

Entrance, Placement, and Transfer

Age of Attendance

Pursuant to Montana law, residents of the District who satisfy the minimum entry age requirement and are less than 19 years of age on or before September 10 may enroll and attend the District's schools. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for admitting an adult who is 19 years of age or older if there are exceptional circumstances.

The administration shall include children enrolled pursuant to this policy in the District's calculation of average number belonging (ANB) as reported to OPI to the extent allowed by law.

Except when enrollment is otherwise required by law, the Board of Trustees has the discretion to give special permission to enroll a student who has not reached the age of five (5) on or before September 10 of the school year where there are exceptional circumstances. The Board of Trustees declares the following to be qualifying "exceptional circumstances" within the meaning of the term as used in 20-5-101(3) MCA and "special permission" within the meaning of that term as used in 20-7-117 MCA, that merit waiving the age provisions of 20-7-117 MCA for qualifying children under 5 years of age:

1. A child at least 3 years of age with a disability qualifying the child for services under the federal individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
2. A child who is 4 years of age or older on or before September 10 of the school year in which enrollment is to occur who:
 - a. meets the income eligibility of 200% or less of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or
 - b. is Limited English Proficient within the meaning of Title III of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or
 - c. is homeless as defined in 42 U.S. Code § 11302, or
 - d. has moved into the District and has met the age requirement of another state and were enrolled in either a kindergarten or first grade in that state, or
 - e. is identified as Gifted and Talented or in need of an acceleration plan, or
 - f. does not meet the requirements of a. through e. but is recommended for enrollment by administration.

Entrance, Date and Age

A parent or guardian may request a waiver of the age requirement. The Board must approve any waivers of the age requirement. The District will not assign or admit any child who has reached his/her nineteenth (19th) birthday on or prior to September 10th of the year in which the child is to enroll. A student may request a waiver of the age limitation, which must be approved by the Board.

School Entrance

Subject to the requirements for immediate enrollment without documentation of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act relating to homeless children and youths, Title I relating to children in foster care, and the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children relating to children of military families:

1. The District requires that proof of age and residence be provided at the time of enrollment.
2. The District requires that a child's parents, legal guardian, or legal custodian present to the school, within forty (40) days of enrollment, proof of identity of the child. If the parent of the student does not provide proof of identification within 40 days, the District shall notify the missing children information program and a local law enforcement authority of the fact that no proof of identity has been presented

for the child.

3. In accordance with the Montana Immunization Law, a student will not be admitted who has not been immunized against disease as required by Montana law. If the student qualifies for conditional attendance or an exemption is filed as defined by Montana law, immunization may not be required.

Placement

The goal of the District shall be to place students at levels and in settings that will enhance the probability of student success. Developmental testing, together with other relevant criteria, including, but not limited to, health, maturity, emotional stability, and developmental disabilities, may be considered in the placement of all students. Final disposition of all placement decisions rests with the principal, subject to review by the Superintendent and the Board. If a student is assigned to a school in the District outside of the adopted school boundaries applicable to that student, this decision is subject to the District's Uniform Grievance Procedure. Upon completion of these procedures, the Board's decision regarding the assignment is final.

Transfer

District policies regulating pupil enrollment from other accredited elementary and secondary schools are designed to protect the educational welfare of the child and of other children enrolled in the District.

Elementary Grades (K-8): Any student transferring into the District will be admitted and placed on a probationary basis for a period of two (2) weeks.

Should any doubt exist with teacher and/or principal as to grade and level placement of the student, the student shall be subject to an educational assessment to determine appropriate grade and level placement.

During the two-(2)-week probationary period, the student will be subject to observation by the teacher and building principal.

Secondary Grades (9-12): Credit Transfer: Resident students seeking to transfer to a District school will be admitted and placed pursuant to the terms of this policy. The District will request the student's records from the prior school district prior to making any final decision on placement.

High school students shall be placed according to the number of credits earned in their previous accredited school districts, subject to Montana Accreditation Rules and Standards and local alternate procedures for earning credit.

Credit Transfer/Assessment for Placement

High School - Requests for transfer of credit or grade placement from any non-accredited, nonpublic school will be subject to examination and approval before being accepted by the District. This will be done by the school counselor or principal. In the case of home schools, the principal may convene a credit evaluation committee consisting of a counselor, a staff member from each subject area in which credit is being requested, and a school principal.

If convened, the credit evaluation committee will take into account the following in its recommendation for awarding credit or grade placement:

1. documentation that a student has spent approximately the same number of classroom hours in home school as would have been spent in a regular class in the District;
2. documentation that a student followed a curriculum essentially similar to that of a course for which credit is requested; and
3. documentation that in the event of a credit request in a lab, industrial arts, or music course, equipment and facilities were sufficient to meet required learning activities of the course.

The credit evaluation committee may also require that a student has satisfactorily passed, in all courses in which a final exam normally is given, a final exam prepared and administered by a staff member in the District.

The District will give credit only for home schools that have met all requirements as specified in Montana law. Credit from home schools will be accepted only when a like course is offered in the District. The school transcripts will record courses taken in home schools or non-accredited schools by indicating title of the course, location where the course was taken, and grade. For the purpose of calculation of class rank, only those courses taken in an accredited school will be used.

Grades 1-8 - Requests from parents of students in non-accredited, nonpublic schools for placement in the District school system will be evaluated by the building principal. In the case of home schools, the building principal may convene an assessment-for-placement team, which may include the principal, teacher in the grade in which the student seeks to enroll, and counselor. The assessment-for-placement team may require formal and/or informal assessments and/or an end-of-the year subject-matter test to be administered and scored. If convened, the assessment-for-placement team may consider the following in its recommendation for grade placement:

1. documentation that the non-accredited, nonpublic school has provided a comparable number of hours as the child would have attended in a public or private school;
2. documentation that the child followed a similar curriculum as would have been provided in an accredited public or private school; and
3. the result of any assessment or end-of-the-year test required by the committee to be administered which indicates that the student has mastered most prerequisite skills.

If a parent is not in agreement with the placement of the child, he/she may request a hearing before the Board.

Cross Reference:

Board Policy 1700 Uniform Grievance Procedure
Board Policy 3212 Education of Homeless Children and Youth
Board Policy 3213 Children of Military Families

Legal Reference:

42 USC § 11431 et seq. Education for Homeless Children and Youths
20 U.S.C. § 6311 Title I (as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act)
§ 20-1-230, MCA Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children
§ 20-5-101, MCA Admittance of child to school
§ 20-5-110, MCA School district assessment for placement of a child who enrolls from a non-accredited, non-public school
§ 20-5-403, MCA Immunization required – release and acceptance of immunization records
§ 20-5-404, MCA Conditional attendance
§ 20-5-405, MCA Medical or religious exemption
§ 20-5-406, MCA Immunization record
§ 20-7-117, MCA Kindergarten and preschool programs
§ 44-2-511(6)(a), MCA Definition of proof of identity
10.55.601 et seq., ARM
10.55.701, ARM Board of Trustees

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