

SPECIAL SERVICES

Admissions, Residency, and Attendance

Exceptions for Attendance at Other Than Base School and Procedure for Applying for Intracounty Exceptions

This regulation supersedes Regulation 2230.8.

I. PURPOSE

To provide procedures for granting exceptions to school-age (K-12) students to attend schools other than their base schools.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

- A. Wording is changed throughout to include guardians as well as parents.
- B. Wording is changed throughout to indicate that responsibility for student transfers has moved from the Office of Social Work and Support Services to the Office of Student Registration.
- C. Section IV.A. adds wording to emphasize the general expectation that a student will attend his or her base school, that new student transfer applications must be submitted annually, that grade-level capacity is a factor in considering student transfer applications, and that a transfer request must be made for the school closest to the home or base school.
- D. Section IV.A.1. adds the requirement for an affidavit to accompany a student transfer application for reason of child care hardship.
- E. Section IV.A.2. adds social workers as an example of a source that might provide supporting documentation for exceptions due to medical, emotional, or social adjustment.
- F. Section IV.A.3. clarifies that capacity issues will not prevent the approval of a student transfer application for an FCPS employee who requests a student transfer for his or her child to attend school at or near his or her work location.
- G. Section IV.A.4. adds language to clarify the process and requirements for student transfer applications based on high school curricular program.

- H. Section IV.A.5. clarifies that a student transfer may be approved from a half-day to a full-day program for kindergarten children of FCPS staff members who work at the requested school.
- I. Section IV.B. adds language to clarify the process for student transfer requests based on intended family relocation to another attendance area within 180 days or based on relocation to another attendance area within 60 days of the end of the school year.
- J. Section IV.C. adds language to clarify when student transfer requests may be approved for siblings.
- K. Section IV.D. adds senior status as a reason for student transfer approval by exception.
- L. Section IV.E.1. adds the requirement for a letter of understanding to accompany requests for student transfer based on high school curricular program.
- M. Section IV.E.3. adds the requirement for the requested school principal to consult with the base school principal, when appropriate, during the application review process.
- N. Section IV.G. clarifies school responsibilities for renewal applications and adds language emphasizing that all student transfer applications must be renewed annually, changes the date by which schools will forward renewal applications to the Office of Student Registration from May 31 to April 30, and adds the requirement that students are making academic progress to be approved for renewal on the basis of high school curricular program.

III. EXCEPTIONS DUE TO BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS (TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED)

Where possible, adjustments in school population shall be implemented through attrition and phasing. The School Board may approve a grade-by-grade phase-in boundary adjustment for students, beginning with the incoming class at the middle or high school level when feasible. Rising 6th (or 5th in K-5 schools), 8th, and 12th grade students affected by a boundary change may, at the discretion of the School Board, be provided the option of remaining in the schools they attended prior to the change. Upon parental request, siblings in the same school as students affected by a boundary adjustment may be included in the boundary adjustment.

A. Principal Survey of Parents and Guardians

When boundary adjustments are announced in the spring, the principal shall survey the parents of current 5th (or 4th), 7th, or 11th grade students. If a grade-by-grade phase-in has been approved, the principal shall survey the appropriate parents based on the approved phasing plan.

B. Parents or Guardian Request

When authorized by School Board boundary decisions, a parent or a guardian who wants his or her child to remain in his or her current school for the following school year shall notify the child's principal in writing by April 1.

C. Principal's List

The principal shall compile an exception-due-to-boundary-adjustments list (with names and addresses) of students who want to remain in their current schools for the following school year. The principal shall send a copy of this list to (1) the principal(s) of the school(s) that would otherwise have been receiving these students, (2) the appropriate cluster assistant superintendent, and (3) the Office of Facilities Planning, Department of Facilities and Transportation Services.

D. Notification of Parents or Guardians

The principal shall notify, in writing, the parents or guardians of each student who has been approved to remain in his or her current school for the following school year.

E. Transportation for Boundary Phase-Ins

Transportation is provided only for School Board-approved boundary phase-ins.

