

RESIDENCY/ENROLLMENT

Background

The Mt. Lebanon School District operates District schools for the benefits of school age children (as defined under applicable law or Board Policy) who reside in the District. Except for the specific conditions permitted by this Policy and the Public School Code, only children who are legal residents of the District shall be permitted to attend District schools.

Objective

The objective of this Policy is to communicate the requirements for eligibility for enrollment of school age children in the schools of the District. This policy is subject to any regulatory or statutory changes which may be adopted in the future.

Policy

Every child of school age who is a resident of a Pennsylvania school district is entitled to a public school education. This entitlement and the requirements to secure enrollment discussed throughout this Policy apply equally to resident students residing with their parent(s); to non-resident students living with a District resident who is supporting the child gratis and seeking enrollment under 24 P.S. §13-1302; to nonresident students living in a facility or institution; and to nonresident students living in a foster home. Any references in this Policy to “parents” include guardians and persons in parental relations to students.

Provided that the required enrollment documentation described herein is provided, the District will enroll non-resident children and permit them to attend school. In most cases the child will be permitted to attend school on the next school day after the day on which the child is presented for enrollment, and in all cases within five (5) business days of the District’s receipt of the required documentation.

The District may also conduct a reasonable investigation where it deems it appropriate to determine initial or ongoing eligibility for enrollment under any provision of this Policy.

Required Enrollment Documentation

Except when a child is homeless, whenever a child of school age is presented for enrollment by a parent(s), District resident, or any other person having charge or care of the child, the District shall require that the following information be documented before enrolling the child and allowing the child to attend school:

1. **Proof of the child's age.** Any one of the following constitutes acceptable documentation:

birth certificate; notarized copy of birth certificate; baptismal certificate; copy of the record of baptism – notarized or duly certified and showing the date of birth; notarized statement from the parents or another relative indicating the date of birth; a valid passport; a prior school record indicating the date of birth.

2. **Immunizations required by law.** Acceptable documentation includes: either the child’s immunization record, a written statement from the former school district or from a medical office that the required immunizations have been administered, or that a required series is in progress, or verbal assurances from the former school district or a medical office that the required immunizations have been completed, with records to follow.
3. **Proof of residency.** Acceptable documentation includes: a deed, a lease, current utility bill, current credit card bill, property tax bill, vehicle registration, driver’s license, DOT identification card. The District may require that more than one form of residency confirmation be provided.
4. **Parent Registration Statement.** A sworn statement attesting to whether the student has been or is suspended or expelled for offenses involving drugs, alcohol, weapons, infliction of injury or violence on school property must be provided for a student to be admitted to any school entity pursuant to 24 P.S. § 13-1304-A, as amended.

The District will not deny or delay a child’s school enrollment based on the information contained in a disciplinary record or sworn statement. However, if a student is currently expelled for a weapons offense, the District can provide the student with alternative education services during the period of expulsion pursuant to 24 P.S. § 13-1317.2(e.1), as amended.

5. **Home Language Survey.** All students seeking first time enrollment in the District shall be given a home language survey in according with requirements of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights. Enrollment of the student will not be delayed in order to administer the Home Language Survey.

The District may also request, but not require, picture identification, health or physical examination records, academic records, attendance records, Individualized Education Program, and other special education records.

School Age

Students are considered school age from the time they are admitted to the public school education program until graduation from high school or the age of 21. Students who turn 21 during the school term are entitled to finish that term. Acceptable documentation of age includes birth certificate or

notarized copy of birth certificate, baptismal certificate or copy of record of baptism showing date of birth, notarized statement of parents or another relative indicating the date of birth, a valid passport or prior school record indicating the date of birth.

Resident Children

A child shall be considered a resident of the Mt. Lebanon School District if his or her parents/guardians reside in the District. Enrollment may be conditioned upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of residency as described above.

When parents reside in different school districts due to separation, divorce or other reasons, the child may attend school in the Mt. Lebanon School District if the parent with whom the child lives for a majority of the time is a Mt. Lebanon School District resident, unless a court order or court-approved custody agreement specifies otherwise. Where parents have joint custody and the child's time is evenly divided between the parents and only one parent lives in the Mt. Lebanon School District, the parents must choose which school district the child will enroll in for the school year. If the parent enrolling the child is relying on a court order or custody agreement as the basis for enrolling the child, then that parent must provide the District with a copy of the order or agreement.

