

## **CALHOUN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT Controlled Open Enrollment Plan**

The Calhoun County School Board has established residential attendance zones for each school. All students unless otherwise provided by Board rule or authorized by the Board's order, shall attend the school serving the student's residential attendance zone. A student's residence is defined as the residence of his/her parent or legal guardian.

The Calhoun County School District Controlled Open Enrollment Plan is designed to give all parents the opportunity to choose the school they want their child to attend. Open enrollment shall be available to all K-12 students residing with their parent/guardian in the State of Florida. The plan provides an opportunity for students to attend public school outside the student's established residential attendance zone, as well as public schools in neighboring counties, as long as the requested school has not reached capacity subject to the maximum class size. A student who is subject to a current expulsion or suspension from any public or private school is ineligible to apply for a choice assignment.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

1. Controlled open enrollment shall be available to all K-12 students residing with their parent/guardian in the State of Florida. Information about the enrollment process will be advertised through the local newspaper, Parent Square and district websites.
2. A student who is subject to a current expulsion or suspension from any public or private school is ineligible to apply for a choice assignment.
3. Any student granted a choice assignment may continue to the highest grade level of the approved school until:
  - a. The student is expelled or suspended;
  - b. The student is withdrawn from enrollment at the school by the parent/guardian;
  - c. The parent/guardian of the student requests a change in school assignment;
  - d. It is determined by the District that the application for controlled open enrollment was based on inaccurate, false or misleading information; or
  - e. The choice assignment is revoked by the school principal, upon concurrence of the superintendent or designee, based on unsatisfactory academic performance, behavior or attendance or transportation issues.
4. Upon completion of the highest grade level of the approved school, the student shall return to his or her zoned school. Students must reapply annually for an additional choice assignment.
5. Students assigned to a school for pre-K services are not provided preferential treatment for purposes of this policy for kindergarten school assignment.

6. For students with disabilities, an appropriate team will convene to make a determination that the requested assignment can provide special education and/or related services that have been determined necessary to ensure that provision of a free appropriate public education as documented in a student's current Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. The team will make this determination prior to approval of the choice application.
7. Parents will be responsible for transporting their children to the school of choice if regular transportation is not available and they live outside the residential attendance zone. Parents/guardian must not drop-off students at school before 7:00 a.m. Students must be picked up within 15 minutes of the last student bell.
8. Calhoun County School District will provide transportation as required by law for foster care and homeless students. Transportation to another public school will be provided to students participating in the Opportunity Scholarship Program (ss.1002.38), and the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program (ss.1003.394) as required in law.
9. A student may receive only one choice assignment per school year.
10. A parent/guardian may discontinue a choice assignment within the school year.

### **Determination of School Capacity**

1. A determination is made on the current capacity of each school based on class size requirements in conjunction with projected class size numbers for each school.
2. Calhoun County School District defines capacity as 90% of the class size limit for each grade.
3. Capacity will be determined for each school in the district by grade level.
4. Capacity determinations must be updated every 12 weeks and must be identified on the school district website.
5. Each virtual charter school and each school district with a contract with an approved virtual instruction program provider shall determine capacity based upon the enrollment requirements established under s. 1002.45(1)(e)4.

### **Application Period**

Applications for school choice assignment for the upcoming school year shall be submitted during the open enrollment period, March 27-May 1.

### **Application**

1. The school choice application may be printed from the district website and includes information on rights and responsibilities of choice, such as good attendance, grades, and behavior.

2. The completed application must be signed by the parent/guardian and submitted to the Superintendent's office in person, US Mail, fax or email. Applications will be dated and time stamped as they are received at the Superintendent's office. Submitting an application does not guarantee that the student will be approved to transfer to the requested school.
3. The District may request additional documentation from the applicant as part of the evaluation process. If that documentation is not provided within (14) calendar days of the request the application may be denied without further action.
4. Applications are required when:
  - a. The request is for initial entry of a student in a school of choice.
  - b. There is a change of home address, which places the student in a different school, and the parents/guardians want their child to remain at the school for the remainder of the current school year. In these cases, approval is limited to the remainder of the current school year.
  - c. A parent/guardian living in another district is requesting attendance at a Calhoun County school.
5. Initial student assignments are awarded after the anticipated enrollments, school capacities, and class sizes are calculated. Students residing in the Calhoun County School District may not be displaced by students from other districts seeking enrollment.
6. A wait list of students who are denied access due to capacity will be maintained. Parents will be notified when space becomes available.
7. Schools will accept students throughout the school year as capacity in each grade becomes available.

### **Evaluation of Applications**

1. The District Student Placement Committee will review all choice assignment requests. The committee members will include the Assistant Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Exceptional Student Education and the school principal or designee from the requested school.
2. No student residing within the District shall be displaced by a student residing in another district for purpose of this policy.
3. After all students residing in the District have been assigned to a school, applicants meeting any of the following mitigating factors shall be provided preferential treatment:
  - a. Dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders;
  - b. Homeless students;
  - c. Children who have been relocated due to foster care placement in a different school attendance zone within the District;

- d. Children who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent. Nothing herein shall be interpreted to grant a court jurisdiction to order a school assignment absent these circumstances;
  - e. Child of school-based employee assigned at the requested school;
  - f. Siblings of a student attending the requested school; and
  - g. Student with a current Family Empowerment Scholarship, or Opportunity Scholarship.
4. A random lottery may be utilized when pending applications exceed available capacity. If a student cannot be accommodated at his or her first-choice assignment, then applications shall be subject a random lottery for a potential second choice assignment.
  5. A wait list of students who are denied access due to capacity will be placed on a wait list. Parents will be notified when space becomes available. Schools will accept students throughout the school year as capacity becomes available.

