



BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY 9000
ENROLLMENT, RESIDENCY, STUDENT
ASSIGNMENT AND ADMISSION TO PRE-K
AND KINDERGARTEN

Effective: March 12, 2009

I. Policy Statement

Maryland's Public School Law confers on the Board of Education of Howard County the responsibility to control educational matters that affect the county and to promote the interests of the schools under its jurisdiction. The Board has established a system of public schools which promote the general welfare of Howard County residents and which are maintained for the education of the students who reside with their parents in Howard County.

Nonresident students may be admitted to the Howard County public schools under special circumstances, in accordance with administrative regulations and subject to compliance with the procedures established by the Superintendent.

To avoid over utilization of some schools and under utilization of others, students are assigned to the schools in the school attendance areas in which they reside, unless approval is given in accordance with this policy.

II. Purpose

- A. To establish procedures for admitting students to Howard County public schools, including procedures for deferred admission to kindergarten and early admission to prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade.
- B. To establish procedures for assigning students to schools.
- C. To make effective use of school facilities while providing flexibility in assignments where feasible.

III. Definitions

- A. Bona fide residence – The person's actual residence maintained in good faith. It does not include a temporary residence or a superficial residence established for the purpose of attendance in the Howard County public schools. Determination of a person's bona fide residence is a factual one and must be made on an individual basis.

- B. Deferred admission – The option provided to parents to request that students meeting the State’s age requirement for kindergarten be granted a one-year attendance waiver.
- C. Early admission – The option for parents to request that students be admitted to prekindergarten, kindergarten, or first grade one year earlier than the State’s age requirements.
- D. Emancipated student – A student who meets one or more of the following conditions:
 - 1. The student is married.
 - 2. The student is under age 18 and has been declared emancipated by the courts.
 - 3. The student is age 18 or older and is living independently of the student's parents.
- E. Exchange student – A student who holds a J-1 Visa and is under an approved exchange program.
- F. Extracurricular activities – Activities available to students beyond the regular school day, which are voluntary and not required for the satisfactory completion of a particular class.
- G. Home school – The school in the school attendance area of the student’s residence.
- H. Homeless student – A student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.
- I. International students – Nationals from other countries.
- J. Interscholastic athletics – Approved athletic competition between or among two or more high schools.
- K. Open school – A school designated by the Board of Education as one that is open to enrollment by students living in other school attendance areas because there is available space.
- L. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
 - 1. Biological parent
 - 2. Adoptive parent – A person who has legally adopted the student.

3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and privileges.
 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and privileges.
 5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody or control over the student, but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian of the minor.
 6. Foster parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a State agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by section 5-507 of the Family Law Article.
- M. Resident Students – School-aged students who meet specified conditions for establishing bona fide residence in Howard County.
- N. School-aged Students – Students who have met the age registration requirements for admission to a Maryland public school.
- O. School Attendance Area – Geographic area from which a school’s students are drawn.
- P. School of Origin – The school the student attended when last enrolled.
- Q. Unaccompanied Homeless Student – A homeless student not in the physical custody of a parent.

IV. Standards

A. Enrollment Requirements

In order to enroll in the Howard County Public School System, students and/or parents must meet legal standards related to age, immunization, authority to make educational decisions, residency, and immigrant status.

B. Age

The State has mandated school attendance for students of a prescribed age and defined minimum and maximum age eligibility for education services from local public school systems.

1. Kindergarten is mandatory in Maryland for children reaching the compulsory attendance age established by the State.
2. Prekindergarten is available for children with demonstrated educational needs who meet age and eligibility requirements established by the State.
3. Parents may request deferred admission of children to kindergarten.

4. Children may be admitted to prekindergarten, kindergarten, or first grade one year earlier than the State's age requirements if parents apply for early admission and the children are accepted according to procedures for evaluating such requests.

C. Resident Students

A school-aged student meeting any one of the following conditions will be considered a resident student and will be admitted to the Howard County Public School System without the payment of tuition except as noted elsewhere.

