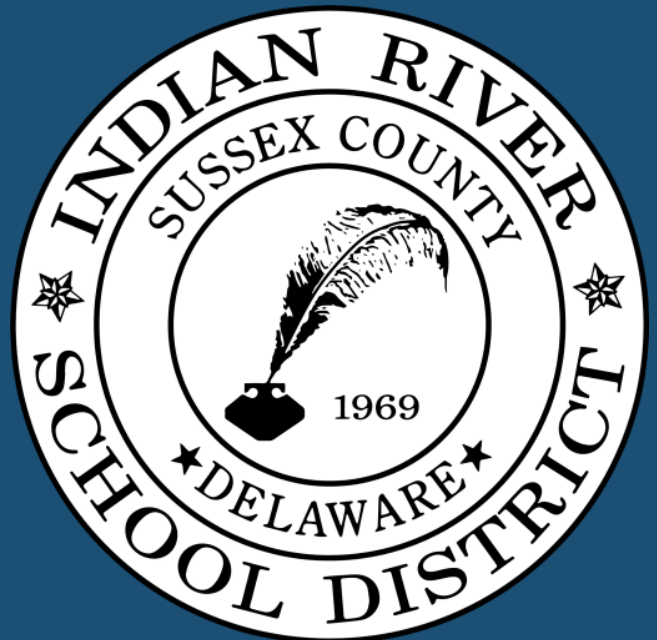


School Choice

FOR 2025-2026



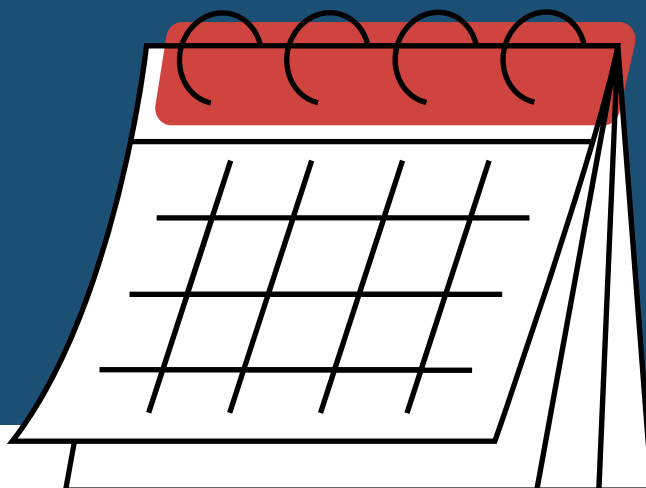
Indian River School District
October 28, 2024



Key Dates

- **Monday, November 4, 2024 | 8am**
Online Choice Application Opens
- **Wednesday, January 8, 2025 - 11:59pm**
Online Choice Application Closes for Grades 1-12*
- **Tuesday, February 25, 2025**
Decisions on Grades K-12 will begin
- **Friday, March 21, 2025**
Final Day for Parent to Notify District/School of Acceptance Decision