Legally Emancipated Minor

An emancipated minor is a student under the age of 21 who has established a domicile apart from the continued control and support of parents or guardians or who is living with a spouse

An emancipated minor who has chosen to establish his or her domicile in Mt. Lebanon apart from the continued control and support of parents or guardians may be registered as a resident of the District provided the individual presents satisfactory proof of residency and satisfactory evidence of legal emancipation.

Children Residing With an Adult Other Than Parent or Legal Guardian

A nonresident child is entitled to attend the District's schools if that child is fully maintained and supported in the home of a District resident as if the child were the resident's own child and if the resident receives no personal compensation for maintaining the student in the District, provided that resident makes application and supplies the required enrollment information noted in the section entitled Required Enrollment Documentation.

Before accepting the child as a student, the District shall require the resident to present either:

1. appropriate legal documentation to show dependency or guardianship; or
2. a sworn notarized statement indicating that the signer is a resident of the District, the child is supported fully without personal compensation or gain, and that the resident will assume all

personal obligations for the child relative to school requirements and intends to so keep and fully support the child continuously and not merely through the school term.

Reasonable documentation to substantiate an affidavit of residential support shall be requested by the Administration. Acceptable documentation includes:

1. Signer is a Resident of the District

- The same documentation listed as proof of residency as previously listed.

2. Signer is Supporting the Child Gratis

- Copy of completed IRS form transferring tax exemption of child to resident
- Copy of Federal or State tax form which lists child as a dependent of resident
- Copy of completed county form transferring child support payments to resident
- Copy of completed State form notifying Department of Welfare of child's new residence
- Copy of insurance policy/card/statement listing child as eligible for services
- Copy of lease/rental agreement identifying the child as a tenant

The District may require that more than one form of documentation be provided.

School-Age Children of Military Personnel

When Pennsylvania residents who are military personnel are deployed and their school-age children are living for that period of time with relatives or family friends who reside in the District, those children are entitled to attend school in the District using the above process. In such an instance, there shall be a presumption that the resident is supporting the child gratis.

Pre-Adoptive and Adoptive Students

Children living with pre-adoptive parents, including pre-adoptive parents who are receiving adoption assistance subsidies, pre-adoptive payments or other payments such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), are eligible to enroll in the District if the pre-adoptive parents are residents of the District.

Re-enrollment of Students Returning from Delinquency Placements

When a student returns to the District from a delinquency placement, the District cannot automatically place the student in an alternative education program for disruptive youth because the student has been adjudicated delinquent. A student returning from a delinquency placement is entitled to an informal hearing to determine whether the student is currently fit to be returned to the regular classroom or meets the definition of a disruptive student who should be placed in an

alternative education program.

The purpose of the hearing is to determine whether the student currently is fit to return to the regular classroom or meets the definition of a disruptive student. Factors the District will consider include:

- whether the incident causing the adjudication occurred at school or at a school-sponsored event;
 - the child's behavior in placement; and
 - the recommendations of teachers and other adults, such as juvenile probation officers, who have worked with the child.

Children and Families with Limited English Proficiency

Children and families with limited English proficiency shall be provided translation and interpretation services to the extent necessary for the family to understand the enrollment process.

Eligibility of Nonresident Students

The District will permit non-resident students to attend District schools as required by law or where otherwise permitted under this Policy. Tuition will be charged for non-resident students in all instances unless specifically waived by law, policy, or separate resolution of the Board. Circumstances in which non-resident students will be permitted to attend District schools include:

1. Nonresident Children Placed in the District

Any child placed in the home of a resident of this District by a court or by an agency of government shall, where required by law, be admitted to the District's schools and shall receive the same benefits and be subject to the same requirements and expectations as resident children. Official documentation from the agency involved or a copy of the court order must be provided prior to admission, and tuition will be charged to the extent permitted by law.

2. Residents of Institutions

A child who is a resident of an institution for the care or training of children located within this District is not a legal resident of the District by such placement but shall, where required by law, be admitted to the schools of this District, and a charge shall be made for the tuition to the district of legal residence in accordance with statute.