1. A school-aged student whose parent(s) has/have established bona fide residence in Howard County.
2. A school-aged student whose parents live apart and:
 - a. The parent to whom legal custody is awarded by the court has established bona fide residence in Howard County, or
 - b. The parent with whom the student lives regularly has established bona fide residence in Howard County, and joint custody is awarded by the court or a determination of legal custody has not been made.
3. A school-aged emancipated or adult student who has established an independent bona fide residence in Howard County.
4. A school-aged student with a court-appointed guardian who has established bona fide residence in Howard County.
5. A school-aged student whose parent(s) has/have established bona fide residence in Howard County, and who has been placed in a foster or group home in Howard County by a licensed private, county, or state child placement agency. Residence for purposes of admission and assignment is the address of the foster or group home.

D. Students Who May Be Denied Admission

1. Students who are Suspended or Expelled

Students who are currently expelled or suspended from another school system may be denied enrollment in accordance with The Annotated Code of Maryland Section 7-305(d)(5).

2. International Students

International students holding a valid B-1 (temporary visitor for business), B-2 (temporary visitor for pleasure), or F-1 (student) visa will not be granted admission.

E. Enrollment of Nonresident Students Under Special Circumstances

School-aged students who do not qualify as resident students under the provisions of IV.C are considered nonresident students. Nonresident students will be admitted to the Howard County Public School System only under the following special circumstances. In some cases, payment of tuition may be required.

1. Student Relocation

- a. Nonresident students whose parents are in the process of establishing bona fide residence in Howard County and who have entered into contracts to build, buy, or lease homes may be admitted to the Howard County Public School System upon payment of tuition. If students are not in the projected homes within 60 calendar days from the first day of the students' attendance, an extension of 30 calendar days will be considered, based on unforeseen changes in circumstances. If an extension is granted, the students will be allowed to continue at their current schools upon payment of additional tuition. If there are no approved extensions, the students will be withdrawn. See also Standard I.3.b.
- b. Students who become nonresidents, because the parents with whom they reside move out of Howard County during the school year, may complete the year at the schools in which they are enrolled upon payment of tuition. An exception will be made for students who become nonresidents because the parents with whom they reside move out of Howard County during their junior or senior high school years or after the last day of their sophomore or junior school year. These students will be allowed to remain at their current schools through graduation upon payment of tuition. Students reassigned under this standard will retain eligibility for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Parent will provide transportation. See tuition exception under Standard G.3.b.

2. Out-of-County Foster Placement in Howard County

Nonresident students who are placed in foster or group homes in Howard County by licensed private, county, or state child placement agencies may be admitted to the Howard County Public School System, subject to

reimbursement to Howard County of the applicable tuition by the school systems of origin.

3. Hardship

Nonresident students living with caregivers due to documented hardship may be admitted to the Howard County Public School System and have tuition waived by satisfying the conditions of one of the following:

a. Informal Kinship Care Status

Nonresident students whose parents are residents of the state of Maryland and whose caregiver status satisfies the conditions of the law. The applicable tuition costs may be reimbursed by the Maryland school system of origin. The criteria for hardship under this provision are:

- i. Death or serious illness of a parent or legal guardian
- ii. Drug addiction of parent or legal guardian
- iii. Incarceration of parent or legal guardian
- iv. Abandonment
- v. Military service.

b. Rights and Responsibilities for Caregiver Status

A nonresident student whose caregiver status does not satisfy the conditions of Informal Kinship Care, or whose parent(s) reside outside the state of Maryland. The criteria for hardship under this provision are:

- i. Child abuse or neglect
- ii. Death or serious illness of a parent or legal guardian
- iii. Drug addiction of parent or legal guardian
- iv. Incarceration of parent or legal guardian
- v. Abandonment
- vi. Military service.

4. Exchange Students

An international student holding a J-1 visa who comes for one year of study through an approved exchange program and who resides with a host family with established bona fide residence in Howard County may be admitted, and tuition is waived. Each high school may enroll up to five such students each year. Residence for purposes of admission and assignment is the address of the host family.

5. Children of School-Based Employees

- a. A nonresident student whose parent is a full-time, school-based employee with benefits may be admitted to the Howard County Public School System and enrolled in the school in which the parent is employed, upon payment of tuition.
- b. If the employee leaves full-time employment, the nonresident student may complete the current school year only.

