STUDENT ADMISSIONS, CATCHMENT AREAS AND PLACEMENT

Purpose

Administrative Procedure 300 supports Board of Education Policy No. 1: District Foundational Statements and Policy No. 21: New Westminster Sanctuary Schools.

Provincial legislation requires that an educational program be provided free of charge to every eligible student of school age who is ordinarily resident in British Columbia. Provincial legislation also supports choice for families to decide the location where their child will attend school.

The placement of a student in a school will be dependent upon the availability of space, facilities, programs, and resources to meet the needs of the student. Decisions about whether space, facilities programs, and resources are available in individual schools or educational programs will be made by the Superintendent or designate. The Superintendent may assign or reassign students to specific schools or educational programs as required to meet student needs.

As per Policy No. 21 (New Westminster Sanctuary Schools) ordinarily resident students with precarious or no immigration status shall be welcomed in our schools and information about them or their families shall not be shared with immigration authorities.

The District may provide for the admission of fee-paying students to district schools. This Administrative Procedure does not apply to fee-paying students. Please refer to Administrative Procedure 301 for such circumstances.

Procedures

1. Eligibility Requirements (see Appendices A, B & C)

1.1 A student is eligible to enroll in an educational program provided by the board of a school district if the person is of school age and resident in British Columbia. Appendices A, B & C provide specific information regarding documentation requirements related to:

a. Age
b. Residency
c. Guardianship

2. Catchment Areas

2.1 School catchment area boundaries are necessary for the efficient use of facilities to meet the educational needs of students. These boundaries may be adjusted from time to time in light of changing demographic patterns. The Board authorizes the Superintendent or designate to make such adjustments.

a. School catchment changes should not impact families living in the affected area who already have children enrolled in the school concerned.

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b. Notice and opportunity for input with respect to proposed boundary changes will be provided to the public at least three months prior to the proposed effective date.

3. Placement of Students

3.1 Availability of Space in a School

a. The majority of students should be accommodated in the school serving the catchment area in which they reside. From time-to-time, due to space limitations and class size and composition restrictions, it may be necessary to temporarily limit particular classes, grades or schools to new enrolments. The Superintendent or designate is authorized to make such determinations and deem schools at, or approaching capacity, as 'full'. Management of enrolment at schools designated full will be overseen by the Superintendent or designate. When the number of registrations exceed available space, a randomized draw will be conducted to determine student placements.

b. A student who cannot be offered enrolment in a catchment school due to lack of available space will be placed at the nearest school that can provide an appropriate educational program. Such students will also be placed on a waitlist for their catchment school and will be contacted if a space becomes available. Waitlists will be dissolved on September 30th of each year.

c. In January of each year, students placed in another school by the District due to lack of available space in their catchment school will be contacted to determine if the family wishes to transfer to their catchment school for the next school year. Students applying for such a transfer will receive priority for the following school year. Should there be more transfer applicants than available spaces in each grade level, a separate draw will be held for each grade level.

3.2 Timeline and Registration

a. In June of each school year, registration timelines will be established and published for the submission of applications to enroll at schools for the following school year.

b. All applications for registration will be received at the Central Registration Office.

c. Parents/guardians must register their child for their catchment school before completing a Programs of Choice, Transfer Request (Out-of-Catchment) or Out-of-District Application.

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

e. Registration timelines are as follows:

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	In-Catchment	Transfer Requests (Out of Catchment)	Out of District Applications	Programs of Choice
Registration Opens	November (first Monday)	February (first Monday)	February (first Monday)	January (first day of instruction after winter break)
Registration Deadline	January (last Friday)	February (last Friday)	February (second Friday)	February (first Friday)
Placement Offers	March (last Friday)	June (second Friday)	June (second Friday)	February (last Friday)
Late Registrations	First come, first served	June (second Friday)	June (second Friday)	First come, first served

3.3 Admission Priority (not applicable to Programs of Choice)

If:

a. space, facilities, and resources are determined to be available by the Superintendent or designate in consultation with the School Principal; and

b. application deadlines and other registration requirements have been met, then enrolment in educational programs in a school will be offered in the following priority order:

1. Continuing catchment students are automatically re-enrolled;
2. Continuing out-of-catchment and out-of-district students are automatically re-enrolled when remaining in the same school and program;
3. Transfer requests from in-catchment students placed, by the District, in another school due to space limitations;
4. New catchment area students with siblings attending the same school;
5. New students within catchment area;
6. Transfer requests for out-of-catchment students with siblings attending the same school;
7. Transfer requests for students who are out of catchment and who are registered in and attending before and/or after school childcare at a licensed childcare facility within the catchment area;
8. Transfer requests for students who are out-of-catchment;
9. Siblings of continuing out-of-district students;
10. Students who are out-of-district.

3.4 Waitlists

1.1 Waitlists will be established for those not accepted and will be maintained until September 30th of each year. Re-evaluation of space availability will take place

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regularly to ensure that the maximum number of requests are met at the earliest time possible. Waitlists for kindergarten students in the Early French Immersion and Montessori Programs will be dissolved on the last day of instruction in of December at 4:00pm.

3.5 Attendance

a. Placements at schools are conditional upon the student attending on the first day of their school program. If a student will not be in attendance on this day due to illness or extenuating circumstances, the School Principal must be contacted.

b. Student placements will be held only until the end of the second week following the start of school. If the student has not returned by this deadline, they will be withdrawn and must re-register through Central Registration upon their return to the district. Every effort will be made to place students at their catchment school; however, placement will be dependent on available space. If there is no space at the catchment school, students will be placed at the next closest school with space.

c. Administrative Procedure 330 – Student Attendance provides further guidance on student attendance and extended absences.