***Kindergarten Choice Applications close on the first day of school in September 2025.**



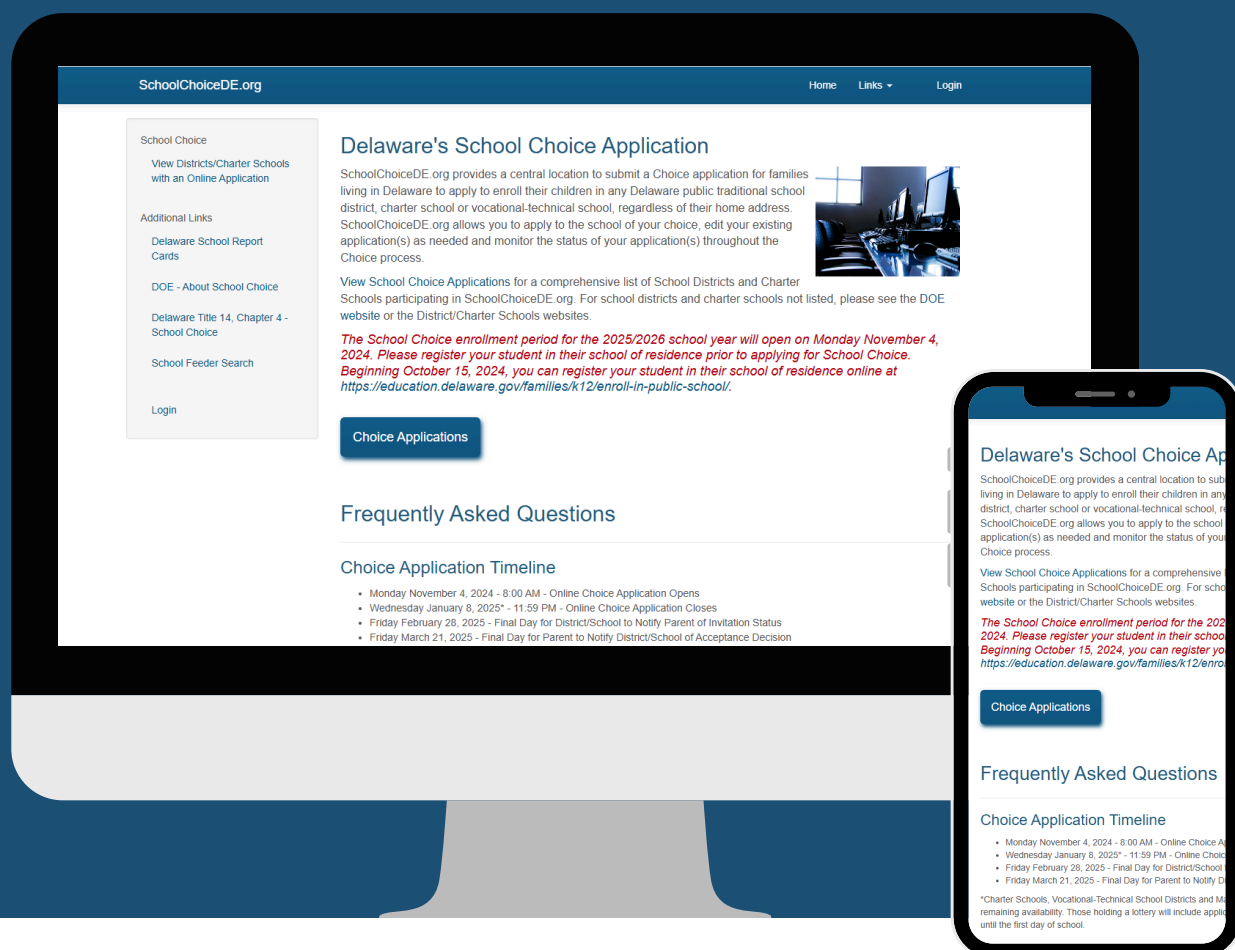


Where to Apply

www.SchoolChoiceDE.org

When visiting schoolchoicede.org, parents must create an account with a user name and password. It is recommended that the user name be an e-mail address. Once an account has been created, the parent can complete the application for selection of choice schools. There are up to 3 choices available. However, the parent is not required to request 3 schools. Simply request the school(s) of interest.

A separate application must be submitted for each child. Parents can also apply to the Spanish Immersion Program for kindergarten. (Certain conditions apply for application of Spanish Immersion in subsequent grades).





Kindergarten School Choice

The application window for Kindergarten Choice will remain open until the first day of school, as long as there is available capacity.

- Families who submitted a Kindergarten 'choice' application by the second Wednesday in January will receive confirmation regarding the status of their request by February 28, 2025.
- Beginning in October for kindergarten, please ensure you complete the online registration for your assigned feeder school. It is essential to pre-register your child with the designated feeder school online. For assistance with online registration, please reach out to your feeder school.



Please note, if you are submitting a "choice" application, it is necessary to pre-register your child at your assigned feeder school first.



5th & 8th Grade Reminder

Existing IRSD School Choice students currently in the fifth or eighth grade require completion of another school choice application to be considered for the next building level next year. Failure to complete the new school choice application will result in the student being placed in his/her home school for the 2025-2026 school year.

The school choice system will also designate district schools that are anticipated to have openings and those that are at capacity. Parents will still be permitted to submit applications for "At Capacity" schools. However, these applications may be placed on a waitlist or denied due to capacity.

The parent/guardian will receive an e-mail confirmation once the school choice application has been submitted. The parent/guardian may review, edit or withdraw the application at any time prior to the January 8, 2025, deadline with the use of the established user name and password.





Choice Consideration Factors

Building Capacity

The number of available seats at each school is dependent upon the projected enrollment and school capacity. The school choice system will designate district schools that are anticipated to have openings and those that are at capacity. Parents will still be permitted to submit applications for "At Capacity" schools. However, these applications may be placed on a waitlist or denied due to capacity.