F. Homeless Students

1. Students who are determined to be homeless by the Office of Pupil Personnel, under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act, may be enrolled immediately in the Howard County Public Schools in the schools in their current attendance areas with or without proof of residency, school immunization records, birth certificates, or other documents.
2. Resident students who are determined to be homeless may choose to attend their school of origin, with transportation provided, even if they move outside of their school attendance area. This arrangement will be in effect for as long as the student is determined to be homeless.
3. When resident homeless students have to move outside of Howard County, the students may continue to attend their schools of origin if it is determined to be in the students' best interests. The Office of Pupil Personnel will assist with the arrangement of transportation.
4. Both resident and non-resident homeless students are covered under the above provisions as long as they are determined to be homeless. If students who have been determined to be homeless become permanently housed during the same school year that the homeless determinations were made, the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act still apply for the remainder of that school year.
5. When homeless students are promoted out of their schools of origin, the students must attend the schools serving the school attendance areas in which their parents currently reside.

G. Tuition

1. Tuition rates will be determined annually and approved by the Howard County Board of Education.

2. Tuition is effective from the student's first day of attendance or the date upon which a student no longer resides in the county, subject to paragraph F.4.
3. Tuition is payable in advance.
 - a. For students enrolling due to relocation into Howard County (E.1.a), tuition will equal the number of school days within the 60-day window. Pro-rated reimbursements or additional assessments for extensions will be made as appropriate.
 - b. For students currently enrolled who have relocated outside of Howard County (E.1.b), tuition will equal the amount due for the balance of the school year. If the move occurs during the student's final semester of the senior year or the final quarter of an undergraduate year, tuition is waived.
 - c. In all other cases, tuition will be paid on an annual basis.
 - d. Tuition will be charged retroactively if, upon investigation, it is determined that students were enrolled as resident students but lacked bona fide residency. If students do not currently qualify for enrollment under this policy, the students will be immediately withdrawn.
4. Requests for tuition waivers or for revised payment schedules based on financial hardship may be submitted to the Superintendent's designee, along with supporting documented evidence. Financial accommodations will be provided only for such period as financial hardships are shown to exist. Requests are subject to review.

H. Original School Assignment

1. All schools will have designated school attendance areas determined by the Board of Education.
2. Students attending public schools in Howard County are initially assigned by the Board of Education to schools serving the school attendance area in which the parents have bona fide residence. Students are required to attend the schools to which they are assigned unless a special exception is made.

I. Student Reassignment

Students may be reassigned from the school in their attendance area for the reasons listed below. Reassignments are subject to the conditions outlined in Standard J.

1. Disciplinary Action

Student reassignment for disciplinary action may be initiated by the Superintendent/designee. Such reassignments may be made at any time during the year. Eligibility for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, and provision of transportation for students reassigned under this standard will be determined by the Superintendent/designee.

2. Safety

Student reassignment for safety reasons may be initiated by the parent or principal/designee. Decisions will be made by the Superintendent/ designee. Eligibility for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, and provision of transportation for students reassigned under this standard will be determined by the Superintendent/designee.

3. Student Relocation

- a. Students who have a change of bona fide residence within the county during the school year may complete the current school year at the schools in which they are enrolled. Students must enroll the next school year in the schools in their new attendance areas. An exception will be made for students who have a change of residence within the county during their junior or senior high school years or after the last day of their sophomore or junior school year. These students will be allowed to remain at their current schools through graduation. See also Standard E.1.b. Students reassigned under this standard will retain eligibility for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Transportation will be provided by the parent.
- b. Resident students whose parents have entered into contracts to build, buy, or lease homes in different school attendance areas than that of their assigned schools may request reassignment to schools in the projected attendance areas. If students are not in the projected homes within 60 calendar days from the first day of the students' attendance, an extension of 30 calendar days will be considered, based on unforeseen changes in circumstances. If there are no approved extensions, the students will be returned to their schools of origin. Students reassigned under this standard will be eligible for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Transportation will be provided by the parent. See also Standard E.1.a.

4. Children of School-Based Employees

Resident students whose parents are full-time, school-based employees with benefits may be reassigned to the schools in which the parents are employed. If employees change employment locations, the students may finish the current school year at the school to which they have been reassigned, regardless of grade level. Students reassigned under this standard will be eligible for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Transportation will be provided by the parent.

