

Policy JBC: School Admissions Policy

I. The St James Parish Public School System maintains a school admission policy pursuant to statutory provisions allowing all lawfully entitled students to become enrolled in the SJPPSS and subsequently educated. Additionally, the SJPPSS ensures that no child is denied enrollment because the child has no permanent address, has been abandoned by his parents, or is in foster care pursuant to placement through the Department of Children and Family Services. (R.S 17:238).

II. The School Board requires parents/guardians who are lawfully residing in St. James Parish and are enrolling their children who also live in St. James Parish into SJPPSS to follow the **school admission procedures** defined in this policy.

III. Admission of Non-Resident Employees

The School Board grants non-resident St. James Parish Public School System employees the privilege of enrolling their PK-12 grade child(ren) in SJPPSS. These non-resident employees must seek authorization **annually** from the Student Services Office by submitting an Employee Out of District Waiver Form. Employees' child(ren) will attend the school in which they work or the school within close proximity of their work location. This does not include acceptance into any program school. The parent must provide transportation for ALL approved requests. If the employee is placed at a different school within the district during the school year, the child(ren) can complete the school year at the assigned school. If, for any reason, the employee is no longer employed by the SJPPSS, the child(ren) will complete the current school year and then return to the school in the attendance zone where he/she resides. A waiver completed by an employee who is not the student's parent/legal guardian will not be processed. The principal of the receiving school may revoke enrollment at any time and for any of the reasons below:

- repeated violations of school rules
- repeated early and/or late arrivals to school

IV. Admission of Expelled Students

The School Board requires students requesting admission who have been recommended for expulsion and/or expelled in another school district in state or out of state to attend the Magnolia Academic Center of Excellence (MACE) on a behavioral contract for a specified term if the following conditions exist:

- The student must legally reside in St. James Parish.
- The student resides in SJP with the domiciliary parent and/or legal guardian.

In addition to all required admissions documents defined in the school admissions procedures in this policy, students who have been recommended for expulsion and/or expelled in another school district in state or out of state will provide the following documents to the Student Services Department. These documents will be used to determine if the applicant meets acceptable conditions for enrollment.

- Complete records from the most recently enrolled school, including but not limited to academic reports, discipline records, and attendance records;
- An official withdrawal form from the most recently enrolled school.

Students who have been recommended for expulsion and/or expelled in another school district in the state or out of state or, for an offense involving a weapon, will be admitted to the SJP Virtual Academy.

V. Admission of Students Who Commit A Felony

The conviction of any student of a felony or the incarceration of any student in a juvenile institution for an act, whether the act is committed in this state or outside this state, which has been committed by an adult would have constituted a felony in this state may be sufficient cause for any superintendent to refuse admission to the student to any school except upon review and approval of a majority of the elected members of the School Board when a request for admission is made to the Board.

VI. **Admission of Children of Military Families**

The School Board shall allow a dependent child of an active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, of the military reserve forces, or the National Guard, or a Department of Defense civilian to register and preliminarily enroll in a public school under its jurisdiction by remote means, including electronic means, before becoming a resident of the state, provided all of the following apply:

- The student's parent or legal guardian is transferred or pending transfer to a military installation or comparable duty location in Louisiana pursuant to an official military order.
- The student's parent or legal guardian provides a copy of the official military order transferring the parent or legal guardian to a military installation or comparable duty location in Louisiana to the School Board.
- The student's parent or legal guardian completes and submits all required registration and enrollment forms and documentation, except that proof of residency shall not be required until ten (10) days after the arrival date specified on the parent or legal guardian's transfer orders.

The School Board shall provide a student of a military family who remotely registers the same enrollment opportunities available to resident students, including requesting and applying for school assignments, registering for courses, participating in extracurricular activities, and applying to any school or program that requires an additional request, including a lottery for admission to a specific school or program. (*R.S. 17:101*)

VII. **Admission of Homeless Students**

Except as provided above with regard to students who have been expelled, no provision in this or any other St James Parish School Board Policy shall be interpreted to impede the immediate or continued enrollment of homeless youth, as addressed in [Policy JBCBB: Homeless Children and Youth](#).

VIII. **Admission of Students with Special Needs**

Neither the School Board nor any public school shall require the parent or legal guardian of any student to disclose the student's medical information or special education needs before enrolling the student in a public school unless otherwise specifically required by law.

Nothing herein shall prohibit a public school from providing an enrollment preference to a student with special needs when the student's parent or legal guardian has voluntarily provided the school with information regarding such needs.

IX. **Admission of 1st Grade Students**

Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, a child, as a prerequisite to enrollment in the first grade of a public school, shall have attended a full-day public or nonpublic kindergarten for an entire school year and shall have satisfactorily passed an academic readiness screening administered by the city, parish, or other local public school board prior to the time of enrollment in the first grade. Each city, parish, or other local public school board shall establish the academic readiness level for entry into the first grade.