3. Future Residents

A student eligible for attendance whose parent or legal guardian has executed a contract to

buy, build or rent a residence in the District may be enrolled without payment of tuition for a period of up to sixty school days. At the time of enrollment of such student(s), parents must present appropriate evidence of a selected residence including an actual street address and an anticipated move-in date. If the student does not become a resident of the District by the end of the period for which free attendance is given, tuition shall be required for the remainder of the time until residency is established. The District reserves the right to require ongoing verification of intended residency and to remove a student from school at any time if adequate verification is not provided.

4. Former Residents

A high school junior or senior who has attended Mt. Lebanon High School as a resident (non tuition) student for at least one full semester immediately before such student's parents/guardians move from the District during the student's junior or senior year may elect to complete his/her high school career (so long as he/she remains in compliance with laws, school rules and policies that apply to resident students), and upon successful completion, graduate from Mt. Lebanon High School as follows:

- a. As a tuition student if the move occurs during the junior year or the first semester of the senior year
- b. Tuition free if the move occurs during the second semester of the senior year.

5. Foreign Exchange Students

F1 Visa Students: Non-resident students residing with a Mt. Lebanon resident who are qualified students of a foreign nation and whose enrollment will enhance and encourage understanding of and association with the cultures of the world community of nations may be admitted for up to one school year when such enrollment will not adversely affect the quality of education offered or increase, directly or indirectly, the cost of education to the School District. Tuition will be charged.

- Should the host family reside outside of the Mt. Lebanon community, an application will only be considered after all requests from Mt. Lebanon host families have been reviewed in accordance with the guidelines outlined for F1 Visa students.
 - Should the host family reside outside of the Mt. Lebanon community, transportation will be the responsibility of the host family.
- Should the F1 Visa student need additional services, e.g., ESL and/or Special Education services, those services will be added to the tuition payment, as needed.

J1 Visa Students: No tuition will be charged when students in approved exchange programs in which the School District participates are residing with host parents who are Mt. Lebanon residents.

Immigration Status

A child's right to be admitted to school may not be conditioned on the child's immigration status. The District may not inquire regarding the immigration status of a student as part of the admission process. This provision does not relieve a student who has obtained an F-1 visa from the student's obligation to pay tuition under Federal law.

Twins and Multiple Siblings

Twins or higher order multiple siblings shall be enrolled in the District in the same manner as all other students. The parent or guardian of twins or higher order multiples who attend the same grade level at the same school may request that the children be placed in the same classroom or separate classrooms. This request must be made no later than ten (10) days after the beginning of the school year or ten (10) days after the first day of the student's attendance, if the students are enrolled after the school year commences. The District shall provide the classroom placement requested unless the District determines that alternate placement is necessary.

A parent or guardian may appeal the District's determination of classroom placement for twins or higher order multiple siblings to the Superintendent.

Address Confidentiality Program (ACP)

Some families may enroll a student using an ACP card which lists a post office box as their address. This is their legal address and the District will not require additional information about their residence. School records from the student's former school will be forwarded through the ACP.

Charter School Enrollment

If a resident student of the District enrolls in a charter school, the charter school shall provide the District with the PDE Charter School Student Enrollment Notification Form within 15 days of the student's enrollment or change in residency and should notify the District within 15 days of a student's withdrawal from the charter school. Failure to provide this form may result in the District withholding payments to the charter school.

Enrollment Complaints

If a dispute arises regarding the enrollment of a student, the person attempting to enroll the child may bring the dispute to the attention of the Department of Education's School Services Unit. Complaints can be made by mail, e-mail or by phone with written follow-up. After receipt of a Complaint, a Department representative will contact the family, the District or other involved parties to determine the facts, whether the child is entitled to enrollment and to try to resolve the dispute.

Administration Responsibility

It shall be the responsibility of the Administration to implement and enforce this policy, to develop any administrative procedures that may be necessary, and to develop the forms required for enrollment in the District. The Administration has the responsibility and the right to use legal means available to assure that students enrolled in the District's schools are meeting the standards of enrollment cited in this policy.

Communication

This policy shall be communicated to:

1. All members of the administration and staff involved in implementing this policy
2. The Mt. Lebanon Community

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