

## ***Board File: JCA/JFB***

### **ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS, SCHOOL CHOICE AND OPEN ENROLLMENT**

The Board endorses the concept of school choice for all students that may wish to attend a school or participate in a program located in an area other than that of their assigned school. The Board of Education also endorses the neighborhood school concept and makes many decisions based on student population within the attendance areas of residence. Therefore, any student shall be allowed to attend any school or participate in any program of their choice for which they are eligible on a space available basis and subject to the provisions of the accompanying regulation JCA/JFB- R.

#### **Attendance Areas**

The public schools of Douglas County School District RE-1 are open to all children of the District. Subject to the District's authority to assign students to a particular school for education reasons, students shall attend school in the attendance area determined by their residence, unless a request to attend another school is approved.

#### **Students Receiving Special Education Services**

Requests from the parents of students receiving special education services for choice enrollment to another school or program shall be considered in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Consideration of whether or not a student receiving special education services is able to enroll in a school of choice shall be implemented in a two-step process. The first step of the process is the Admissions Phase and the second step is the Enrollment Phase. In order for a student receiving special education services to enroll and attend a school of choice, the student must be admitted after completion of the Admissions Phase of the process **and** then must be approved for enrollment during the Enrollment Phase of the process.

During a school's Admissions Phase of the process, including any lottery or similar process, school shall not in any way inquire into the disability status of a student. If a student receiving special education services is admitted through the Admissions Phase of the process, the student must still be approved for enrollment into the school of choice. During the Enrollment Phase of the process, the student's current Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall be reviewed to determine if the student's IEP can be appropriately implemented at the requested school or program so that student can be provided a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). If there is a determination that the student's IEP cannot be implemented at the requested school, student enrollment may be denied and the student may be assigned to another school where the child's IEP can be implemented as developed by the IEP team. Decisions to assign the student to another school shall be made with due consideration for the impact on the child's total education program and must include parent participation.

#### **Open Enrollment**

Students may apply for choice enrollment in a school or program outside their neighborhood

attendance area (including a neighborhood District school, alternative school, magnet school or charter school) and such applications shall be approved if there is space available, the application has been submitted in accordance with the procedures in regulation JCA/JFB-R, and the other requirements specified in this policy and in regulation have been met. Non-resident students from other school Districts within the state who apply in accordance with this policy and regulation JCA/JFB-R may enroll in schools or programs in this District.

The first-round open enrollment period will commence November 1st and end on December 1st annually unless either day is not a school day, in which case the next regular school day will be the opening or closing day, respectively.

Applications for the second round must be submitted between January 22 and August 1 annually unless either day is not a school day, in which case the next regular school day will be the opening or closing day, respectively. Applicants may apply to as many schools as they choose during either period.

Applications for open enrollment must be submitted in accordance with the supportive regulations of this policy. Approved applications for open enrollment shall be valid for attendance at that school beginning the following school year and throughout the grades served by the school. The only exception to this rule is a family moving into the District and/or students who are returning to DCSD who did not attend a Douglas County School District neighborhood, charter or magnet school in the prior school year, in which case the application may be acted on immediately on a space available basis at the school of their choice, as set forth in Policy JCA/JFB-R

When the number of eligible applicants exceeds the space available in a program or school to which admission is sought under open enrollment, the priority system as outlined in JCA/JFB-R shall be followed.

#### Administrative Transfers

Principals may initiate an administrative transfer in accordance with this policy and the accompanying regulation JCA/JFB-R. The administrative transfer option is only available for the purpose of moving a student from one school to another in those circumstances where the choice enrollment option may not be timely or may be inappropriate or inapplicable, considering the best interest of the student and the school. Administrative transfers are not intended to accommodate students who fail to request a change in assigned schools during the open enrollment period, or whose open enrollment request was not accepted.

#### Transportation

Transportation for resident students granted permission to attend a school or program outside their neighborhood attendance area shall be furnished by their parent/guardian unless it is determined that transportation is necessary for the District to comply with the requirements of state or federal law concerning homeless and disabled students. However, students who wish to catch a bus from a stop that transports to the school to which they have open enrolled, may, on a space available basis, purchase a bus pass to ride that bus to their newly assigned school.

## Changes Affecting High School Students

High school students who transfer from one school to another by open enrollment, choice enrollment or administrative transfer are subject to the rules and regulations for participation in interscholastic activities and athletic contests as determined by the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA).

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### CROSS REFS.:

JC, School Attendance Areas JF,

Student Admissions

JFAB, Admission of Nonresident and Homeless Students

JFAB-R, Student Residency

JKD/JKE, Student Suspension, Expulsion, and Classroom Removal LEGAL

### REF.:

C.R.S. 22-36-101 et seq. *Choice of programs and schools within school districts*