meet their educational needs. The placement of a student in a school will be dependent upon the availability of space, programs and resources.

When a parent or guardian requests permission to attend a school outside of their catchment area, the parent or guardian will be expected to assume responsibility for transportation and any other costs associated with this decision.

Student enrollment will be subject to the timelines established by the Superintendent. A student newly arrived to the District, may be required to be placed in a nearby school if their catchment school does not have space, facilities, necessary resources or an educational program to meet the needs of the student.

The District may provide for the admission of fee-paying off-shore students to District schools. This administrative procedure does not apply to fee-paying students.

## Rationale

Provincial legislation provides for an educational program to be provided free of charge to every eligible student of school age who is ordinarily resident in British Columbia. At the same time, provincial legislation supports choice for families whenever possible as they decide upon the location where their child will attend school.

The District is also responsible for ensuring that schools and classes are not overcrowded, have adequate resources available for students, and that appropriate educational programs are available to accommodate student needs. These resources must be managed in a manner which is fiscally responsible, and honours the guidelines set out in legislation for class size.

While it is desirable that students attend their catchment area school, there are a number of circumstances which may make attendance at another District school advantageous or necessary.

The District recognizes the need for specialized programs which may be available at a limited number of sites in order to meet the diverse needs and choices of students and their families.

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The District may assign or reassign students to specific schools or educational programs as required to meet student needs.

### Definitions

*“School Age”* is defined in the School Act as a person who has or will have attained the age of five (5) years on or before December 31 of that school year and who has not attained the age of nineteen (19) years before July 1 in the year of application.

*“Ordinarily Resident”* means the establishment of a permanent home and maintenance of an ongoing presence in the District and “guardian” means a person who is so named by the Court in accordance with the Family Relations Act. The onus is on the parents or guardians to show that they and the student meet the definition of the term “ordinarily resident.” The place of residence at the time of application determines the status of the applicant as a catchment area, non-catchment area, or non-District child.

*“Catchment area child”* means a person of school age, who is resident in the catchment area of the school.

*“Non-catchment area child”* means a person of school age, who is resident in the District, and not resident in the catchment area of the school.

*“District child”* means a catchment area child or a non-catchment area child.

*“Non-District child”* means a person of school age, resident in British Columbia and not resident in the District.

*“Previous school year”* means the school year previous to the school year for which the person is applying to enroll in an educational program.

*“Feeder schools”* and their associated “receiving schools” are described by the Board’s established 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 enrollment elsewhere is accepted.

*“Continuing student”* means a student in attendance at the school or a designated feeder school during the previous school year.

### Procedures

1. Student admission is guided by the following principles:
  - 1.1 The admission process is to maximize the number of students able to attend their catchment area school.
  - 1.2 The admission process is to maximize the student’s and parent’s ability to choose the school and educational program which best meets the student’s educational needs.
  - 1.3 The admission process is to maximize continuity for students and families. Wherever possible, siblings will be admitted to the same school, subject to the provisions of the School Act, and District procedures.

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1.4 The admission process will enable school and District staff to plan the allocation of space and resources in ways that will best accommodate demand and minimize adjustments required at the beginning of the school year.

### 2. Determination of Available Space and Facilities

2.1 Section 74.1 of the School Act establishes priorities for enrollment to apply if the board determines that space and facilities are available in a school.

2.2 Space and facilities are available in a school for purposes of section 74.1(6) and (7) of the School Act if there is excess capacity, taking into account both physical and instructional resources, after reasonable enrollment projections have been made to allow for accommodation of students returning from prior years, students enrolling in District programs, students incoming from designated feeder schools, and children enrolling in kindergarten who live in the catchment area for the school.

2.3 Decisions whether space and facilities are available in individual schools and educational programs in the District for the purposes of Section 74.1(6) and (7) of the School Act will be made by the Superintendent or designate.

2.4 Decisions are to be made in consultation with the Principal of the particular school and will be based on program capacity, including consideration of the following factors:

2.4.1 The operating capacity of the school as defined by the Ministry of Education and the District.

2.4.2 Staff assigned to a school by the District.

2.4.3 The physical space in which instructional programs operate in the school.

2.4.4 The ability of the school to provide the appropriate educational programs for the applicant and other students.

### 3. Catchment Areas

3.1.1 The location of the student's normal residence will usually determine the catchment area school for enrollment purposes. The Board determines the boundaries for each school, which may be adjusted periodically based on the number of school age children residing in the area surrounding a school, space, resources and facilities.

3.1.2 Some specialized educational programs, available at a limited number of sites will be identified as having "West Vancouver" as their catchment area. Examples of these programs are French Immersion (Early and Late), Secondary International Baccalaureate, Sports Academies and Advanced Placement.

