

CHOICE OF SCHOOLS

- 1.0 **General.** The District is committed to allowing choice for students in the selection of a school of attendance. The District is also committed to providing equal opportunities in its schools of choice program and will not unlawfully discriminate based on a student’s race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), religion, creed, national origin (including ethnicity), ancestry, genetic information (including family medical history), marital status, family composition, sexual orientation, transgender identity, gender identity, gender expression, or disability (“protected classes”). In accordance with these commitments as well as applicable law and District policy, the District recognizes the need to consider the District-wide impact of limited space availability in certain schools/programs and the efficient and effective management of the choice process. This policy shall set the standards for a) student school choice in schools/programs without specialized admission criteria, and b) student school choice in schools and programs with specialized admissions criteria.
- 1.1 **Enrollment in District-Authorized Charter Schools.** Application to and enrollment in District-authorized charter schools are governed by the terms of the schools’ charter contracts with the District and by each charter school’s enrollment policies and procedures. The deadlines and procedures for enrollment in District charter schools differ from those in this policy. Parents/students interested in such schools should contact the charter school directly for application/enrollment information.
- 2.0 **Definitions.**
- 2.1 “Assigned School” is the school a student is assigned to attend via the choice process described in this policy.
- 2.2 “Boundary School” (i.e. “Home School”) is the school designated for a student who resides within specified school boundaries.
- 2.3 “Choice of Schools” is a request for a student to choice enroll in a school using the process described in this policy.
- 2.4 “In-District Student” is a student who resides within the District’s boundaries.
- 2.5 “In-District Choice Student” is a student who resides within the District’s boundaries, has been accepted for choice enrollment in a District school pursuant to this policy, and is currently enrolled in the choice school.
- 2.5 “Out-of-District Student” is a student who resides outside of the District’s boundaries.
- 2.6 “Out-of-District Choice Student” is a student who resides outside of the District's boundaries, has been accepted for choice enrollment in a District school pursuant to this policy, and is currently enrolled in the choice school.
- 3.0 **Schools/Programs Open to Choice.** On an annual basis, the District shall publicize the names of schools/programs that are open for choice for the subsequent school year. Choice applications shall be available at each school, on the District’s website, and at the District’s Educational Support Center.
- 4.0 **Preschool.** Students who attend a District preschool outside of their Boundary School are not guaranteed enrollment at that school for kindergarten. Preschool students who wish to attend the same District school for kindergarten must apply for choice in accordance with this policy, provided that the school is open to choice for kindergarten.

5.0 Approval/Denial Criteria and Continuing Choice Enrollment.

- 5.1 The District may determine that an applicant is unqualified for choice or the District may revoke a choice approval at any time if:
- 5.1.1 The student has been expelled by the District or another school district during the preceding twelve months;
 - 5.1.2 The student has engaged in behavior during the preceding twelve months while enrolled in another school district that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other pupils or of school personnel including but not limited to behavior that has resulted in an out-of-school suspension;
 - 5.1.3 The student's choice application includes material misrepresentations, including but not limited to misrepresentations concerning the student's residence, discipline history, or educational programming needs;
 - 5.1.4 There is inadequate space or teaching staff in the requested school, in which case students who reside within the school's boundaries shall have priority;
 - 5.1.5 The requested school does not offer appropriate programs for the student or does not offer a requested program;
 - 5.1.6 The requested school is not structured or equipped with the necessary facilities to meet the special needs of the student; or
 - 5.1.7 Grounds identified in state law for denial of choice enrollment are present.
- 5.2 The District may deny re-enrollment for the next school year for any choice student if due to a change in circumstances, the school would be required to add programs, space or teaching staff or make an alteration to facilities or equipment in order to serve the student.
- 5.3 Permission to attend a choice school may be rescinded at the end of the school year if the school's growth in enrollment due to an increase of students living within the school's boundaries results in inadequate space or resources for enrolled students. In such cases, the enrollment of Out-of-District Choice Students will be rescinded first, followed by In-District Choice Students.
- 5.4 Permission to attend a magnet school/program with or without specialized admissions criteria may be rescinded at the end of the school year if a family moves Out-of-District. Parents/guardians who wish for their student to remain at the magnet school/program shall submit a written request to the responsible Executive Director, requesting that the student remain at the school/program. The size of the waitlist and the ability to replace students who have disenrolled shall be used as a factor in the District's determination. If the Executive Director approves the request, the approval will be valid for all grades served by the school, subject to the exceptions listed in this section and section 11.0.

6.0 Choice of Schools Without Specialized Admission Criteria.

- 6.1 A student and/or the student's parent/guardian may submit an application for the student to attend a school other than the Boundary School by following the process in this section, which applies to schools without specialized admission criteria.
- 6.2 **Round 1 (Priority).** Choice applications must be completed and filed with the District's Admissions Office between December 1 and January 2. Applying for choice in Round 1 gives families the best chance of being accepted into their first choice school. Parents/guardians who apply for choice in Round 1 will be notified via email by the first week of February whether their choice application has been approved or denied for the following school year.