X. The School Board shall grant admission or readmission to school to any person who meets all of the following criteria: (R.S 17:221)

- Resides within the geographic boundaries of the school system.
- Meets the eligibility requirements for school entrance pursuant to statutory provisions
- Is nineteen (19) years of age or younger on September 30th of the calendar year in which the school year begins or is twenty (20) years of age on September 30th of the calendar year in which the school year begins and has sufficient course credits that he/she will be able to graduate within one (1) school year of admission or readmission.
- Has not received a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Is otherwise for enrollment in a public school pursuant to state law and the policies of the School Board and the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

If the person meets all of the criteria stated above, the School Board shall not deny admission or readmission based on any of the following characteristics:

- The person voluntarily withdrew from school.
- The person is pregnant.
- The person is a parent.
- The person is married.

The admission or readmission of a person who will be twenty (20) years of age on September 30th of the calendar year in which the school year begins shall be limited to grade twelve (12).

The admission or readmission of a person with an exceptionality shall be subject to the federal and state laws governing the age of eligibility for services for students with exceptionalities.

School Admission Procedures

- I. School admission procedures for children of legal residents of St. James Parish will require the parent or legal guardian to present a completed registration packet and the following documents to the Student Services Department:

- **Child's Official Birth Certificate**
Only birth records from the local or state registrar of vital statistics will be accepted for children born in Louisiana, except as otherwise provided herein. A 15-day grace period for children born in Louisiana and a 30-day grace period for children born outside of Louisiana will be allowed for parents and guardians to secure and present the official birth record copy to the school's principal. Children born outside the United States will be allowed to submit birth facts as shown on their passport or citizenship papers in lieu of a birth record if none is available from the country of birth.
- **An Official Social Security Card**
Students enrolling without a Social Security number will be issued a student identification number.
- **Immunization Records**
Satisfactory documentation of immunity to or immunization according to a schedule approved by the Office of Public Health or Department of Health and Hospitals.
- **An Official Louisiana Driver's License or Louisiana Issued Identification Card**
- **Proof of Custody** (if applicable)
If an official custody judgment exists, it must be submitted in person at the point of enrollment. A judge must sign all custody judgments with a visible court seal. This court document must identify the parent as the custodial and domiciliary parent. Legal guardians enrolling a child must have similar court documents identifying the guardian and the child.

Provisional custody by mandate/provisional guardianship is not accepted as proof of legal guardianship or legal custody.

- **Proof of Residency**
 1. Parents or legal guardians of enrolling students who reside in their own residence within St. James Parish must provide two current utility bills (electric, gas, and/or water) showing the enrolling parent or legal guardian's name and current physical address. The service location noted on utility bills must match the reported physical address. No cable TV or phone bills will be accepted. For St. James Parish residents who own multiple residences, the active current address filed with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the homestead exemption residence will be considered the primary residence. The address on the enrolling parent's or legal guardian's official ID must match the physical address of their St. James Parish proof of residency address.

2. When any of the two current utility bills listed above are lacking, one current utility bill, as listed above, **plus two** of the alternative forms of evidence listed below, will be acceptable. The alternative evidence must identify the physical location of the reported residency in the name of the parent or legal guardian who is enrolling their child.
 - a) current homestead exemption documentation
 - b) current automobile insurance documentation
 - c) most recent federal or state income tax return
 - d) current IRS W-2 employment form
 - e) most recent voter's registration card
3. Parents/legal guardians who reside on the property of another St. James Parish resident through a lease/rental agreement must submit the following:
 - a) a copy of a current lease or rental agreement with the names of the legal parent/guardian and all children residing at this address;
 - b) a current utility bill showing the enrolling parent or legal guardian's name and current active physical address; and
 - c) the address on the enrolling parent's or legal guardian's official ID/driver's license must match the physical address of their St. James Parish proof of residency address.
4. Parents/legal guardians of enrolling students who reside within the household of a St. James Parish resident without a rental or lease agreement must present the following:
 - a) student's official birth record, parent's valid ID, immunization records, Social Security card, and proof of custody (if applicable) as cited above;
 - b) a St. James Parish Public School Affidavit notarized in St. James Parish stating temporary residency
 - (1) Both the parent/legal guardian's and the legal resident's signatures must be notarized on the Affidavit.
 - (2) Parents/legal guardians with an active current residence outside of St. James Parish are not eligible to apply for temporary residency using an Affidavit.
 - (3) Parents/legal guardians of all first-time enrollees (including students who attempt to re-enroll within the same school year) under this provision must provide a current, notarized Affidavit with the same proof of residency to the Student Services Department at the initial enrollment and each year thereafter.

If the school has reason to believe that the information in the Affidavit is incorrect, that the parent and/or student is, in fact, residing outside the residence, the student will be required to return to the school in the attendance zone where they reside. Out-of-parish students will be withdrawn immediately from the school district and may be held liable to reimburse the district for expenses incurred to educate this student.

Making intentionally false statements on the Affidavit may expose parents/guardians and the residence owner to prosecution for false swearing under LA R.S 14:125, which states whoever commits the crime of false swearing shall be fined not more than five hundred (\$500) dollars or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.

All affidavits must have the signature of the Superintendent for it to be approved.