

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
School District #33 (Chilliwack)**

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**531.1  
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION  
School Admission and Choice**

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**1. DEFINITIONS:**

**school age** is defined by the School Act as a person who has or will have attained the age of 5 years on or before December 31 of that school year and who has not attained the age of 19 years before July 1 in the year of application.

**parent** includes a guardian of the person appointed by court order or under the will of a deceased parent, but does not include a non-custodial parent.

**guardian** means a person who is so ordered by the court in accordance with the Family Relations Act.

**ordinarily resident** means the establishment of a permanent home and maintenance of an ongoing presence in the school district and the term. The parent or guardian has the responsibility to show they meet the definition of ordinarily resident. The place of ordinary residence at the time of application will determine the applicant's category for purposes of section 2(d) of this regulation.

**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.

**school district child** means a catchment area child or a non-catchment area child.

**catchment area child** means a person

- a) of school age
- b) resident in the catchment area of the school

**non-catchment area child** means a person

- a) of school age
- b) resident in the school district and
- c) not resident in the catchment area of the school

**non-school district child** means a person

- a) of school age
- b) resident in British Columbia, and
- c) not resident in the school district

**previous school year** means the school year previous to the school year for which the person is applying to enroll in an educational program.

**continuing student** means a student in attendance at the school or designated feeder school during the previous school year.

**feeder schools** and their related **receiving schools** are as described by the Board's catchment areas, where the class from the highest grade offered by the feeder school would be enrolled the next year in a designated receiving school unless an application for enrolment elsewhere is accepted under the district's enrolment process for continuing students.

**district choice programs** are as specified in the district's policy on programs of choice or are programs established with a particular educational focus, offered at specific schools, for which application to the school district must be made. They may have special program entrance criteria and special catchment areas.

## 2. DETERMINATION OF AVAILABLE SPACE AND FACILITIES

- a) Space and facilities are available in a school to enroll a student or applicant if, based on reasonable enrolment projections, there is expected capacity for both physical space and instructional resources to provide the student or applicant with an educational program.
- b) The Board delegates to the Superintendent of Schools (or designate) the decisions whether space and facilities are available in individual schools and educational programs.
- c) Decisions on space, program capacity and facilities availability will be made in consultation with the principal of the affected school and will give consideration to the following factors:
  - the operating capacity of the school as defined by the Ministry of Education
  - staff assigned to a school by the district

- the physical space in which instructional programs operate in the school
  - the ability of the school to provide appropriate educational programs for the applicant and other students
  - the needs of other programs located in the school
- d) If space and facilities are determined to be available, enrolment in educational programs in the school will be offered in the following priority order, provided that application deadlines and requirements are met:

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|------------|---|
| Category A | continuing student who attended the school or feeder school during the previous school year.  |
| Category B | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. catchment area student wait-listed before March 1 from previous years.</li> <li>2. other catchment area student</li> <li>3. new non-catchment area student who is a sibling of a continuing non-catchment area student</li> </ol> |
| Category C | non-catchment area child  |
| Category D | non-school district child   |

- e) Wait lists will be established for those not accepted. If an applicant declines an offer of enrolment, the applicant will be removed from the current year's wait list.
- f) Evaluation of space availability will take place periodically by the principal to ensure that the maximum numbers of requests are met at the earliest time possible.
- g) Tie-breaking - When applications made within district enrolment timeline requirements have the same priority selection, priority between them will be determined by time and date of application.

### 3. **CATCHMENT AREAS**

The location of a student's normal residence will usually determine the catchment area school for enrolment purposes. The Board determines the boundaries for each school and may periodically adjust these based on the number of school-aged children residing in the catchment area, school space, resources and facilities. Some specialized educational programs available at a single site or limited sites may have the district as their catchment area.

**4. REGISTRATION, ENROLMENT AND PLACEMENT PROCESS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT CHILDREN**

- a) **Continuing School District Students:** school district students who will be continuing at the same school or the related receiving school without a change of educational program are not required to apply.
  
- b) **Transfers:** school district children who are applying to transfer from one school in the district to another school in the district or to a different educational program are required to apply in accordance with the district enrolment timeline requirements. Parents may request a transfer and this will be granted providing a suitable program, resources, space and facilities are available. A parent requesting a transfer must contact the school their child is currently enrolled in and complete the transfer form. A copy will be given to the parent and a copy will be forwarded to the requested school. The principal, in consultation with the parents may arrange a transfer if the parents believe it is in the best interests of the student. Parents of students transferred by request to a school outside their catchment will be responsible for transportation arrangements to and from school.
  
- c) **Registration and Placement** - If a catchment area school or requested school does not have space, facilities, adequate resources or an appropriate educational program to meet the student's educational needs, an alternative placement will be made in accordance with this regulation as outlined below:
  - i) A student remains a student of his/her catchment area school until an alternate placement is accepted.
  
  - ii) Should a student require an immediate school placement during the school year (new registration to the district), the principal, in consultation with the parents, will arrange for placement in another school as an overflow student. Upon request, as indicated on the registration or transfer form, the student's name will be kept on the catchment area or requested school's wait list for a possible placement at the start of the next school year.
  