5. Special Programs

Student reassignment may be initiated by parents of students who choose to participate in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC), teen parenting, or other special programs designated by the Board of Education for these purposes. Decisions will be made by the Superintendent/designee. Students reassigned under this standard will be eligible for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Transportation will be provided by the parent. Students will be returned to their home school the day after they withdraw from the special program regardless of grade level.

6. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Reassignment of students who receive ESOL services must be implemented in accordance with entrance/exit guidelines for specific programs, such as the high school ESOL Newcomer Centers or the Regional ESOL centers. Students reassigned under this standard will be eligible for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Transportation will be provided by the school system.

7. Special Education Services

Reassignment of students who receive special education services must be considered through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team process and must be consistent with the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) and COMAR regulations which govern the provision of special education. Students reassigned under this standard will be eligible for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Transportation will be provided by the school system.

8. Title I

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) provides public school choice for all parents who have children enrolled in a Title I school that has not

made adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive years. The NCLB regulations must be implemented according to federal law regardless of school system or Board policies. Students reassigned under this standard will be eligible for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. Transportation will be provided by the school system.

9. Open School Designation

The Board of Education may choose to identify schools that, because they have available space, are open to enrollment by students not living in the schools' attendance areas. The Superintendent/designee may assign students to identified schools. Parents may initiate student reassignment to identified schools according to established procedures. Students reassigned under this standard will be eligible for extracurricular activities, except they will not be eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics for a period of one year effective the date of transfer. Transportation will be provided by the parent.

10. Special Circumstances

In rare circumstances, the Superintendent/designee may grant parent requests for individual exceptions to the student reassignment standards based on documented needs. Such exceptions will not be granted for issues common to large numbers of families, such as the need for a particular schedule, class/program, sibling enrollment, redistricting, or day care issues. Decisions will be made by the Superintendent/designee. Eligibility for extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, and provision of transportation for students reassigned under this standard will be determined by the Superintendent/designee.

J. General Conditions Related to Student Reassignments

1. Parents initiating a request for reassignment must agree, in writing, to register students for the complete school year (or the remainder of the school year) in the schools for which the application is made.
2. Students who are reassigned to schools need not reapply for reassignment for those same schools on a yearly basis except as noted elsewhere. However, applications will be subject to annual review.
3. Parents agree to provide transportation where applicable under Standard I.
4. While applications for reassignment are pending, applicants will remain in attendance at the schools of origin.

5. Student eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities is subject to Policy 9070, Academic Eligibility for High School Extracurricular Activities as well as Standard I.
6. Students who are reassigned at the request of parents, and who do not behave in an acceptable manner under the provisions of the HCPSS Code of Conduct, do not demonstrate prompt and regular attendance, or do not engage in learning, may be returned to their schools of origin at any time during the school year. Such decisions are made by the current principals after due consideration and proper notification to the students, parents, and the principals of the schools in the students' attendance areas.

K. Appeals Procedure

Decisions of the Superintendent/designee with regard to enrollment and assignment may be appealed to the Howard County Board of Education if received in writing within 30 calendar days of the date of written notification of the decision. Decisions of the Howard County Board of Education may be further appealed to the State Board of Education if received in writing within 30 calendar days of the of the date of written notification of the local school board's decision.

V. Compliance

- A. School-based staff are responsible for ensuring that students assigned to their school are properly enrolled.
- B. The Office of Pupil Personnel is responsible for investigating the residency or custody status of students seeking to meet enrollment requirements, determining whether circumstances exist which constitute hardship where appropriate, and reporting findings to school staff for appropriate action.
- C. The Board of Education is responsible for establishing tuition rates annually.
- D. The Finance Office is responsible for invoicing responsible parties and collecting tuition payments.
- E. Parents/emancipated students are responsible for providing documentation required for enrollment in Howard County Schools.
- F. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that procedures related to enrollment and school assignment are published annually to staff, parents, and the community.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is directed to develop procedures to implement this policy.

