

CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

STUDENT OUT OF ZONE TRANSFERS/CHOICE REASSIGNMENT/SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS **5.201*+**

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- I. The School Board strives to accommodate family choice to the maximum extent possible. Students may attend a school other than their zoned school if they have been granted a choice assignment in accordance with this policy. Disciplinary and/or attendance issues may preclude eligibility or result in a return to the home zoned school the following school year and/or may result in immediate return to the home zoned school. School choice is available for through the following:

A. Magnet Programs

B. Controlled Open Enrollment

B-C. Reassignment

C-D. Charter Schools

E. Family Empowerment or Opportunity Scholarships

D-F. Hope Scholarship

E-G. Home School

F-H. Virtual School

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- II. The following provisions apply to all choice assignments:

A. Applying for a choice assignment does not guarantee approval. The requested school's enrollment, staffing, available space and programmatic capacity shall be considered before a choice assignment can be granted.

A-B. The student must remain in the zoned school until a choice assignment is granted.

B-C. Applications for certain choice assignments must be submitted within the designated time frame. Time frames are published on the Board or individual school's website.

C-D. With the exception of children of full-time Board employees who are non-residents of the District, students whose primary legal residence is in the District shall be given preference over non-resident students with respect to the granting of choice assignment.

E. The Board does not provide transportation to students with choice assignments except as otherwise provided for in this policy or by law.

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CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

~~D.F.~~ If for any reason a student leaves a choice school or program prior to completing the highest-grade level within that particular school or academic program, he or she will be required to return to his or her assigned District school.

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III. Magnet Programs

CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

A. Magnet programs/schools are educational choice options that promote diversity and academic excellence. Students seeking admission to a magnet program/school shall be required to meet the eligibility criteria, guidelines, and timelines specified by the magnet school of interest. Magnet programs for elementary, middle, and high school students have pre-established criteria for admission which vary by school/program. These admission criteria and application procedures will be made available to interested persons through the school where the program is located. Magnet application and admissions shall be implemented following the procedures outlined in the "School Choice and Reassignment Procedures and Guidelines," which can be found on the School Choice section of the district website.

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B. Application to magnet programs will begin in January for entry into the program at the beginning of the following school year. The Superintendent or designee will annually establish caps for each magnet program and a deadline for applications.

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C. For any school year, parents may apply for admission of the student to magnet programs and, must signify their choice by registering the student by the date established by the Superintendent.

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D. A student who is accepted to a magnet program who ceases to participate in the program will be returned to his/her zoned school. Participation is defined as being registered in and maintaining the expected levels of success as defined by the magnet program. A minimum, grade point average may also be required.

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E. Transportation may be provided for students enrolled in magnet programs at the discretion of the Superintendent or as may be required by applicable law.

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IV. Controlled Open Enrollment

Controlled Open Enrollment is an educational choice that allows the District to make student school assignments using parents' and legal guardians' preferential school choice selections as a significant factor. Pursuant to F.S. 1002.31, a student residing in any Florida County may be permitted to attend a school in another residential attendance zone using Controlled Open Enrollment (Regular School Choice) and the Choice guidelines adopted by the School Board. Controlled Open Enrollment is a lottery process.

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The Controlled Open Enrollment process shall be implemented following the School Board approved Controlled Open Enrollment (COE) Plan that is outlined in School Board Policy 5.23 and available on the School Choice section of the district website.

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A. Students may be granted choice assignments to schools that are

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CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

~~not crowded and would not become crowded as a result of such assignments.~~

- ~~B. The District will establish a ninety percent (90%) capacity determination for each school, by grade level, in the District. The capacity determination will be identified on the school district's website and must be updated every 12 weeks. Schools having a projected enrollment of less than ninety percent (90%) of capacity for the following school year, by grade level, will be available for controlled open enrollment.~~
- ~~C. Schools having a projected enrollment equal to or greater than ninety percent (90%) capacity for each school, by grade level, will not be available for controlled open enrollment, any applications submitted will be placed on a waiting list. Students denied access due to capacity will be notified when space becomes available. Eligible schools will be posted on the Board's website.~~
- ~~D. Applications for controlled open enrollment will be submitted to the district on the Controlled Open Enrollment Application. The Superintendent will annually establish an application period for controlled open enrollment.~~

CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

~~E. The Office of School Choice will compile applications into lists by school of application.~~

- ~~1. If the school's ninety percent (90%) capacity would not be exceeded by the number of choice applications when added to the projected school population, choice applicants for that school will be approved as in alignment with the School Choice Plan.~~
- ~~2. If the school's ninety percent (90%) capacity would be exceeded by the number of choice applications when added to the projected student population, admission will be granted first to students who have siblings in the chosen school, and all other available positions will be filled through a stratified lottery.~~
- ~~3. Once verified, applications for students meeting one or more of the priority criteria as described in this paragraph shall be granted priority to attend their first choice school if a seat is available. Applications with one or more of the priorities provided in this paragraph shall be separated from each group and placed in random order. Students who are eligible for priority preference include:
 - ~~a. Dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders;~~
 - ~~b. Children who have been relocated due to a foster care placement;~~
 - ~~c. Children who have moved due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce;~~
 - ~~d. Children who have moved due to the serious illness or death of a custodial parent.~~
 - ~~e. Students residing in the District.~~~~

~~F. Parents will be notified of the approval or denial of their student's application.~~

~~G. A student who is granted a choice assignment under Controlled Open Enrollment must accept the seat within the established deadline or the choice assignment will be rescinded.~~

~~H. Students who are not selected to attend the school(s) to which they applied will be notified that the District will be unable to place them at a requested school and they must register at their zoned school. The student will be placed on a waiting list. The school capacity determination for each grade level must be updated every 12 weeks. If capacity becomes available at a grade level within a school, parent(s) of students placed on the waiting list will be notified of the opening and permitted to enroll throughout the school year.~~

CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

~~I. Positions at a school that were assigned to a student under Controlled Open Enrollment will be monitored at the beginning of the school year. Students who have accepted assignments but who have not enrolled by the third (3rd) day and/or are not in attendance by the tenth (10th) day of school will have their assignments revoked. A revoked choice assignment may then be assigned to the next student on the waiting list.~~

V. Reassignments

The reassignment process is available to those students who meet special circumstances for attending a non-districted school. The reassignment process is separate and apart from Controlled Open Enrollment. Reassignments qualifications may include, but are not limited to, documented moves in/out of an attendance zone. Reassignment applications are reviewed individually and are not guaranteed approval. The reassignment process shall be implemented following the procedures outlined in the "School Choice and Reassignment Procedures and Guidelines," which can be found on the School Choice section of the district website.

~~VI.~~ Charter Schools

In addition to choice within schools operated by the Board, parents may elect for students to attend charter schools that have been approved by the Board. (See Policy 3.90 - Charter Schools.) Each charter school is operated and governed by its own independent board. Parents who elect this option need to communicate directly with the charter school to resolve questions and concerns.

~~VII.~~ Opportunity and Family Empowerment Scholarships

A. The Family Empowerment Scholarship Program is an educational choice program with two branches of eligibility, the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options (FES EO) and the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES UA). FES provides the educational choice for parents to send their eligible student to either a private school or a public school other than their assigned school based on attendance zone. FES families may also qualify to receive a personal education savings account (ESA) for their student

1. Parents/guardians shall access the Family Empowerment Scholarship through a Scholarship Funding Organization identified by the Florida Department website.
2. The District shall provide assistance as required by the Florida Department of Education.
3. Requests for the FES UA public school transfer option shall be processed using the Reassignment application and procedures as outlined in the "School Choice and Reassignment Procedures and

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CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

Guidelines,” which can be found on the School Choice section of the district website.

B. The Opportunity Scholarship Program offers students who attended or who were assigned to attend failing public schools the option to choose a higher performing public school under the provisions of F.S. 1002.38.

Students with disabilities may be granted choice assignments to schools other than the school to which they are zoned under the provisions of the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program (F.S. 1002.394).

