

CONTROLLED OPEN ENROLLMENT PLAN FOR PARENTAL CHOICE (Out-of-Zone and School Choice)

Introduction:

- [Board Policy 5120](#) was established to allow parents or legal guardians of elementary, middle, and high school students, under specified conditions, to request another school of enrollment outside of their geographic zone. School capacity and class size restrictions apply.
- **Out-of-Zone:**
 - Out-of-Zone applications are for parents or legal guardians who request to exercise Parental Choice based on specified reasons under [Board Policy 5120](#), and are processed on a first come first serve basis, if space is available.
 - Out-of-Zone applications shall take priority over School Choice applications.
- **School Choice:**
 - School Choice applications are for parents or legal guardians who request to exercise Parental Choice without respect to or limitations upon their reasons, if space is available.
 - School Choice applications are processed on a lottery basis, if space is available.

Priority Window for Parental Choice:

- The Parental Choice priority window for the following school year is from January 10 through February 15 of the current school year.
- Priority status will be given to those applications submitted during the priority window.
 - Out-of-Zone applications shall take priority over School Choice applications.
 - Students residing in the District shall receive priority over students residing outside of the District.
 - Preferential treatment shall be given to the following Out-of-Zone reasons/categories:
 - residency (which includes dependent children who move as a result of active military personnel orders, foster care placement, and court-ordered change in custody)
 - District employees
 - siblings
 - students residing in the District

District Application and Approval Process:

- The Parental Choice application is available to parents/guardians online at <http://www.collierschools.com/ParentalChoice>, along with the District contact information. Parents/guardians may complete the online application from home. If parents/guardians do not have a computer or internet access, computer access is provided for parents/guardians at all District schools and the District administrative building, as well as public libraries.
- As a reminder, the Parental Choice priority window for the following school year is from January 10 through February 15 of the current school year.
- Per [Board Policy 5120](#), School Choice applications for the next school year must be submitted no later than June 30th.
- Students entering the District for the first time, have the one time option of choosing a school outside their zoned school; approval is based on space available at the school and at the specific grade level.
- Upon submission of a completed application, parents/guardians are notified that their application has been received via electronic email, along with their confirmation number.

- Additionally, notification of the status of applications (approval/denial) is also delivered via electronic email throughout the summer. Parents/guardians may check the status of their applications online, as well.
- Student assignments for Parental Choice are accommodated after the anticipated enrollments, school capacities, and class sizes are calculated.
- Parental Choice approvals are limited to available capacity (school capacity and class size restrictions).
 - Capacity will be determined annually based upon current enrollment projections and class-size compliance.
 - Capacity is available online at <http://www.collierschools.com/ParentalChoice>.
- Approvals shall remain through the highest grade at that level (e.g., elementary, middle, or high). New requests are required when a change in level takes place (e.g., elementary to middle, and/or middle to high).

Parental Choice Declaration Process:

- The Parental Choice application requires student name, date of birth, address, zoned school, school(s) requested, grade level, parent contact information, and reason (if applicable) for the Parental Choice request.
- Parents/guardians are required to select at least two (2) schools and are strongly encouraged to select three (3) schools in an attempt to accommodate requests.

Employees:

- A child who is the legal dependent of a full-time District employee and who resides with such employee is given priority consideration if the application was submitted during the priority window.
 - The child may be placed at the school in which the employee is assigned.
 - Other than residency, District employees shall have the highest priority status, if the application was submitted during the priority window.
 - Approvals are limited to available capacity (school capacity and class size restrictions).

Sibling Placement:

- A child who is the sibling of students concurrently exercising Parental Choice at the same school requested shall be given priority consideration if the application was submitted during the priority window.
 - Sibling placement priority shall immediately follow employee approvals, if the application was submitted during the priority window.
 - Approvals are limited to available capacity (school capacity and class size restrictions).
- A child who is the sibling of students with disabilities concurrently attending Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs due to an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) placement at the same school requested is given priority to avoid splitting families with two or more children concurrently in the same level.
 - A child who is the sibling of students with disabilities concurrently assigned to a school other than the zoned school within the District with an ESE program due to an IEP shall be approved. This is not applicable to siblings on McKay Scholarships.
- School Choice lotteries shall be conducted by family in order to avoid splitting families with two (2) or more children concurrently in the same level.
 - A family shall have only one (1) entry in the lottery at each level regardless of the number of children.

Lottery Procedure to Determine Student Assignment:

- The lottery shall be conducted by levels (e.g., elementary and secondary) and by family in order to avoid splitting families with two (2) or more children concurrently in the same level.
- A family shall have only one (1) entry in the lottery at each level regardless of the number of children.
- Names are selected randomly until all spaces have been filled.

Appeals Process for Out-of-Zone Hardship Cases:

- Upon denial of an Out-of-Zone application, parents/legal guardians who provide new information or demonstrate a continued hardship may appeal the denial if they opt into an appeal waitlist for an available space at the school(s) selected.
- The appeal waitlist shall be maintained and considered throughout the third week of school.
- School Choice applications are not appealable.

Availability of Transportation:

- Parents exercising Parental Choice must provide transportation to and from any school other than that to which the student is regularly assigned.

Process for Promoting Strong Parental Involvement:

- Information is sent to principals for dissemination.
 - The information includes the priority application time frame, contact information, an online link for further information, and locations of computers that can be used to access information.
- Information is also shared via the District website, social media, and the Parent Guide.

Disclaimer:

- In some instances, modifications made to an application by the District office will also be delivered via electronic email. Examples of modifications made by the District could include:
 - A change of application type (Out-of-Zone, School Choice, or McKay Scholarship) due to criteria listed in [Board Policy 5120](#)
 - The addition of extra schools of choice due to parent request
 - Corrections to the application due to errors upon initial entry by the parent (examples shall include but are not limited to: incorrect grade level, zoned school, address, spelling of names)