IV. EXCEPTIONS FOR REASONS OTHER THAN BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS (TRANSPORTATION NOT PROVIDED)

A. Reasons for Exceptions

A student is expected to attend the school that serves his or her attendance area, and every effort is made toward that end. However, if the school capacity, grade-level capacity, and the school curricular program at the requested school will permit, a request for a student transfer by exception may be approved by the coordinator of Student Registration. Requests must be made for the school closest to the home or base school that is not at capacity unless the specific reason for the transfer request necessitates placement at another school. All student transfer approvals are for one year only, and a new application must be submitted annually to extend the transfer. In addition to availability in the requested school or program, based on the curricular program and school capacity, one of the following conditions must exist:

1. Child Care Hardship (Elementary School Only)

The family demonstrates hardship in obtaining appropriate full-time before- and/or after-school supervision within the boundaries of the school where the child actually resides. Base school personnel shall verify child care provisions and the location of such within the requested school boundaries or within the next closest school boundary area if capacity issues preclude placement within the school boundaries where the child care is provided. The Affidavit for Student Transfer

Child Care Requests, which can be accessed at <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/StudentRegistration/student-transfer/affidavit.pdf>, must be attached to the student transfer application verifying the facts of the request and indicating attempts the family has made to procure child care within the community of residence.

2. Medical, Emotional, or Social Adjustment

The student demonstrates exceptional hardship for reasons of medical, emotional, or social adjustment. Independent, detailed documentation substantiating the circumstances (e.g., from physicians, psychologists, social workers, or counselors) is required and must be attached to the student transfer application.

3. Child of Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Employee

The parent or guardian is an FCPS employee who works more than 20 hours per week, resides in Fairfax County, and is requesting a student transfer to the school in which the parent or guardian is employed or to the school nearest the employee's work location. If the request for a student transfer is to the school in which the parent or guardian is employed, in this instance only, capacity issues will not prevent the transfer.

4. High School Curricular Program

The student intends to enroll and remain enrolled for the year in a sequential curricular program from the Fairfax County Public Schools Standard Course Offerings, which is not offered at the base high school. For example, applications may be submitted for an exception for an Advanced Placement (AP) or an International Baccalaureate (IB) program if the base school does not offer the desired program of study. Student transfers can be requested to the school with space available that is closest to the student's residence or base school. Parents or guardians and students are required to sign a letter of understanding committing to the requested program. Students are required to enroll in courses as outlined in the letter of understanding. Renewal applications are required annually and must be submitted by April 1. New applications must be received by April 15 for the following school year.

5. Kindergarten

Except for children of FCPS staff members who work at the requested school, transfers for kindergarten students to schools with full-day kindergarten programs will be granted only when the student's base school has a full-day kindergarten program. Requests must meet one of the reasons for exception mentioned elsewhere in this regulation (e.g., family relocation, child care, or adjustment).

B. Family Relocation

1. A request for a student transfer by exception may be approved by the coordinator of Student Registration if the family has moved from one school attendance area to another during the school year or can demonstrate definite plans to do so within 180 calendar days. Proof of purchase or rental must be provided with the request for student transfer. The new residence must be the primary permanent residence for the student and the student's family and be located within the requested school boundaries. Additional documentation may be requested to establish that the new residence is bona fide and that the family has abandoned or will abandon any other property as its primary residence.
2. A request for a student transfer by exception may be approved if the family has moved from one school attendance area to another within 60 calendar days of the end of the school year but requests that the child be permitted to continue attending his or her previously assigned school until completion of the school year. A formal student transfer application is not required; however, the family must provide proof of the new address to the principal of the school in which the child is currently enrolled.

C. Siblings

1. A request for a student transfer by exception may be approved by the coordinator of Student Registration for a kindergarten student whose older sibling is enrolled in an elementary school partial-immersion foreign language program if the kindergarten student plans to enroll in the immersion program the following year. However, if the transfer request is for a school with a full-day kindergarten program, it will be granted only when the student's base school also has a full-day kindergarten program.
2. A request for a student transfer by exception may be approved by the coordinator of Student Registration if failure to do so would require that siblings enrolled in grades K-12 attend schools on different calendars.
3. Under no other circumstances will having a sibling in the school be considered sufficient reason for exceptions to enrollment. Except as noted above in section III., with regard to boundary adjustments, the reasons for requests for student transfers for siblings must be one of those stated elsewhere in section IV.

D. Senior Status

A request for student transfer by exception may be approved by the coordinator of Student Registration for a student who is currently attending the requested school and who will move to a different attendance area after the completion of the school year but who wants to return to the same location to complete the final year of elementary, middle, or high school. Capacity issues will not be a barrier to approval.

E. Application Procedure

1. Initial Student Transfer Application

The parent or guardian submits a completed student transfer application with appropriate documentation for the following school year to the student's base school principal (Form SS/SE-222 Initial Student Transfer Application). This form can be accessed at <http://www.fcps.edu/forms.htm> and <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/StudentRegistration/student-transfer/index.htm>.

Requests based on sequential curricular programs, including the IB and AP programs, must be submitted with the letter of understanding for the requested program by April 15 for the following school year (Form SS/SE-221 High School Curricular Program Student Transfer Application). This form can be accessed at <http://www.fcps.edu/forms.htm> and at <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/StudentRegistration/student-transfer/index.htm>. All other requests must be submitted by June 1 for the following school year. The reason for the request must meet one of those stated in section IV. of this regulation and include any required documentation. A student must attend his or her base school until a student transfer decision is approved.

2. Base School Principal Review

Following receipt of the application, the base school principal verifies that the information is complete and accurate and approves or does not approve the request, stating the reason. The base school principal forwards the application to the requested school's principal for review.

3. Requested School Principal Review

The requested school principal reviews the application, consulting with the base school principal when appropriate, and approves or does not approve the request, stating the reason. The application is forwarded to the Office of Student Registration for final processing unless the request is for sequential curricular programs. For student transfer requests based on sequential curricular programs, by April 30 the requested school principal forwards to the Office of Student Registration a list of students whose transfers have been approved.

F. Notification

The Office of Student Registration will notify the parent or guardian and schools in writing of all decisions, except for requests for sequential curricular programs and transfer renewals. For sequential curricular programs and transfer renewals, the requested school principal will notify the parent or guardian of the decision in writing.

G. Renewal Application

All student transfer applications must be renewed annually. Renewal applications

are available for schools to download after February 15 and should be sent by the current school to the parents or guardians of currently enrolled transfer students. The parent or guardian must submit a completed renewal application to the current school by April 1, attaching the required documentation for the continued student transfer (Form SS/SE-223 Renewal Student Transfer Application). This form can be accessed at <http://www.fcps.edu/forms.htm> and at <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/StudentRegistration/student-transfer/index.htm>.

Student transfers will be renewed only if the reason for the request meets one of those stated in section IV. of this regulation. High school curricular applications will be renewed only if the student is enrolled in the requested program and is making academic progress. The school of enrollment will review transcripts to verify enrollment and academic progress. Capacity issues will not be a barrier to high school curricular renewal approval. The school of enrollment will notify the parent or guardian of the approval or denial decision in writing. All requests submitted after April 1 will be processed as initial (new) requests. The school will forward a list of students whose transfers have been approved to the Office of Student Registration no later than April 30.

H. Conditions for Student Transfers

1. Conditions of Transfer

Any student who is granted a transfer must maintain appropriate behavior, attend school regularly, and demonstrate academic progress. In addition, the reason for the transfer must continue to exist. If the conditions of the transfer are not maintained, the principal may revoke approval. The principal will notify the parent and the Office of Student Registration of the revocation, and the student will be reassigned to the base school.

2. One-Year Limitation

Student transfer requests are approved for one school year only and must be renewed annually. The school in which the student is enrolled has the responsibility for verifying Fairfax County residency status each year the request is resubmitted.

3. Transportation

Transportation is not provided by FCPS for students attending schools on approved student transfers unless granted through the School Board-approved boundary phase-ins.

I. Appeal Procedure

The parent, guardian, or student 18 years old or older may appeal, in writing, a denial or termination of a request for a student transfer to the director of operations

and strategic planning, Department of Special Services, or his or her designee. An appeal must be received within 30 calendar days of the receipt of notification of the decision to deny or terminate a student transfer. The director of operations and strategic planning's appeal decision, made in collaboration with the appropriate cluster assistant superintendent, shall be final.

See also the current versions of: Policy 2601, Responsibilities and Rights of Students
Policy 8130, Local School Boundaries, Program
Assignments, and School Closings
Regulation 8130, Local School Boundaries, Program
Assignments, and School Closings