Good Standing

For a student to participate in the School Choice Program, the following must be in good standing: Academics, Attendance and Behavior

Priority

- 1) Returning students who continue to meet the requirements for the program or school, including students graduating from one school to another within a single program.
- 3) In-district siblings of in-district students who are already enrolled in the program or school and who will be returning to the program or school for the following academic year provided that the siblings meet the requirements for the program or school. Exiting students are not considered siblings for this enrollment preference.
- 4) Out-of-district siblings of out-of-district students who are already enrolled in the program or school and who will be returning to the program or school for the following academic year provided that the siblings meet the requirements for the program or school. Exiting students are not considered siblings for this enrollment preference.
- 5) Students of employees holding a permanent position that meets the state requirements as a pension eligible position; as long as they otherwise meet the criteria of the program or school and reside in the State of Delaware
- 6) District students.
- 7) Non-district students.





Family Notification



Invitation and Waitlist letters will be emailed to all school choice applicants by **February 28, 2025**



Parents are obligated to notify the District of their decision to accept or decline an invitation by **March 21, 2025**

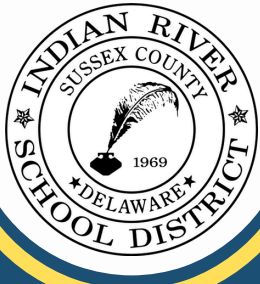


If **your child receives an invitation to a school that isn't your top choice**, you have the option to either accept or decline it. However, students will automatically be added to the waitlist for all schools listed **ABOVE** the one they were invited to



What should I do if my child does not receive an invitation to any Choice School?

Unfortunately, selection is not guaranteed. If a student does not receive an invitation, they will continue to be enrolled in their current school or their assigned feeder school. It is advisable for families to have backup plans in case they do not get into their desired Choice School.



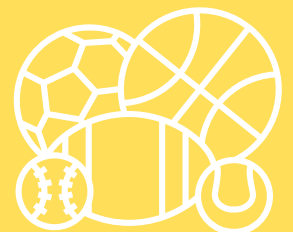
HIGHLIGHTS

Students who are not already registered in a Delaware Public School must register at their feeder pattern/resident school before they can apply for consideration in the "school choice" program.



Transportation is NOT provided for School Choice students. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the student is dropped off and picked up within the hours permitted by their school.

Any student enrolled in grades 9-12 must meet eligibility guidelines outlined in DIAA Regulation 1009, Section 2.4 "Eligibility, Transfers." All other DIAA athletic eligibility requirements must also be adhered to in order for students to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics.





Elementary Spanish Immersion Program

Kindergarten students living within the feeder areas of John M. Clayton Elementary, East Millsboro Elementary, and North Georgetown Elementary will have the chance to request enrollment in the Spanish Immersion Program during the registration process. Any available seats after this will be filled from the School Choice waitlist.



If you live outside the feeder areas of John M. Clayton, East Millsboro, or North Georgetown Elementary Schools and wish to enroll, it is necessary to complete a Choice Application. You can select either Spanish Immersion or Regular Education for these elementary schools.

Important: Open Enrollment Choice Applications for the Elementary Spanish Immersion Program should be submitted following the above guidelines for any student living outside the feeder pattern of the desired school.

Families in the Spanish Immersion Program will be contacted about continuing in the program in middle or high school.

For more information about our Spanish Immersion Program visit:
www.irsd.net/departments/curriculum-and-instruction/special-programs



Good Cause Applications

Good Cause applications are the only school choice options available for 2024-2025 school year and must meet one of the criteria listed below.

IRSD will consider "choice" applications outside of open enrollment when "Good Cause" exists. As we know life doesn't happen on a schedule. Sometimes changing family circumstances make "choicing" your child to a particular school a necessity. Below are the definitions for Good Cause:

- A change in the family residence within Delaware.
- A family moves to Delaware from out of state
- A change in the marital status of the parents
- A change in guardianship
- Placement in foster care or Adoption
- Participation in a foreign exchange to Delaware
- A child who is in a substance abuse or health treatment program
- A reported, recorded and substantiated instance of "bullying" against their child as defined in §4112D of Title 14
- Another reason that is consistent with the reasons above

Please be advised that not only would your request need to meet the definition of "Good Cause", but:

- Space must be available within the building and/or classroom
- Attendance and discipline are deciding factors

If your student is a current 5th or 8th grader, you will also need to apply for the 2025-2026 school year, during Open Enrollment, if you wish for them to stay in the same feeder pattern.

Communication regarding choice applications will be made to the applicant's email address. Also please check your spam folder.

For more information about school choice or the online application system, please contact the IRSD district office at (302) 436-1000.