- 6.3 **Round 2.** Choice applications submitted between January 3 and March 31 will be considered if space remains available in the schools open for choice following completion of Round 1. Parents/guardians who apply for choice in Round 2 will be notified via email by the third week of April whether their choice application has been approved or denied for the following school year.
- 6.4 **Ongoing Choice.** The District's Admissions Office may determine that it will accept choice applications between April and August for the upcoming school year. If allowed, the District's Admissions Office will determine the exact dates within the ongoing choice window and publicize the names of schools that are open for ongoing choice no later than April 30. An application for choice must be completed and filed before the first day of school to be considered for the current school year. These applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Parents/guardians who apply in this window will be notified via email whether their choice application is approved or denied. Waitlists for choice admission into specific schools will be maintained until August 31.

7.0 **Lottery Process.**

- 7.1 Choice applications received by the Round 1 and Round 2 deadlines shall be entered into a lottery. The District's Admissions Office shall review the applications and place each student into their highest preferred school that has spaces available. If a student's first (1st) choice is not available, the lower choices shall be considered in their order of preference. Students will be placed on waitlists for schools they applied to with a higher preference compared to the school to which they were approved. For example, if a student is approved for their third (3rd) choice school, the student would be placed on the waitlist for their first (1st) and second (2nd) choice schools but not the fourth (4th) choice school.
- 7.2 When applying for choice enrollment in a District elementary or K-8 school, The choice lottery priority process is as follows:
- 7.2.1 Students who are the children of a District staff member.
 - 7.2.2 In-District Students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in concurrent enrollment of siblings (for example, an incoming kindergartner whose sibling is going into 3rd grade).
 - 7.2.3 In-District students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in one year lapse of concurrent sibling enrollment (for example, an incoming kindergartner whose sibling is going into 6th grade).
 - 7.2.4 In-District Students without siblings at the requested school.
 - 7.2.5 Out-of-District Students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in concurrent enrollment of siblings.
 - 7.2.6 Out-of-District Students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in one year lapse of concurrent sibling enrollment.
 - 7.2.7 Out-of-District Students without siblings at the requested school.
- 7.3 When applying for choice enrollment in a District middle school or high school, the choice lottery priority process is as follows:
- 7.3.1 Students who are the children of a District staff member.
 - 7.3.2 In-District Choice students.

- 7.3.3 In-District students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in concurrent enrollment of siblings (for example, an incoming 6th grader whose sibling is going into 8th grade).
 - 7.3.4 In-District students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in one year lapse of concurrent sibling enrollment (for example, an incoming 6th grader whose sibling is going into 9th grade).
 - 7.3.5 In-District Students without siblings at the requested school.
 - 7.3.6 Out-of-District Choice Students.
 - 7.3.7 Out-of-District Students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in concurrent enrollment of siblings.
 - 7.3.8 Out-of-District Students who are siblings of (an) existing student(s) at the requested school that results in one year lapse of concurrent sibling enrollment.
 - 7.3.9 Out-of-District Students without siblings at the requested school.
- 8.0 **Timeline for Choice Acceptance.** In accordance with the deadlines in section 6.0, parents/guardians will be notified via email regarding the status of their choice application.
- 8.1 Parents/guardians who are notified of their student's acceptance must accept or reject the offered choice school and, if accepting, complete the choice enrollment process within five (5) school days of the notification date. District magnet schools (e.g. Hulstrom, STEM Lab) may determine a shorter timeline for acceptance, which will be posted on the District website and included in the email notification of choice application status.
 - 8.2 If the parent/guardian of an In-District Choice Student or In-District Student does not accept the offered choice school and complete the choice enrollment process within the required timeline, the student will be assigned to their Boundary School.
 - 8.3 If the parent/guardian of an Out-of-District Choice Student or an Out-of-District Student does not accept the offered choice school and complete the choice enrollment process within the required timeline, the student will not be enrolled in any District school.
- 9.0 **Post Acceptance.** Upon acceptance of a choice application and the student's enrollment in the choice school, the choice school becomes the student's Assigned School for all grade levels served by the Assigned School except as provided in sections 5.0 and 11.0 of this policy. An In-District Choice Student may return to the student's Boundary School only by submitting a choice application for the Boundary School in accordance with section 6.0 of this policy or by submitting a family-initiated transfer request in accordance with District Policy 5265.
- 9.1 The District's Admissions Office shall notify parents/guardians and the Assigned School upon completion of the choice enrollment process. The District's Admissions Office shall also notify the former Assigned School when a student transitions to another level, typically at the end of fifth and eighth grade, so that student records can be transferred appropriately.
 - 9.2 A student who wishes to attend a school outside their Boundary School after completing elementary, K-8 or middle school must reapply for choice when transitioning from the elementary to the middle level and from the K-8 or middle level to the high school level.
 - 9.3 If an In-District Choice Student moves to a different school attendance area boundary within the District, the student may choose to keep their existing choice status or enroll in their new Boundary School. If the student wishes to maintain their existing choice status, the parent/guardian shall inform the choice school that they wish to remain there and

complete any necessary forms. If the student wishes to enroll in their new Boundary School, the parent/guardian shall inform the new Boundary School within 30 days of moving that they wish to have their previous choice status rescinded and shall complete any necessary forms.