  - iii) Should a student's application for registration occur after the district enrolment deadline and the school is not able to accommodate the request, the student will be placed on the wait list for the next school year.

- iv) During the summer months when schools are closed, parents may make application to register students in person at the Chilliwack School District Office during regular office hours. A list identifying the time and date a student has requested registration will be kept and forwarded to the principal of the requested/catchment area school for consideration and placement. The place of ordinary residence at the time of application will determine the applicant's category for purposes of section 2(d) of this regulation. All schools will have registration times during the week prior to school opening following the summer break.

**5. GUARANTEE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

School district children who apply for enrolment in an educational program will be provided with an educational program in the district as required by the *School Act*, unless a parent of the student consents to a placement outside the school district.

**6. COMMITMENT**

- a) The district process shall encourage school age students and their parents to jointly consider the student's educational needs before requesting an assignment to a school other than the current school or the catchment area school.
- b) 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 an educational program (in or out of the school district), applications for all other programs become invalid. When a student is offered a placement for which they have applied, a timely decision is required. Normally this would be within 24 hours unless extenuating circumstances exist. Failure to accept a placement offer in a timely fashion will result in the space be allocated to another student and removal of the previous student offered the space from the wait list. If the placement is accepted, the student may not maintain enrolment or wait list status at another school.
- c) 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.
- d) Students accepted to a school who reside in the school district shall remain enrolled at their school of choice as a continuing student.

**7. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants for enrolment must meet all program requirements for the requested educational program.

**8. DISCRETIONARY ACCEPTANCE: SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED NONSCHOOL DISTRICT CHILDREN**

Enrolment applications from non-school district children may be refused if the child:

- a) is under suspension from a BC public school or school district, or
- b) has been refused an educational program by a BC public school Board 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 himself or herself to his or her studies. Such applications or any other applications from students with limited or restricted attendance by other schools or government bodies outside the BC public school system, will be referred to the Superintendent or designate for a decision on admission. Such students will only be admitted in extraordinary circumstances where the Superintendent is satisfied that the student is unlikely to repeat the offending conduct. Admissions may be made subject to terms and conditions.

**9. 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 communities outside the school district (ie newsletters, newspaper advertisements, website).

**10. DISTRICT ENROLMENT TIMELINES**

**a) Catchment Area Applications**

- i) **Kindergarten:** September to March 1: Applications will be received, dated and prioritized for kindergarten enrolment for the following school year. It is anticipated that in most cases, families registering their children at their catchment school during this period of time should expect that it is most likely that room will be available at their catchment school for the following September.
- ii) **March 1<sup>st</sup>:** By March 1st, parents of students who remain on the wait list due to enrolment at an earlier date not being possible, and who are in the catchment area, will be contacted by the principal of the catchment area school. They will be advised that their children will be enrolled at their catchment school for the school year beginning in September. If, at this time, a parent/guardian chooses to

waive their right to attend their catchment school, the student will remain at the school in which they are currently registered as a continuing student for the following year.

- iii) **June 1<sup>st</sup>:** A newly arrived student, who registers at their catchment school by June 1st, should anticipate that whenever possible, the student will be enrolled at the school by September of the upcoming school year.
  - iv) **After June 1<sup>st</sup>:** A newly arrived catchment area student registering after June 1st may be required to have their name placed on the wait list for the school if room is not immediately available for September. Priority of enrolment at the school will be dependent upon the time and date of registration with priority given if there are siblings attending the school who will remain as continuing students in September.
  - v) **June 15<sup>th</sup>:** Principals communicate with parents regarding enrolment for September for catchment students who have applied prior to June 1st.
- b) **Continuing Students** who reside in the school district but not in the catchment area are not required to apply annually to attend the school in which they are currently enrolled. These students will be enrolled automatically subject to space availability and meeting program requirements, unless transferred or withdrawn. See sections 4 (a) and 2 (d).
- c) **Continuing Non-District Students** must re-apply to attend the school in which they are enrolled each year prior to March 1st . If it is anticipated that space will not be available for the following school year, students and their families will be notified prior to the beginning of Spring Break by the principal of the school in which they are enrolled.
- d) **Non-Catchment Area Applicants and Non-School District Applicants**
- i) **January 15<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>:** schools will accept registrations for first time, non-catchment area applicants and non-school district applicants. These applications will be prioritized in accordance with 2.d) (ie non-catchment children with siblings who are continuing students, other non-catchment children, non-school district children). These registrations will identify the “eligible” applicants to be considered for enrolment in the

following September. Notification of acceptance will normally be given by **June 15th**.

- ii) Non-catchment area students who apply **after March 1<sup>st</sup>**: A non-catchment area child applying to a specific program or school and a non-school district child applying to a specific program or school after March 1st will have their application considered for enrolment in the school or program at the discretion of the principal if space, facilities, resources and an-appropriate educational program are available. Late applications received after March 1st may not be reviewed until September enrolments are confirmed following the first week school is in session in September.
  
- e) **Unconfirmed Students in September**  
An enrolled student may be removed from the school's register if the student has not returned to school by 3:00pm on the last day of the first week of school opening in September and if the parent has not advised the school of the student's late return.