VII. References

A. Legal

The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 4-109(c),
Geographical Attendance Areas
The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Sections 4-122 and 4-122.1,
Out-of-County Living Arrangement and Informal Kinship Care
The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-101, Admission
of Students
The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-301, Compulsory
Attendance
The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-305(d)(5),
Suspension and Expulsion
COMAR 13A.06.02, Prekindergarten Programs
COMAR 13A.08.01.02, Age for School Attendance
COMAR 13A.08.05, Informal Kinship Care
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B

B. Other Board Policies

Policy 6010, School Attendance Areas
Policy 8010, Grading and Reporting: Pre Kindergarten through Grade 8
Policy 9020, Students' Rights and Responsibilities
Policy 9070, Academic Eligibility for High School Extracurricular Activities

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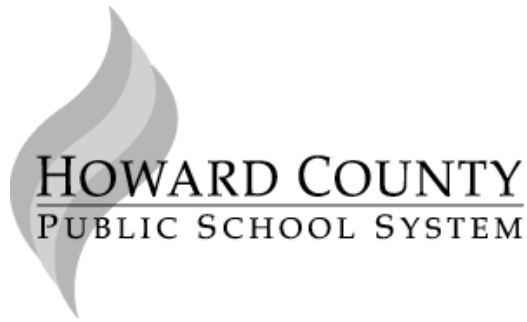
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POLICY 9000-PR
IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES
ENROLLMENT, RESIDENCY, STUDENT
ASSIGNMENT AND ADMISSION TO PRE-K
AND KINDERGARTEN

Effective: March 12, 2009

I. School Procedures

- A. A student must be registered by his or her parent (or, in the case of separation or divorce, the custodial parent). The following documentation must be presented at the time of registration. All documents should be originals. The school may make photographic duplicates at the time of registration.
1. Proof of student's date of birth
Acceptable documents are birth certificate, hospital or physician's certificate, church/baptismal certificate, passport, or military identification. The state of Maryland has established the age for admission to public schools. Application for waivers may be made under the provisions of section III.
 2. Proof of parent identity
Acceptable documents are driver's license with photograph, passport, Motor Vehicle Administration identification, or other legal form of photographic identification.
 3. Proof of parental relationship or custody
 - a. Acceptable documents are birth certificate that identifies the parents, court order, separation or divorce decree, or other legal identification.
 - b. In cases of separation or divorce, when primary physical custody has been awarded, documents regarding the bona fide residence must reflect that of the parent with primary physical custody. If parents have joint legal custody with no primary custody designated, documents regarding the bona fide residence must reflect that of the parent with whom the student lives regularly.
 4. Proof of emancipation when applicable
 5. Proof of current student immunization
 6. Student's social security number (requested but not required)

7. Proof of residency

- a. Homeowner – Acceptable documents are a deed or a deed of trust that has all required signatures, along with any of the following: current cable bill, current bill for non-cellular telephone, or current gas and electric bill. If a home was just purchased and no deed is available, signed settlement papers may be submitted. Within 30 days of enrollment, the parent must submit a deed or a deed of trust with all required signatures.
 - b. Renter – Acceptable document is an original, current lease with all required signatures, along with any of the following: current cable bill, current bill for non-cellular telephone, or current gas and electric bill.
 - c. Shared housing – See Multiple Family Determination.
- B. In cases in which the school questions the accuracy or completeness of the enrollment information or if the parent cannot provide all of the necessary information, the parent is directed to contact the school’s Pupil Personnel Worker to assist with the enrollment process.
- C. If nonresidency or noncustody of an enrolled student is suspected, the school should contact the Pupil Personnel Worker to investigate. If the parent is found to be in non-compliance, the school will issue a letter of withdrawal giving the opportunity for appeal to the Office of Student Services within ten (10) school days of the date of issuance.
- D. If a student is in state supervised care (including foster care), enrollment procedures are governed by COMAR 13A.08.07. The Office of Pupil Personnel will facilitate such enrollment.

II. Office of Pupil Personnel Procedures

A. Investigation

Upon request, the Office of Pupil Personnel will investigate the residency or custody status of students seeking to meet enrollment requirements and report findings to school staff for appropriate action. The Office of Pupil Personnel may utilize the services of the Coordinator of Security for record searches, investigative follow-up, or other actions necessary to residency investigations.

B. Hardship

When seeking enrollment for students under the hardship provisions defined in this policy, the parent or potential caregiver must provide documented evidence of hardship. Upon request, the Pupil Personnel Worker will meet with the parent and/or caregiver to complete the appropriate forms.

