

4.10.051-P Student Enrollment and Transfers

I. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal access to educational options for all resident students through an open, fair and accessible process and to promote equity and diversity in student transfers and admissions through alignment with the Educational Options Policy (6.10.022-P). The policy furthers the Student Achievement Policy (6.10.010-P), the district's Racial Educational Equity Policy (2.10.010-P), and other district policies and state and federal requirements.

II. General Policy Statement

All Portland Public School students have the right to attend their neighborhood school, except in extraordinary circumstances as described in Section IV. All Portland Public School students have the right to request a transfer to attend any grade- appropriate school or program in the district. The Board is committed to families and students having equitable access to a broad portfolio of educational options. The district has the responsibility, through its centralized coordination of information, outreach, and support services, to provide families and students with information and advice that will enable families and students to make informed decisions about their choice of educational options.

III. Definitions

(1) School and student terms

- (a) Neighborhood school. A school serving a designated attendance area and as defined in 6.10.022-P .
- (b) Focus option. A separate school or program structured around a unique curriculum or particular theme and as defined in 6.10.022-P.
- (c) Transfer school. The school to which a student has transferred.
- (d) Transfer student. A district student attending a school other than his/her neighborhood school.
- (e) Resident student. A student who is a resident of the Portland Public School district.
- (f) Nonresident. A student from another district attending a PPS district school on inter-district transfer.

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(g) Sibling. Children with the same parent or supervising adult living together at the same address.

(2) Admission and transfer terms

(a) Transfer: A formal request by a district family for a student to attend a school other than their neighborhood school or to return to their neighborhood school. There are two types of transfers:

(A) Lottery transfers: a request to transfer to a focus option. Lottery transfers are based on space availability and preferences.

(B) Petition transfers: a request to transfer to a different neighborhood school, or to a focus option after the lottery transfer process has closed.

(b) Enrollment: The process for accounting for students in schools.

(c) Feeder pattern: A designated path for students to advance from one school grade grouping to another.

IV. Policy Scope

This policy does not apply to nonresident students, alternative education placements, pre-kindergarten admissions, or charter school admissions. In order to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities, those students may be assigned to specialized program services outside of their neighborhood school. The district also shall be in compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding student enrollment and transfers.

V. Admission

(1) By area of residence. Students have a right to attend the neighborhood school where they reside with their parent or supervising adult, except as provided in Section IV. This right extends to students returning to their neighborhood school with a petition transfer request and to families with students new to the district.

(2) By transfer. All students have the right to request a transfer to a school or program other than their own assigned neighborhood school.

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- (a) Transfers to a different neighborhood school: requests to transfer to a different neighborhood school will be considered through the petition process. Petitions will be considered on an individual basis based on a standard set of criteria, taking into consideration available space at the requested school.
- (b) Transfers to a focus option: requests to transfer to a focus option shall be considered through a lottery process and a petition process after the lottery transfer process has closed. A transfer request to a focus option is granted based on an on-time transfer request, space availability, admission criteria if any and preferences.
- (3) Admission criteria for focus option schools or programs
 - (a) Admission criteria to any District school or program shall be the same for neighborhood and transfer students.
 - (b) Admission criteria shall be clear, objective and directly related to the educational goals of the focus option and the district. A school or program may require the family and student to indicate an understanding of program expectations prior to enrollment.
 - (c) Middle and high school focus options may have admission criteria as specified in the operations plan required in 6.10.022-P.
 - (d) Elementary focus options shall have no admission criteria except for language criteria for dual language immersion and late entry for language immersion options.

VI. Enrollment

- (1) Students are expected and encouraged to remain in the same program or school in which they are enrolled for the school year, except in cases of extraordinary circumstances. Schools shall collaborate with families, students and staff to meet the needs of students for that school year.
- (2) Students enrolled in a transfer school do not have to reapply until completion of all grades in that school.
- (3) Upon completion of a school grade grouping, students are enrolled in their neighborhood feeder pattern school, except as

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provided in (4) and (5) below. Students who want to attend a school other than their neighborhood school shall follow the admission procedures in Section V.

- (4) Students admitted to a focus option that continues from one school grade grouping to another do not need to reapply for admission during these transitions except as provided in the focus option plan of operations.
- (5) Students enrolled in a curriculum that includes different school grade groupings may enroll in the school with the higher grade grouping after completion of the previous grade grouping.

VII. Preferences

- (1) For focus option schools and programs, if lottery transfer requests exceed available spaces and the student meets admission criteria, if any, the following preferences determine priority placement in the following order:
 - (a) Students continuing from their previous school grade grouping if required by the focus option plan of operations.
 - (b) Students required by state or federal law or other district policy to receive priority.
 - (c) A student whose sibling is enrolled at the same time in the student's first choice elementary, middle school or high school or program that includes other school grade groupings.
 - (d) Students who qualify to receive free and reduced-price meals, or qualify for enrollment in a Head Start Program, in a proportion corresponding to a district-wide average. The preference will occur at schools where the rate of enrolled students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals is lower than the district-wide average.
 - (e) Resident students who have submitted an on-time lottery transfer request.
- (2) If, after the lottery, staff identifies that there were applicants eligible for free and reduced meals, up to the district average, not approved due to the number of sibling applicants, the Board will review the order of preferences.

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- (3) A focus option may make special provision in its Board-approved plan of operations for admitting students from particular attendance areas.

VIII. Student Transfer Process

- (1) Student transfer decisions shall be facilitated by the administrator assigned to coordinate student transfers.
- (2) The superintendent shall establish protocols and procedures, including deadlines and an appeals process, for lottery and petition transfers and for inter district transfers.
- (3) The superintendent shall establish a process for determining if space is available in a particular school or program.
- (4) For focus options, the superintendent shall establish a process for admitting students by a centrally administered lottery for students who submit an on-time lottery transfer request and meet admission criteria, if any, and there are more applicants than available space.
- (5) For transfers to a different neighborhood school, or for transfers to a focus option after the lottery has closed, the petition transfer process will provide review of applications on an individualized basis. The superintendent shall establish clear, flexible, culturally relevant protocols and standards to the petition transfer process. In addition, the superintendent shall establish a process to collect and monitor data from petition transfer requests to ensure equitable processes and decision-making and to identify areas of improvement in neighborhood schools.
- (6) To support overall district goals and equal educational opportunities for all students, the transfer process also shall include factors as needed to promote equity and diversity in student admissions. The factors shall be based on the district's Racial Educational Equity Policy (2.10.010-P) and the Student Achievement Policy (6.10.010-P). The factors and process for how they shall be weighted in the lottery process shall be approved by the Board.
- (7) The wait list established for a focus option school or program shall be randomly determined by the lottery, incorporating preferences and weighting as provided in this policy.

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IX. Non-Discrimination

- (1) All schools and programs offered by the district shall be open to all students without discrimination based on any factors provided for by state and federal laws and regulations and as provided in 1.80.020-P.

X. Policy Implementation and Effective Dates

- (1) The superintendent shall develop administrative directives to implement this policy and a plan to transition to the new policy.
- (2) This policy shall be implemented for the school year 2015-16.

Legal References:

History: Approved 5/12/03; Amended 1/24/2005; 1/2015

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