- 9.4 A student's choice status is only valid as long as continuous enrollment occurs.
- 9.5 The District does not provide transportation for choice students unless it is determined that transportation is necessary for the District to comply with state and/or federal law.
- 9.6 Before and after school programs and extracurricular activities are not available at all schools and vary by location. Enrollment and participation in these programs and activities depend on each school's specific processes, applicable Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) requirements, and the availability of space.

10.0 **Choice of Schools for Siblings of In-District Students with Disabilities Placed Outside Their Boundary School.** For purposes of this section, "Students with Disabilities" means those students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Some In-District Students with Disabilities may be placed in District schools outside of their Boundary School. Siblings of these In-District Students with Disabilities are eligible to attend the same school, so long as the sibling(s) are not deemed unqualified for choice as provided in section 5.0 of this policy. Parents/guardians wishing to choice sibling(s) into the District school where the In-District Student with Disabilities has been placed shall complete a choice application and submit it to the District's Admissions Office. The application should indicate that the parent/guardian is requesting choice pursuant to this section 10.0.

11.0 **Choice of Schools/Programs with Specialized Enrollment and Continuation Criteria.**

11.1 **K-8 School Serving Gifted and Talented Students.** Choice applicants to this District school (Hulstrom K-8) shall follow the choice process described in section 6.0 of this policy. After applying for choice through the District's Admissions Office, the school will contact families to complete a body of evidence review. Families will then be notified by the District's Admissions Office as to their status. Students accepted for enrollment in this K-8 school are subject to the enrollment/continuation criteria in sections 5.0 and 11.3.2 of this policy.

11.2 **High Schools/Programs with Specialized Enrollment and Continuation Criteria.** Enrollment in the following District high schools/programs is not subject to the choice process in section 6.0 of this policy and shall be governed instead by section 11.3 of this policy.

11.2.1 Schools or programs designed to address the unique educational interests and needs of a student, including the High School of Business Program at Mountain Range High School, Thornton High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB), Legacy 2000 Program (L2k), Northglenn High School STEM, Pathways Future Center School, SOAR at Horizon High School, Vantage Point High School, and the Vista View Program.

11.3 Enrollment/Continuation Criteria.

11.3.1 **Enrollment Criteria.** The administrators responsible for these schools/programs shall identify nondiscriminatory enrollment criteria including specific levels of ability or performance, prerequisite courses, and entrance exams and shall include such criteria with the application for the school/program. The District will

determine if these schools/programs are open to Out-of-District Choice Students and Out-of-District Students, and, if they are open, the extent and the method through which they will accept applications from these students.

11.3.2 **Continuation Criteria.** The administrators responsible for these schools/programs shall identify nondiscriminatory continuation criteria including specific levels of academic achievement, performance, and/or skills achievement necessary for students to continue their enrollment in such school or program. These criteria shall be distributed to students and parents/guardians upon the student's enrollment in the school/program and promptly following any revisions to these criteria.

11.3.2.1 If a student does not meet these criteria during a grading period or periods, the school/program shall provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian and offer them the opportunity to meet with appropriate staff to develop strategies for the student to meet said criteria.

11.3.2.2 If the student's performance does not meet the specified criteria during the following grading period, the school/program may withdraw the student after providing the student and parent/guardian with written notice describing the deficiency and providing them an opportunity to meet with appropriate staff.

11.3.2.3 This section shall not preclude a school/program from permitting students a time period in excess of a trimester or semester to meet the specified criteria.

11.4 When a student is withdrawn from the school/program, the student will be assigned to the student's Boundary School unless it is determined by the responsible Executive Director, in consultation with the building principal, that another school better meets the student's needs.

11.5 This policy shall not be construed to limit the ability of a school/program to withdraw a student if a student or parent/guardian contends that staff failed to provide adequate support for the student or failed to develop appropriate strategies to help the student meet the criteria.

11.6 Upon acceptance into a school/program with specialized enrollment and continuation criteria, the school/program becomes the student's Assigned School for all grade levels served by the Assigned School except as provided in this section and section 5.0 of this policy. An In-District Choice Student may return to their Boundary School only by submitting a choice application for the Boundary School in accordance with section 6.0 of this policy or by submitting a family-initiated transfer request in accordance with District Policy 5265.

12.0 **Post-Expulsion.** Students attending choice schools or programs may be expelled in accordance with District policy and applicable law. Upon completion of an expulsion, a choice student shall return to their Boundary School after the period of expulsion unless:

- 12.1 The hearing officer in the expulsion proceedings recommends a different school be considered upon completion of the expulsion; or
- 12.2 The student is not eligible to return to their Boundary School pursuant to District policy and/or applicable law.

LEGAL REFERENCES:
C.R.S. 22-36-101

CROSS REFERENCES:
Policy 5210
Policy 5230
Policy 5240
Policy 5265
Policy 8400

Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Most Recent Adoption: October 30, 2024