[Click Here to Apply
for Good Cause](#)



Choice Termination

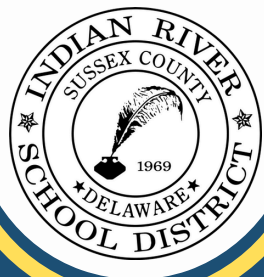
A pupil accepted for enrollment in a school or program shall remain enrolled therein for a minimum of 2 years unless during that 2-year period:

- a. A pupil graduates from the school or completes the program.
- b. The pupil's parent or parents cease to be residents of the pupil's original district of residence.
- c. At the conclusion of any academic year during such 2-year period, the pupil ceases to meet the academic requirements for such school or program.
- d. If the reason for the school choice request/approval was a student's daycare circumstance and the daycare circumstance is no longer relevant.
- e. The board of the district of residence, the board of the receiving district, and the parent or parents of the pupil agrees for any reason to terminate such enrollment.
- f. The provisions of this section (2a-2e) shall apply unless the district, at its sole discretion, agrees to maintain a child in a choice placement. Due to the unique educational and developmental needs of primary age children, on a case by case basis, the district may grant exceptions to allow students in grades kindergarten through grade 3 to remain in school choice even if they fail to meet required educational standards.
- g. The pupil's parents or guardians wish to terminate the agreement due to a reported, recorded, and substantiated instance of "bullying" against their child as defined in § 4112D of Title 14.

A parent may apply to terminate that parent's own child's enrollment in the district prior to the expiration of the minimum period established above by submitting a written application provided by the Department of Education to the child's then-existing district of enrollment, no later than December 1 for enrollment during the following school year. If a parent of a child fails to file an application by the deadline of December 1 and good cause exists for the failure to meet the deadline, the child's then-existing district of enrollment shall accept and consider the application in the same manner as if the deadline had been met.

School Choice Termination Form

For more information
regarding School Choice
Termination [click here](#)



Answers to FAQs



What is School Choice?

The Delaware School Choice Program is intended to "increase access to educational opportunities for all children throughout the state regardless of where they may live," and to "maximize parental choice in obtaining access to educational opportunities for their children." According to the law, a parent residing in Delaware may enroll his or her child in a public school in any school district in accordance with the law and if space is available.

How do I apply for School Choice?

To begin the application process, ensure your child is registered or pre-registered at a Delaware public school. If you are applying for Kindergarten, or if your child is currently attending a private school or being homeschooled, you must preregister with your designated feeder pattern school. We recommend that families complete this step online by clicking [HERE](#). If your child is already enrolled in a Delaware public school, this step is not necessary.

Do I need a separate Choice application for each child in my family?

Yes, a separate application is required for each student.

Can I apply to more than one school?

You may list up to three Indian River School District schools on your child's application, prioritizing them in the order you wish. The lottery will process the schools according to the sequence you select on the application.

Can I receive an invitation to more than one school?

Students will not receive more than one invitation to a school within the Indian River School District. The lottery processes each child's Choice application in priority order, as designated on the standard application (i.e., first choice, second choice, and then third choice). If a student receives an invitation to their first-choice school, no further action will be taken regarding their second or third choices. Should a student be waitlisted for a higher-priority school, they will be considered for their second-choice school. If waitlisted for the second choice, they will then be evaluated for their third choice.



Answers to FAQs



My child was waitlisted, what does that mean?

When a student is placed on a waitlist, it indicates that there are currently no available Choice seats at the requested school. As other students accept offers from different schools, openings may arise, at which point we will notify the next student on the waitlist via email to extend an offer for a seat. If your child is waitlisted for a higher-priority school but receives an invitation from another choice school, you may accept that invitation. Your child will remain on the waitlist for the higher-priority school, which will remain active until the first day of the school year.

My child has an IEP or 504. Will that prevent my child from being able to apply for Choice?

No, all students are eligible to apply for Choice. The state Choice application and lottery process does not have access to IEP or 504 information.

Do my child's accomplishments have any weight in getting an invitation?

No. Test scores, grades, athletic abilities, school and community activities do not have any influence on a random generated computer lottery to determine who gets invited or selected.

Do I need to re-apply every year?

Once a student has been accepted at a Choice school, he/she will be enrolled in that building until completion of that building's grade-level configuration (i.e. K-5, 6-8, 9-12).^{*} While enrolled as a Choice student, the student will have all the rights and responsibilities of a resident student until the end of that building's grade-level configuration. ^{*}Moving from one school to another – approval of a Choice application for a school does not entitle the student to move to the school housing the next grade configuration. A Choice application must be submitted during the Open Enrollment period in order for a student to be considered for enrollment in the school housing the next grade configuration.

For more information regarding the Indian River School Choice Policy please visit irsd.net