3.1.3 The Principal of the school will assess the educational needs of the prospective student and the capacity of the school to serve those needs.

3.1.4 Should a Principal determine that placement of a student in the school is not possible due to the lack of space, facilities, available resources, or appropriate educational program, procedures for an alternative placement will be initiated as described below.

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### 4. Enrollment Application Dates

- 4.1 Prior to February 1 in each school year the District will establish enrollment deadline dates for:
  - 4.1.1 Non-District children;
  - 4.1.2 Non-catchment area children, except for continuing students;
  - 4.1.3 Children and students applying to District programs for the first time;
  - 4.1.4 Catchment area children, other than continuing students;
  - 4.1.5 Children applying for first-time entry to kindergarten programs.
- 4.2 The District may establish different enrollment dates for different grades, educational programs, or categories of applicants.
- 4.3 In-District continuing students are not required to apply annually.

### 5. Placement of Students Outside Regular Catchment Areas

- 5.1 In some cases, the school located within the catchment area or the requested school will not have space, facilities, adequate resources, or appropriate educational programs required to meet the student's educational needs. In these instances, the District will arrange an alternative placement utilizing a set of procedures as outlined below.
- 5.2 When the Principal determines that there is insufficient space, facilities, adequate resources, or educational programs in that school, the student's name shall be placed on a wait list, with the time and date of application and the residence of the student recorded. Should the student require a placement in a school immediately (i.e., for registrations during a school year), the Principal will arrange for a placement in another school. Upon request, the student's name will be kept on the school's waiting list for a possible placement at the start of the upcoming school year.
- 5.3 Should the student's application for registration occur after the deadline date, and the Principal is unable to accommodate the student, the student's name will be placed on the wait list for consideration at the start of school in September. The Principal of the school will review the wait list at that time and determine the capacity of the school to admit students whose names are on the wait list and according to enrollment priorities. Any student who cannot then be placed in the school due to lack of space, facilities, resources, or appropriate educational programs will be placed in another school.
- 5.4 During the summer months, parents may continue to access the online registration system. The Principal of the requested school will review the waiting list at the start of the school year in September and approve the application for enrollment after determining if there is sufficient space, facilities, adequate resources, and an educational program available at the school to meet the student's need.

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### 6. Transfer of Students

- 6.1 Parents may request that a continuing student be permitted to attend a school outside their catchment area. These requests will be granted provided a suitable program, resources, space and facilities are available at the other school and the transfer is for valid educational reasons. A Principal may also initiate a transfer of a continuing student based upon the Principal's assessment of what is in the best interest of that student and the other students in the school.
- 6.2 A parent requesting a transfer must contact the school in which their child is currently enrolled and complete a transfer form. This form is available at all schools, but must be returned to the Principal of the student's current school.
- 6.3 The Principal of the school that the child currently attends may require an interview with the parent and/or the student in order to discuss the requested transfer. If the Principal determines that the transfer is in the best interest of the student, the Principal will contact the Principal of the requested school and arrange an appointment for the parent and/or student.
- 6.4 The Principal at the receiving school is responsible for determining final acceptance or denial of the transfer request. The decision will be based upon the availability of space, facilities, resources and the ability to provide an appropriate educational program for the transferring student. The Principal will also verify the transfer is for valid educational reasons.
- 6.5 Parents and/or guardians of continuing students transferred to a school outside of their catchment area will be responsible for their own transportation arrangements to and from school.

### 7. Commitment

- 7.1 A parent or guardian who is offered a place at a school location for which they have applied, must make the decision to accept the position in a timely fashion. Although this can vary, depending on extenuating circumstances, generally this decision must be made within twenty-four (24) hours.
- 7.2 If the placement offer is accepted, the student may not maintain enrollment or wait list status at another school. Failure to accept a placement offer in a timely fashion will result in the space being allotted to another student, and the name of the student who was originally offered the space being removed from the wait list of that school.
- 7.3 The Superintendent or designate, is authorized to enter into reciprocal agreements with other Districts to review wait lists and enrollment information in order to enforce this procedure.
- 7.4 Students accepted to a school who reside in the District, shall remain enrolled at the school of their choice as a continuing student for future years, unless they apply through this administrative procedure and are accepted as students at another school in the District.

### 8. Program Requirements

- 8.1 When applying to a specific educational program located in a school, the applicant must meet all program requirements and will be subject to the selection process determined for that program.

### 9. Suspended or Expelled Non-District Students

- 9.1 Enrollment applications from non-District students may be refused if the student:

- 9.1.1 Is under suspension from a British Columbia public school or District, or

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Has been refused an educational program by a British Columbia public school board under Section 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, or any other applications from students limited by other schools or governing bodies outside of the British Columbia public school system to attend school will be referred to the Superintendent or designate for a decision on admission.