1. Informal Kinship Care

- a. The relative providing informal kinship care must provide evidence of bona fide residence.
- b. The relative verifies the informal kinship care relationship through a sworn affidavit and provides documentation of hardship to the Office of Pupil Personnel. A new affidavit and supporting documentation must be provided each year at least two weeks before the beginning of the school year.
- c. The relative must notify the Office of Pupil Personnel in writing within 30 days, if any change occurs in the care of the student or in the serious family hardship of the student's parent.
- d. The relative providing informal kinship care shall make the full range of educational decisions for the student. The parent of a student in an informal kinship care relationship shall have the final decision-making authority regarding the educational needs of the student.
- e. The Office of Pupil Personnel may verify the facts given by the relative providing informal kinship care. If fraud or misrepresentation is discovered during an audit, the student shall be withdrawn from the HCPSS. Any person who willfully makes a material misrepresentation in the affidavit shall be subject to a penalty payable to the HCPSS for three times the pro rata share of tuition for the time the student fraudulently attends a public school in the county.

2. Rights and Responsibilities for Caregiver Status

- a. Caregivers must provide evidence of bona fide residence.
- b. Caregivers must verify that they are providing care to the student by completing a notarized Caregiver Agreement. The parent of the student must complete a notarized Parent Agreement. Both agreements and documentation of hardship must be provided to the Office of Pupil Personnel. Supporting documentation of continuing hardship must be provided each year at least two weeks before the beginning of the school year.
- c. Caregivers must notify the Office of Pupil Personnel in writing within 30 days, if any change occurs in the care of the student or in the serious family hardship of the student's parent.
- d. Caregivers shall make the full range of education decisions for the student. The parent of a student in a caregiver relationship shall have the final decision-making authority regarding the educational needs of the student.
- e. The Office of Pupil Personnel may verify the facts given by the caregiver. If fraud or misrepresentation is discovered during an audit, the student shall be withdrawn from the HCPSS. Any person who willfully

makes a material misrepresentation in the Caregiver Agreement and the Parent Agreement shall be subject to a penalty payable to the HCPSS for the pro rata share of tuition for the time the student fraudulently attends a public school in the county.

C. Multiple Family Determination

Guest families residing with host families may establish residency through the completion of the Multiple Family Disclosure form.

1. Guest families living with host families who are renting should have their names placed on leases as "occupants." Guest families must provide two additional proofs of residency within 14 days, including but not limited to a pay stub, Post Office change of address label, credit card statement, tax statement, or bank statement. If special circumstances exist, a Multiple Family Disclosure may be completed with the school's Pupil Personnel Worker.
2. Guest families living with host families who own a home must complete a Multiple Family Disclosure form at a meeting with the school's Pupil Personnel Worker. One member of both the guest and host family must attend. The host must bring a copy of the deed and one of the following: a recent utility bill, a recent non-cellular telephone bill, or a recent cable bill. The host and guest must each bring some form of photo identification for the purpose of notarization. The guest must also provide two additional proofs of residency within 14 days, including but not limited to a pay stub, Post Office change of address label, credit card statement, tax statement, or bank statement. Two recent proofs of residency must be provided to the school at the beginning of each school year as long as the multiple family living situation continues, or the student will be withdrawn.
3. Multiple family residency is subject to investigation at any time. If it is found that the multiple family claim is false, tuition will be charged from the first date of entry and the school will withdraw the student. This may be appealed to the Office of Student Services within 10 school days of the notification of withdrawal.

D. Homeless Student Determination

1. Homeless students are students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Homeless students include:
 - a. Students who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels,

- hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement
- b. Students who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
 - c. Students who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings, and
 - d. Migratory students who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in a, b, or c.
2. Pupil Personnel Workers will make determinations of homelessness and will facilitate enrollment.
 3. Homeless students must be immediately enrolled even if they do not have required documents such as school records, medical records, and proof of residency. The school and Pupil Personnel Worker will assist in obtaining necessary records as quickly as possible.
 4. If a dispute arises regarding the educational placement of a homeless student, the student must be immediately admitted to the school of choice while the dispute is being resolved.

III. Early and Deferred Admission

A. Deferred Admission

Parents who feel their children are not ready to attend kindergarten at the age established by the state of Maryland may apply for a one-year waiver. Level of Maturity waiver applications may be obtained from the Office of School Administration. Following the one-year waiver, children should be registered for kindergarten.