Students assigned to attend a school that has earned a grade of “F” or three consecutive grades of “D” may request and receive an Opportunity Scholarship for the student to enroll in and attend a public school that has been designated by the state as a school performing higher than that in which the student is currently enrolled. (F.S. 1002.38).

Students of families that have limited financial resources may request and receive a Family Empowerment Scholarship to attend a school different from the school to which the student was assigned. (F.S. 1002.394).

VIII. Hope Scholarship

The Hope Scholarship is available for students who have been subjected to a qualifying incident as described in F.S. 1002.40. The scholarship provides an opportunity to transfer the student to another public school with capacity or to request a scholarship for the student to enroll in an eligible private school. Applications for funding to attend an eligible private school are managed by state-approved Scholarship Funding Organizations.

VII.X. Home School Education

Parents may elect to home school students in accordance with State law. See Policy 4.70 – Home Education Programs.

Home Education is an educational choice option that is defined as the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent or guardian to satisfy the requirement for compulsory education (F.S. 1002.20). The parent/guardian may elect to register his or her student in home school in accordance with School Board Policy 4.70.

VIII.X. Virtual School Instruction

Parents may elect to register their students in a virtual education program. See Policy 4.65 – Virtual Instruction.

Virtual Instruction is a school choice option available to students under the provisions of F.S. 1002.321, F.S. 1002.45, F.S. 1002.455 and Board Policy 4.65. A parent/guardian selecting this option may register his/her student in the District’s full-time virtual instruction program or part-time course offering program.

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CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

~~IX. Dual Enrollment~~
~~See Policy 5.202 – Postsecondary Enrollment Programs.~~

CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

~~XI.~~ Revocation of Choice Assignment

If a student is granted a choice assignment and displays issues with attendance, grades, or disciplinary actions the ~~principal may make the decision to have the student~~ may be returned to their zoned school. Prior to revoking a school choice variance the school will document good faith efforts to provide interventions and enlist parental/guardian support for the identified areas of concern. If a student is being returned to their zoned school due to a revocation, communication should occur between the schools to establish supports for the student. Revocation of a choice assignment shall be noticed within ten (10) school days of ~~the end of the the end of a nine (9) weeks or semester~~ grading period and will be effective the first day of the following grading period. No requests for revocation will be considered ~~during the final twenty (20) days of the school year for students attending the highest grade level offered at that school.~~

~~XI.~~ Zoning Exceptions

~~Students may attend a school other than their zoned school if they have been granted a zoning exception in accordance with this policy. Zoning exceptions are not to be used as a substitute for school choice. Zoning exceptions may be granted for the following reasons:~~

~~A. Parents employed by the Board: Students may be allowed to attend the school of parent's choice if the parent is a full time employee with Sarasota County Schools. A reassignment application must be completed and approved prior to the transfer. Students may ride the bus from the nearest existing stop servicing the requested school.~~

~~B. Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Transfers: Students who transfer into the District from another school district must have an IEP meeting to review their current IEP after obtaining approval or upon verification as a new resident. Some ESE programs do not allow for choice because they serve the specific needs of a student with a disability at a cluster site. Siblings of ESE students being served in a cluster site program may attend school with the ESE siblings. Parents must complete the request form prior to sibling transfer. Transportation may not be provided for the non-ESE siblings. Time Frame: ESE service requirements.~~

~~C.A. Transfers may be granted for a student who has documented evidence of moving into a different attendance zone than the one currently assigned.~~

~~D.B. Students who move to another school zone during the school year are permitted to complete the academic year at the school in which the students were legally enrolled prior to the change of address or enroll at the school assigned to their new attendance zone. Students wishing to remain at the original school of enrollment, must apply for reassignment.~~

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CHAPTER 5.00 – STUDENTS

~~E.C.~~ Out of district transfers will be approved on a case by case basis if space is available.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.41, 1001.42, F.S.

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: 1000.21, 1001.41, 1001.42, 1001.43, 1001.51,
1002.20, 1002.31, 1002.38, 1002.39,
1002.394, 1011.68, 1013.35, F.S.

HISTORY: ADOPTED: _____
REVISION DATE(S): 05/07/19, 10/18/22
FORMERLY: NEW

NOTES: