

POLICY CODE: JBC

TITLE: SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Whenever any minor child seeks or applies to enroll or gain entrance to any public school in this state, and the child is not accompanied by an adult or is accompanied by an adult who is not the child's parent, guardian, if a legal guardian has been appointed for the child, or legal custodian, the school official or officials or teacher to whom the child applies or reports for enrollment or admission may delay consideration of the enrollment or enlistment of the minor child and require the child's parent, legal guardian or legal custodian to accompany the child and apply for enrollment and admission into the school for and on behalf of the minor child. § 37-15-11 (2002)

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

1. This school district shall admit into its free public schools all minor-age children (that is, those under twenty-one years of age, Miss. Code Ann. §1-3-27), and all compulsory school age children as defined in Policy JBA, which quotes Mississippi code definitions.
2. Each minor child shall attend school in the school district of his/her residence unless legally transferred to another school district by the school board pursuant to Miss. Code §37-15-29.
3. Except for those students who have been legally transferred, each minor child seeking to enroll in this school district shall be a school district resident. All students shall register at the school they are assigned to attend.
4. Any new student enrolling in this school district or any continuing student whose residence has changed shall be accompanied to enrollment by a parent, guardian, adult custodian or adult agent of a social service agency of the district who shall register the minor child for admission, except students who have been legally transferred. The accompanying adult shall be required to verify his/her residence as herein provided as part of the registration process.
5. The person in charge of each school or his/her designee shall require any child enrolling in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1 to present a certified birth certificate and valid immunization certificate upon enrollment. No child will be allowed to enroll in or attend any school without a certified birth certificate or valid immunization certificate.
6. Subject to the provisions of MS Code 37-15-9, subsection (3), [see item 7 below] any child who transfers from an out-of-state public or private school in which that state's law provides for a first grade or kindergarten enrollment date subsequent to September 1, shall be allowed to enroll in this school district at the same grade level as their prior out-of-state enrollment, if:
 - a) The parent, legal guardian or custodian of such child was a legal resident of the state from which the child is transferring;
 - b) The out-of-state school from which the child is transferring is duly accredited by that state's appropriate accrediting authority;
 - c) Such child was legally enrolled in a public or private school for a minimum of four weeks in the previous state; and
 - d) The superintendent of schools of this school district has determined that the child was making satisfactory educational progress in the previous state.
7. When any child applies for admission or enrollment in any public school in the state, the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth, in the absence of an accompanying parent or guardian, shall indicate to the principal or his/he designee if the enrolling child has been expelled from any public

or private school or is currently a party to an expulsion proceeding. If it is determined from the child's cumulative record or application for admission or enrollment that the child has been expelled, the school district may deny the student admission and enrollment until the superintendent of the school or his/her designee has reviewed the child's cumulative record and determined that the child has participated in successful rehabilitative efforts including, but not limited to, progress in an alternative school or similar program. If the child is a party to an expulsion proceeding, the child may be admitted to a public school pending final disposition of the expulsion proceeding. If the expulsion proceeding results in the expulsion of the child, the public school may revoke such admission to school. If the child was expelled or is a party to an expulsion proceeding for an act involving violence, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs or other activity that may result in expulsion, the school district shall not be required to grant admission or enrollment to the child before one (1) calendar year after the date of the expulsion.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND VACCINATIONS

8. No child in grades Pre-K through 12 shall be allowed to enroll in or attend any school without a valid immunization certificate. Valid certificates include:
 - a. Form 121 -- Certificate of Compliance
 - b. Form 121-A -- Medical Exemption Certificate
 - c. Form 121-T -- Temporary Compliance Certificate
 - The Temporary Compliance Certificate, Form 121-T, is not valid after the date shown. After that date, the principal shall deny school attendance by such child unless or until the principal is furnished another Temporary Compliance Certificate, Form 121-T, or a Certificate of Compliance, Form 121, or a Medical Exemption Certificate, Form 121-A.
9. The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) will require the Tdap vaccination for all students entering 7th grade beginning with the school year (2012 – 2013). The Tdap vaccine (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) has previously been a recommended vaccination for this age group since 2006, and 41 other states have already implemented this particular vaccination requirement.

Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, has increased in frequency across the country in recent years, as protection from the childhood pertussis vaccine has become weaker over time in the adolescent population.

The required Tdap vaccination and other recommended vaccinations are available at health department clinics throughout the state and through all Vaccines for Children (VFC) providers for a \$10 administrative fee per vaccine.

Students must have any certificate and/or vaccination required by the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH).

RESIDENCE VERIFICATION PROCEDURE

Definition of residence for school attendance purposes: The student physically resides full time week days/nights and weekends, at a place of abode located within the limits of this school district.

Residency may be determined in the following manner:

A. STUDENTS LIVING WITH PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN(S)

The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a student seeking to enroll must provide this school district with at least two of the items numbered 1 through 10 below as verification of their address, except that a document with a post office box as an address will not be accepted.

1. Filed Homestead Exemption Application form
2. Mortgage documents or property deed

3. Apartment or home lease
4. Utility bills
5. Driver's license
6. Voter precinct identification (Must be dated in current school year)
7. Automobile registration
8. Affidavit and/or personal visit by a designated school district official
9. Certified copy of filed petition for guardianship if pending and final decree when granted.
10. Government assistance documentation dated in current school year (SSI, WIC, Medicaid, TANF, or CHIPS)

B. HOMELESS CHILDREN

When a child is determined to be homeless as defined below, this school district shall consider and take enrollment action that is in the best interest of the child.