B. Early Admission

Parents who feel their children display an exceptionally high degree of cognitive, social, emotional and physical readiness to attend prekindergarten, kindergarten or first grade one year prior to the age established by the state of Maryland may apply for early admission. Early admission is open only to children whose birthdays fall between September 2 and October 15, inclusive. For prekindergarten, only parents of children who are eligible based on the

requirements established by the state may apply for early admission. (See also accelerated grade placement under Policy 8010.)

1. Parents may obtain information and application packets between January and the first day of kindergarten registration. Principals are available to discuss the information in the packet.
2. Applications include developmental checklists to be completed by parents and preschool teachers or others knowledgeable about the child. All information should be submitted to the elementary administration office before the last business day in March.
3. Students for whom completed applications are received will be tested by the school system using a standardized assessment.
4. The Office of Elementary Education will review application materials and scores and make a decision regarding admission by the end of May. The Office of Elementary Curricular Programs will notify parents in writing of the decision. Parents may appeal the decision to the appropriate elementary school director within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of notification.
5. For parents who move into Howard County from another state after the application window, the early admission procedures will be followed until the end of the business day one week prior to the start of the fall semester.
6. Student admission under early entrance is subject to a 30-calendar day trial period. Standardized developmental checklists will be used to assess student performance. Parents of students for whom continuation in kindergarten is not recommended will be notified in writing at the end of the trial period. Parents may appeal the decision of non-continuation to the assistant superintendent for school administration within ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the non-continuation notice.

IV. Student Reassignment Initiated by Parents Under Policy Provisions I.2 (Safety), I.3 (Student Relocation), I.4 (School-Based Employees), I.5 (Special Programs), and I.10 (Special Circumstances)

- A. Parents requesting reassignment of students will submit the form, "Request for Student Reassignment," with appropriate supporting documentation, to the Superintendent's designee.

- B. For admission to the JROTC program:
 - 1. Students who do not have a JROTC program offered at their designated school are eligible to apply.
 - 2. Applications from in-county students must be received by the established deadline.
 - 3. Students who transfer into the school system during the school year or during the summer months and were not in a JROTC program, may apply by the established deadline for the following school year.
 - 4. Students who transfer into the school system during the summer months, or during the school year and were in a JROTC program, are eligible to apply if a favorable recommendation is received from the previous JROTC instructor and space is available in the program to which the student is applying.
 - 5. Exceptions may be made if the JROTC program is at risk for being eliminated due to low enrollment.
- C. The Superintendent's designee will approve or deny the request.
- D. While the application is pending, the student will remain in attendance in the school of original assignment.
- E. Parents may appeal decisions of the Superintendent's designee to the Board of Education.

V. Student Reassignment Initiated by Parents Under Provision I.9 (Open School Designation)

All schools will have designated school attendance areas determined by the Board of Education. Students attending public schools in Howard County are initially assigned by the Board of Education to schools serving the school attendance area in which their parents have bona fide residence. Students are required to attend the schools to which they are assigned unless a special exception is made. In the event that the Board of Education identifies schools that are open to enrollment by students not living in the school's attendance area, student reassignment may be initiated by parents in accordance with the following procedures:

- A. Parents requesting reassignment to an open school will submit the form, "Request for Student Reassignment," during a designated period to the Superintendent's designee.

- B. In any school(s) where there are more applicants than openings, a lottery will be conducted.
1. The lottery will be administered by the Superintendent's designee.
 2. A timeline will be established which includes: announcement of the lottery, the lottery registration window, the date on which the lottery will be held, and deadlines for selected students to exercise their options.
 3. Each student's name will be given a number. The affected parents and students will be invited to attend an open meeting at which the lottery is held. Numbers will be drawn to fill the available slots in the open enrollment school. Additional numbers will be drawn to establish a list of alternates.
 4. In the event that students selected by the lottery do not exercise their option by the established lottery deadline, alternates will be extended the option in the order drawn until a given deadline or until the number of available slots is filled, whichever comes first.
- C. If no lottery is necessary, the Superintendent's designee will approve or deny the request.
- D. Students reassigned under this provision will be ineligible for participation in interscholastic athletics for a period of one year, effective the day of transfer.
- E. Students reassigned under this provision must provide their own transportation.

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