### 10. District Timelines

#### 10.1.1 Catchment Area and Kindergarten Applications (English Program)

##### 10.1.2 October 15 to March 1

Applications will be received, dated and prioritized for enrollment for all English language programs, including Kindergarten, for the following school year. It is anticipated that in most cases, families registering their children at their catchment school during this period of time should expect that it is most likely that room will be available at their catchment school for the following September.

##### 10.1.3 March 1

By March 1, parents of students who remain on the wait-list due to enrollment at an earlier date not being possible, and who are in the catchment area, will be contacted by the Principal of the catchment area school. In most cases, they will be advised that their children will be enrolled at their catchment school for the school year beginning in September.

If, at this time, a parent/guardian chooses to waive their right to attend their catchment school, the student will remain at the school in which they are currently registered as a continuing student for the following year.

##### 10.1.4 June 1

A newly arrived student, who registers at their catchment school by June 1, may anticipate that whenever possible, the student will be enrolled at the school by September of the upcoming school year.

##### 10.1.5 After June 1

A newly arrived catchment area student registering after June 1 may be required to have their name placed on the wait list for the school if room is not immediately available for September. Priority of enrollment at the school will be dependent upon the time and date of registration with advanced priority if there are siblings attending the school who will remain as continuing students in September.

##### 10.1.6 June 15

Principals communicate with parents regarding enrollment for September for in-catchment students who have applied prior to June 1.

#### 10.2.1 French Immersion Program registration – Kindergarten

#### 10.2.2 October 15 to November 30

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Applications will be received, dated and prioritized for Early French Immersion Kindergarten enrollment for the following school year. Students will be admitted by utilization of the following priority system:

- 10.2.3.1 Children of West Vancouver residents with siblings in the French Immersion Program (for this purpose, the sibling will be projected to be enrolled as of September 30 of the year in which the child applying for Kindergarten will begin school).
- 10.2.3.2 Children resident in West Vancouver.
- 10.2.3.3 Out of District children with siblings in the French Immersion program.
- 10.2.3.4 Out of District children.

If required, a lottery draw will be held for each priority group listed above as soon as practicable following November 30 and enrollment spaces shall be awarded based on the priorities listed above.

For families with siblings, whenever possible, new enrollees shall be enrolled at the same school location as their siblings.

A “wait list” shall be established for all children who, by enrolling prior to November 30 were included in the lottery for enrollment spaces, but were not successful due to lack of enrollment spaces. These individuals shall be prioritized for enrollment if space becomes available in the order established by the lottery draw.

### 10.2.4 After November 30

Following November 30, children applying for Early French Immersion enrollment in the following year, shall be granted enrollment into the program if space is available. If space is not available, they may join the “wait list” for available openings.

### 10.2.5 Priority after November 30 shall be:

Those children who applied prior to November 30, participated in the lottery selection and were subsequently “wait listed”. Other applicants after November 30, as per the priority order established for pre-November 30 applicants.

## 10.3 Continuing Students

- 10.3.1 Continuing students will be enrolled automatically, subject to space availability and meeting program requirements, unless transferred or withdrawn.

## 10.4 Non-Catchment Area Students and Non-District Students

### 10.4.1 January 15 – January 31

Schools will establish a wait list for first time, non-catchment area applicants and out of District applications (except Kindergarten students – please see Catchment Area and Kindergarten Applications, above). These student applications will be prioritized by category (e.g., non catchment in District students with siblings, non-catchment in District students, non-District students) and the date and time of the application. This list will identify the “eligible” applicants for consideration for enrollment in the

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following September.

### 10.4.2 Non-Catchment Area Students Who Apply After January 31

All non-catchment area students wishing to attend another school in September, must apply at their school of choice prior to January 31. A non-catchment application submitted after January 31, while not eligible under Section 74.1(6) of the School Act to enroll in an educational program offered by a school or the District, may be considered for enrollment in the school or program at the discretion of the Principal if space, facilities, resources and an appropriate educational program are available.

Late applications received after January 31 may not be reviewed until September enrollments are confirmed following the first week school is in session in September.

### 10.4.3 Access for “District Child”

If a secondary school is unable to accommodate all Feeder School and District Child requests, those who meet the District Child criteria will have priority over those in the Feeder School who meet the Non-District Child criteria (applies to new registrants as of January 1, 2010).

### 10.5 Unconfirmed Students in September

*An enrolled student will be removed from the school's register if the student has not returned to school by 3:00 p.m. on the Thursday after school opening in September and their parent or legal guardian has not advised the school of the student's late return.*

Legal Reference: *Sections 2, 3, 4, 7, 20, 22, 23, 65, 74.1, 75, 75.1, 85 School Act*