As defined by 42 U.S.C. §11302(a), a homeless person includes:

1. an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and
2. an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is--
 - a) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
 - b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
 - c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(A) requires that the local school decide whether it is in the child's best interest to

- a) continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness—
 - 1) in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or
 - 2) for the remainder of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- b) enroll the child or youth in any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

In determining the best interest of the child or youth, the local educational agency shall—

- a) to the extent feasible, keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child's or youth's parent or guardian;
- b) provide a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, to the homeless child's or youth's parent or guardian, if the local educational agency sends such child or youth to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian; and
- c) in the case of an unaccompanied youth, ensure that the homeless liaison assists in placement or enrollment decisions under this subparagraph, considers the views of such unaccompanied youth, and provides notice to such youth of the right to appeal.

42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(B).

C. STUDENTS LIVING WITH ADULTS OTHER THAN PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS:

1. The non-parent(s) claiming district residency must meet the criteria of subparagraph (A) (1) through (10) above, required of a parent or legal guardian.

2. The district resident must provide the school with an affidavit (form may be obtained in the school office) stating his or her relationship to the student, and that the student will be living at his/her abode full time, and provide documentation fully explaining the reason(s) (other than school attendance zone or district preference) for this arrangement. The superintendent or his/her designee will make the necessary factual determinations as required under this policy. Examples of situations where "in loco parentis" authority of an adult will be recognized to establish residency of the minor include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) Death or serious illness of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s);
 - a) Abandonment of the child;
 - b) Child abuse or neglect;
 - c) Unstable family relationships or undesirable conditions in the home of the child's parents or guardians having a detrimental effect on the child;
 - d) Students enrolled in recognized exchange programs residing with host families.
 3. Whenever appropriate the person who has assumed responsibility for the care and custody of the child shall be encouraged to obtain legal guardianship of the child.
- D. The school district may require additional documentation and verification at any time. At the minimum, this school district shall maintain in a file a written instrument identifying the types of documents used to verify each student's residency and copies of any relevant guardianship petition or decree.
- E. The provisions of this policy do not apply to students who reside outside the school district, but who have legally transferred into the school district.

Any court ordered procedure shall take precedent over any procedure contained herein.

AGE VERIFICATION PROCEDURE

It shall be the responsibility of the person in charge of each school or his designee to enforce the requirement for evidence of the age of each pupil before enrollment. The following shall be accepted:

- A certified birth certificate (Miss. Code Ann. §37-15-1.)

TRANSFER STUDENTS

1. No student is to be enrolled in this school district until any and all questions regarding residence or immunizations have been resolved.
2. Students suspended or expelled from another school or school district may not be allowed to enroll.
3. No pupil shall be permanently enrolled in a school in this school district who formerly was enrolled in another school within the state or outside the state until the cumulative record of said pupil shall have been received from the school from which he/she transferred. Should such record have become lost or destroyed, then it shall be the duty of the superintendent or principal of the school where the pupil last attended school to initiate a new record.
4. Unless a transfer student is tested in the manner provided in paragraph 5 below, the student will be permanently enrolled and placed in a grade or class on the basis of an official transcript of credits from the last school attended.
5. All students seeking to transfer from any school, public or private, within or outside of the boundaries of the State of Mississippi, to this school district shall be required to take a standardized test or district approved assessment to determine the grade and class to which the pupil shall be assigned at the time of pupil transfer.

The principal of the school or his/her designee shall administer the test or tests to such pupil or pupils as shall apply for transfer to such public school. Such test or tests shall be administered within thirty days after the filing of each such application for transfer. Notice of the giving of such test shall be given to the applicant not less than five days prior to the date of the administration of such test.

No transfer of a pupil shall be affected until the test has been given and the pupil is assigned to the grade and class for which the test shows he is best suited. No pupil shall be assigned to a grade and class more than three (3) grades above or below the grade or class that the pupil would have been assigned to had the pupil remained in the school from which the transfer is being made. Pending the administration of the test herein provided for and its grading and an assignment based thereon, the superintendent of this school district or the principal of the school to which the pupil seeks admission may assign the pupil temporarily to a grade and class comparable to that in which the pupil would have been had the pupil continued in the school from which the transfer was being made.

If any student is transferred or reassigned within this school district by an order of the board of trustees of this school district as designated by law of the State of Mississippi and not at his own request, the requirement of that pupil taking the standardized test shall be waived. Likewise, if a pupil shall transfer from one school district to another school district in the manner provided and required by the laws of the State of Mississippi, the requirement of such pupil taking the standardized test or district approved assessment shall be waived.

6. Any legal guardianship formed for the purpose of establishing residency for school district attendance purposes shall not be recognized by this school board.

LEGAL REF.: Miss Code § 37-15-1; 37-15-3; 37-15-9; 37-15-11; 37-15-13; 37-15-29;

FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS

It is the intent of the Holly Springs School District to participate in the foreign exchange program whereby students from foreign countries are allowed temporary enrollment in the HSSD to enhance cultural exchange. In order to facilitate placement of foreign exchange students in the school district, the following criteria will be considered by the building principal upon receipt of any such application.

1. The application for enrollment be approved by the building principal prior to the start of the school year in which the student plans to attend, and the application must be for the entire school year.
2. Only placement agencies appearing on the National Association of Secondary School Principals list will be eligible to submit applications.
3. All applications shall have attached a resume of the host family with whom the student will be living during the school year. The resume shall contain the names of all adult members of the host family and their addresses and telephone numbers where they may be reached during and after school hours. The names and ages of all children in the home should also be included in the resume.
4. All applicants and/or agencies applying for enrollment and admission will be individually responsible to ensure that all requirements of the Immigration and Naturalization Service are met.
5. It is the responsibility for the foreign exchange counselor to secure, transfer, and have validated all records that are required by the foreign exchange student's home country. The school counselor will provide only a record of credits earned in the Holly Springs School District.