

## POLICY 410: School Choice and Catchment

The Board of Education for School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) has established that student admission to district schools is guided by the following principles:

- The admission process should maximize the number of students able to attend their catchment area school in accordance with their wishes.
- The admission process should maximize the student's and parent's ability to choose the school and education program which best meets the student's educational needs.
- The admission process should enable school and District staff to plan the allocation of space and instructional resources to best accommodate demand and to minimize the adjustments required at the beginning of the year.
- The board reserves the right to alter school catchment boundaries when deemed necessary.

### 1. Definitions

- 1.1. "catchment area student" means a person of school age and who normally resides in the catchment area of the school.
- 1.2. "continuing student" means a school age student in attendance at the school or a designated feeder school who is expected to continue in the educational program for the succeeding school, but does not include a non-District student, a student who withdraws or transfers from the school or educational program before the end of the previous school year, or a student who attended the previous year on a disciplinary transfer.
- 1.3. "District choice programs" are unique programs approved by the Board, such as Late French Immersion, Outdoor Programs, and Academies which are offered at individual schools.
- 1.4. "feeder schools" are schools whose students would normally proceed to the next higher grade in a "receiving school."
- 1.5. "non-catchment area student" means a person of school age, resident in the School District and who is not resident in the catchment area of the school.
- 1.6. "non-District student" means a person of school age, resident in British Columbia and who is not resident in the School District.
- 1.7. "parent" includes a guardian of a student appointed by Court Order or under the will of a deceased parent and does not include a non-custodial parent.
- 1.8. "place of residence," for purposes of this policy, a student's place of residence is deemed to be that of the student's parent unless satisfactory evidence is produced that the student's ordinary place of residence during the school year is elsewhere.

- 1.9. “previous school year” means the school year previous to the school year for which the student is applying to enroll in an educational program.
- 1.10. “School District student” means a catchment area student or a non-catchment area student who normally resides within the boundaries of the School District.

## 2. Determination of Available Space and Facilities

- 2.1. The School Act establishes priorities for enrolment to apply if the Board determines space and facilities are available in a school.
- 2.2. For the purposes of the School Act, space and facilities are available to enroll an applicant if:
  - 2.2.1. there is capacity to provide the applicant with an educational program appropriate to the applicant’s needs;
  - 2.2.2. there are both physical and educational resources after reasonable enrolment projections have been made, to allow for accommodation of continuing students and district programs located in the school; and,
  - 2.2.3. if applicable, a Kindergarten program adequate to accommodate the projected enrollment of catchment area students.
- 2.3. The Board of Trustees delegates to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designate, the decisions whether space and facilities are available in individual schools and educational programs for purposes of the School Act, in accordance with paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2.
- 2.4. Decisions will be made in consultation with the Principal of the affected 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;
  - 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 number of diverse needs students already enrolled in a class;
  - 2.4.5. the ability of the school to provide an appropriate educational program for the applicant and other students; and,
  - 2.4.6. the needs of other programs located in the school.
- 2.5. Notwithstanding 2.4 above, in particular instances where the welfare of the student is perceived to be at risk, every effort will be made to accommodate a transfer request.
- 2.6. If space and facilities are determined to be available, enrolment in educational programs at the school will be offered in the following priority order and deadlines, provided that application deadlines and other application requirements are met:
  - 2.6.1. Firstly, any students in attendance in the previous year at a school or continuing on to the secondary school from the feeder elementary school;

- 2.6.2. Secondly, new catchment area students or siblings of students who were in attendance in the previous year at a school or continuing on to the secondary school from the feeder elementary school;
- 2.6.3. Thirdly, new non-catchment area students, provided they have made their application between 9:00 a.m. (PT) on the first Monday in January and 4:00 p.m. (PT), on the last Friday in March;
- 2.6.4. Fourthly, new non-district students provided they have made their application between 9:00 a.m. (PT) on the first Monday in January and 4:00 p.m. (PT), on the last Friday in March;
- 2.7. Students who apply after the deadlines will still be considered in priority order after students who registered prior to the set deadlines have been placed.
- 2.8. Waitlists will be established for those not accepted, to be maintained until September 30th.
- 2.9. Re-evaluation of space availability will take place periodically from March 30th until the Friday of the first week of school to ensure maximum numbers of requests are met at the earliest time possible.
- 2.10. Applicants for enrolment in K-12 programs and District choice programs will be separately prioritized.

### 3. Tie-breaking

When applications made otherwise have the same priority, the time and date of application will determine priority between them, unless changes in the School Act allow a determination to be made by the board, the superintendent or the superintendent's designate to determine priority.

### 4. Guarantee of an Educational Program

School District students who apply for enrolment in an educational program will be provided with an educational program in the District, unless a parent of the student consents to a placement outside the School District.

### 5. Commitment

- 5.1. Applicants may apply for more than one educational program but may only be enrolled in one. When an applicant is offered and accepts enrolment in educational program (in or out of the District), applications for all other programs become invalid.
- 5.2. The Superintendent or designate is authorized to enter into reciprocal agreements with other School Districts to review wait lists and enrolment information in order to enforce this policy.

### 6. Program Requirements

Applicants for enrolment must meet all program requirements for the requested educational program and will be subject to any selection process established for that program.

### 7. Discretionary Acceptance: Suspended or Expelled Non-School District Students

- 7.1. Enrolment applications from non-School District children may be refused, if the child is: under suspension from a B.C. public school or School District, has been refused an educational program by a B.C. public school under s.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 him or herself to his/her studies.
- 7.2. Such application will be referred to the Superintendent or designate for a decision on admission. Admissions may be made subject to terms and conditions.

## 8. Communication

Application periods and enrolment dates will be communicated to the school communities and to the community at large and may also be communicated to other communities within and outside the School District.