#### **Notification of Outcome**

1. The District will notify the parent/guardian of its decision on the Open Enrollment Application by U.S. Mail, by July 15.
2. A parent/guardian granted a choice assignment will register the student at the choice school providing records and documents required for registration in accordance with District policy and procedures. If the student fails to begin attending classes at the choice school by the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) day of the new school year, the choice assignment shall be deemed forfeited and reassigned to their residential attendance zone unless there are extenuating circumstances.

#### **Appeals Process for Hardship Cases**

Parents of students who applied during controlled open enrollment and were not approved for placement in a school of choice may request an appeal review based on a documented hardship situation within 3 days of receiving notice of denial. A written appeal describing the hardship and documentation must be submitted via facsimile, email or hand-delivered to the Superintendent's office. The Student Placement Committee serves as the contact for appeal requests and coordinates the review of all hardship requests. The committee will make recommendations to the Superintendent concerning whether to overturn an enrollment denial because of a documented hardship. The Superintendent's decision is final.

Parents/guardians with legitimate, documented hardships will be given priority if space is available. Hardship provisions may include documented medical, emotional, psychological, proximity to work or daycare, and legal reasons.

1. If a hardship appeal is submitted because of proximity to work or daycare, the parent must submit documentation such as a check stub with work address and/or proof of daycare attendance.
2. If a hardship appeal is submitted for medical reasons, the parent/guardian must submit a Release of Records form and a physician's statement describing the medical condition of the student and specific medical reasons justifying the request.
3. If a hardship appeal is submitted for legal reasons, the parent/guardian must submit documentation of the legal hardship.
4. If a hardship appeal is based on course availability, to be considered, the requested program must have been stated in the original application and the requested school has space available in the core academic classes as well as the requested program.
5. A wait list of students who are denied access due to capacity will be placed on a wait list. Parents will be notified when space becomes available.
6. Schools will accept students throughout the school year as capacity becomes available.

### **Interscholastic Activities**

The District's middle and high school interscholastic athletic program adheres to the rules and policies of the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA).

1. Upon school choice approval, middle and high school students will be "immediately eligible to participate" when first enrolling in school or transferring schools, with certain limiting conditions, set forth below. Mid-season transfers may seek immediately join an existing team roster, so long as:
  - a. The designated roster for the sport has not reached maximum size; and the coach determines that the student has the requisite skill and ability to participate.
  - b. The student has not already participated in the same sport at another school during the same school year, unless the student meets one of the following:
    - 1) A dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders;
    - 2) A child who have been relocated due to a foster care placement in a different school zone; or
    - 3) A child who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent.
2. Home Education, Florida Virtual School or Calhoun Virtual School full-time students are eligible to participate at the public school to which the student would be assigned to attend or which the student could choose to attend pursuant to s. 1002.31. **(F.S. 1006.15)**

### **Procedure to Maintain Socioeconomic, Demographic, and Racial Balance**

All students are eligible to attend the school of their choice regardless of race, gender, religion, national origin or ethnicity. School choice data are collected and the Superintendent's staff is apprised of emerging patterns that may potentially impact the socioeconomic, demographic and racial balance of the district. If necessary, further analysis and possible revision to the district school choice open enrollment plan may be recommended.

### **Availability of Transportation**

Transportation will not be provided for students who are assigned to a school of choice through Controlled Open Enrollment. Parents will be responsible for transporting their children to the school of choice if regular transportation is not available and they live outside the residential attendance zone. Parents/guardian must not drop-off students at school before 7:00 a.m. Students must be picked up within 15 minutes of the last student bell.

Calhoun County School District will provide transportation as required by law for foster care and homeless students. Transportation to another public school will be provided to students participating in the Opportunity Scholarship Program (ss.1002.38), and the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program as required in law.

If any other transportation within the school district becomes available, parents will be notified. Any transportation options available in the community will be communicated to parents.

### **Annual Report and Other Compliance Requirements**

The District shall annually report the number of students exercising public school choice pursuant to this policy and as otherwise determined by law.

A wait list of students who are denied access due to capacity will be placed on a wait list. Parents will be notified when space becomes available. Schools will accept students throughout the school year as capacity becomes available.

### **Misleading or False Evidence**

In addition to the criminal penalty associated with the making of a false or misleading statement, if it is discovered that misleading or false evidence was presented in support of an application for choice assignment, the student shall be reassigned immediately to the school within the appropriate geographic attendance area, or if out-of-district, immediate revocation of enrollment into the school of choice.

Failure to report a change in address shall be deemed evidence of intent to circumvent this policy and shall result in the application or choice assignment being denied or revocation of the choice assignment.

### **Special Assignments**

1. Any students over the compulsory attendance age who has previously withdrawn, dropped out of school, or been expelled, and later indicates a desire to re-enroll must be recommended for re-enrollment by the student placement committee. This committee shall review individual student data and make a recommendation to the Superintendent for placement into the educational program that shall best provide the student the opportunity to further his or her education.
2. Based upon recommendation student placement committee, the Superintendent may assign any student to an alternative site anytime during the school year when such placement is deemed to be in the best interest of the student.
3. There may be circumstances where a choice assignment of students is not possible.

### **Revocation of School Choice Assignment**

A principal may revoke a choice assignment for violations of the code of student conduct, absenteeism or unsatisfactory academic performance. The principal must establish the standards for revocation in writing to the parent or legal guardian. Revocation of choice assignment shall render that student ineligible to apply for a choice assignment for the following year. Revocation of a choice assignment is not subject to the appeal process set forth in this policy.