3.6 Extended Absences for Parents/Legal Guardians

a. A Parent or Legal Guardian may not leave the student in the care of another adult for more than three weeks during the school year. Any extenuating circumstances must be discussed with and approved by the School Principal.

b. A Parent/Guardian Declaration Form AP-300-D must be completed and submitted to the school office. This form must include:

- The dates of the planned absence.
- The name and contact information of the responsible adult (25 years or older) who will be caring for and resident with the student.
- Out-of-town contact information for the Legal Parent/Guardian.

c. The Legal Parent/Guardian whose status is used to register the student must reside with the student consistently throughout the school year and must be working within a daily commutable distance from the school.

4. Transfer of Continuing Students (Out of Catchment)

4.1 Parents/guardians may request that a continuing student be permitted to attend a different school in a subsequent school year. These requests for transfer may be granted provided a suitable program, resources, space and facilities are available at the desired school.

4.2 The Superintendent or designate may deem schools “open” or “closed” for transfer requests based upon availability of space and specific criteria relevant to that school.

4.3 Management of enrolment at schools designated “closed” for transfer will be managed by the Superintendent or designate.

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4.4 Out-of-catchment and out-of-district students who attend school in New Westminster and students enrolled in special programs (e.g.) French Immersion, Montessori, etc. are expected to find their own means of traveling to and from school.

5. School Transition

5.1 Students transitioning from elementary to middle or middle to secondary are automatically transitioned to their catchment schools.

5.2 Parents/guardians who wish to transition to a school outside of their catchment may complete a transfer request provided that the desired school is deemed "open" for such requests.

6. Programs of Choice

6.1 Applications from new students for available spaces in Programs of Choice will follow the guidelines as per Administrative Procedure 220.

6.2 Students must be registered for their catchment school before completing a Programs of Choice Application.

6.3 Specific timelines for applications for the following school year will be published in June of each school year.

7. Withdrawal from Programs of Choice or District Programs

7.1 If a student, who is enrolled in a Program of Choice or district program (e.g. French Immersion, Montessori, or Home Learners), withdraws during the school year, they are expected to return to their catchment school. However, the student may apply for an out-of-catchment placement at the current school of placement. Approval of the request will be based on available space, facilities, and resources.

8. International Students

8.1 Student admissions, registrations and placement will follow the guidelines outlined in Administrative Procedure 301.

9. District Alternate Programs

9.1 The District strives to provide an educational program for all school-age students within district schools. The District further recognizes the diverse needs of learners, who may have educational, social, emotional, and/or behavioural needs that require an alternate educational setting and program. The following procedures relate to referrals to District Alternate Programs:

a. School Principals, in consultation with families and school-based teams will recommend students to be considered for placement in an Alternate Program through a referral to the District Screening Committee.

b. Self or family referrals to Alternate Programs will be made to the District Screening Committee, facilitated through school Counselors and Principals.

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c. Following District Screening Committee recommendations, the District Principal of Alternate Programs will determine if there is space and supports available to accept students into the appropriate Alternate Program.
d. Supportive transition plans to Alternate Programs will be developed in consultation with the student and family.
e. Transportation funding will not be provided for attendance at Alternate Schools or Programs, unless deemed necessary by the Board.

Definitions

Age - A student is eligible for admission in September of a school year if the student will have attained the age of five years on or before December 31 of a school year. The student is eligible to continue to receive an educational program until June 30 of the school in which the person reaches the age of 19 years.

Availability of Space in Schools – refers to identifying limitations in program capacity, including consideration of the following factors:

1. operating capacity of the school as defined by the Ministry of Education
2. the physical space in which the instructional programs operate in the school
3. the school staff assigned to the school by the district
4. the ability of the school to provide appropriate educational programs for the applicant and other students

Catchment Area Child – means a person of school age, and resident in the catchment area of the school. For each Programs of Choice (e.g.) French Immersion and Montessori, there are specific catchment boundaries.

Out-of-Catchment Area Child – means a person of school age, and a resident in the school district and non-resident in the catchment area of the school

Out-of-District Child – means a person of school age, resident in British Columbia, and non-resident in the school district.

Guardianship – is defined by the *Family Law Act*. Persons who are not a child's parents can become that child's guardian either by a court order under Section 30 or by a will under Section 50 of the *Infants Act*.

Resident - a student is considered resident if the student is ordinarily resident in the school district and the guardian of the person of the student is ordinarily resident in British Columbia.

Sibling – refers to only those siblings attending an educational program in a school concurrently.

Transfer (Out-of-Catchment) is a school-age student or child applying to attend a school other than the catchment school, by request.

Capacity (Physical Space) – refers to a calculation that is based upon the number of classrooms (physical space) for enrolling purposes and approved classroom enrolment sizes.

Appendices

Appendix A: Registration Checklist
Appendix B: Detailed Parent/Guardianship Requirements

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Appendix C: Detailed Residency Requirements (temporary residents)
Appendix D: Parent/Guardian Declaration Form

Reference Documents: *The School Act, Sections 74 and Section 82 and others*
School Regulation, Section 16
The Family Law Act, Section 27 and Section 39
The Infants Act, Section 50 and Section 51
The Child, Family and Community Service Act
The Adoption Act

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