

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

FEDERAL PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

The Jefferson Davis Parish School Board is required by both Federal law and the Louisiana School Accountability Program to develop and maintain a *Public School Choice* policy for any school with a *School Performance Score* (SPS) below levels set by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). *School Choice* allows eligible students to transfer to an academically acceptable school.

Once schools eligible to receive students have been identified, a school-site utilization study shall be conducted as needed in all schools to determine the extent to which capacity exists to possibly accommodate students from schools offering choice, including students with special needs and/or students with disabilities. Only those schools that are labeled *academically acceptable* shall be considered eligible to receive students.

The Superintendent and staff shall be responsible for developing and managing a *School Choice Plan*, which shall determine the schools to which students may transfer, which students shall have priority in transferring, and all other regulations and procedures for supervising school choice within the school district.

Notification

Notification of parents of their school choice options shall be sent as early as possible, but not later than the first day of the school year for the schools that are required to offer choice. If there are no choice options available, this information shall be included in the notification sent parents.

Eligibility of Students

All students in a school required to offer choice shall be eligible to transfer. However, the School Board shall give priority to the students from the lowest performing schools.

LOUISIANA PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

Louisiana Public School Choice (La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:4035.1) provides for the right of a parent or legal guardians to enroll his/her child in a school other than the school to which the child was scheduled to be enrolled based upon a school district attendance zone, if the school at which the child was most recently enrolled received an School Performance Score of "D" or "F" in the most recent assessment and the school to which the child is sought to be enrolled received a School Performance Score of "C" or better in the most recent assessment. To facilitate the operation of Louisiana Public School Choice the Jefferson Davis Parish Public School Board establishes the following policy and procedure. As Louisiana Public School Choice provides for

certain variable eligibility criterion, any enrollment based upon Louisiana Public School Choice will be considered an annual enrollment and will not obligate the School Board to allow for enrollment beyond one school year.

The School Board shall define “capacity” for each school, and determine a transfer request period which shall begin no later than March first and end no earlier than March twenty-eighth, annually. Prior to the transfer request period, the School Board shall notify parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in schools that received a D or F school performance letter grade of the following:

1. The provisions of the Louisiana Public School Choice policy;
2. The School Board's eligibility requirements;
3. Schools under the jurisdiction of the School Board that received an A, B, or C school performance letter grade, if any;
4. The process for submitting student transfer requests; and,
5. Information to locate school performance data on the Louisiana Department of Education's website.

SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT

1. A parent or guardian wishing to utilize Louisiana Public School Choice who resides and intends on continuing to reside during the upcoming school year must contact the Supervisor of Child Welfare at 203 East Plaquemine, Jennings, Louisiana. This shall be the only office authorized to process an application to enroll under Louisiana Public School Choice.
2. An application for enrollment under Louisiana Public School Choice shall serve as consent for the System to obtain the records and information necessary to determine the eligibility/ineligibility of the student.
3. New students enrolling who come from a failing school shall not be eligible for school choice if the Jefferson Davis Parish school in their attendance zone is not a D or F school.

VERIFICATION OF INITIAL ELIGIBILITY

1. Documentation of the prior school enrollment of the student must be provided; such as report card or official correspondence.
2. The School Board shall verify that the school of prior enrollment was most recently assessed as a “D” or “F”.

3. The parent or guardian shall identify the school to which the student is sought to be enrolled, and the School Board shall verify that such school was most recently assessed as a "C" or better.

VERIFICATION OF CAPACITY

1. The primary obligation of the School Board is to provide for the enrollment of students who reside within Jefferson Davis Parish and more specifically to provide for enrollment of students in Jefferson Davis Parish in the schools aligned with established attendance zones. Therefore, the School Board shall not enroll Louisiana Public School Choice students to the extent that such enrollment may conflict with this primary obligation.
2. Upon receipt of an application for enrollment under Louisiana Public School Choice, the School Board shall verify whether the school to which the student is sought to be enrolled has sufficient capacity.
3. The capacity verification shall take into account grade level and special program requirement, such as gifted and talented and shall be made on a school by school basis.
4. For purposes of determining capacity, any school which has an anticipated enrollment of greater than eight percent (80%) of its optimal total student capacity, in the grade in which the student seeks to enroll, will be deemed to have insufficient capacity to allow for a Louisiana Public School Choice enrollment. Any school that has portables or modular buildings would be considered at capacity.
5. Upon such a determination, the parent shall be advised that the school to which enrollment is sought has insufficient capacity.
6. The verification of capacity shall be an annual determination for the re-enrollment of Louisiana Public School Choice students for each subsequent year.

EXCESS APPLICATIONS

1. In the event the number of applications for enrollment exceeds the capacity in any particular school, students enrolled in the school for the prior year shall have preference.
2. If, after enrolling all prior year student applicants exceed the remaining capacity, applicants will be selected at random until capacity is no longer available.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Administrators are responsible for contacting the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) to determine the eligibility of the student for participation in varsity sports. In order to participate in varsity sports sanctioned by the LHSAA, students must have written approval of the LHSAA. This documentation must be provided to district athletic director before student participates at any level.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation shall not be provided to a student who enrolls in a public school that is located outside the geographic boundaries of the attendance zone in which the student resides, if providing such transportation will result in additional cost to the School Board.

INELIGIBILITY

A student meeting any of the following will be ineligible to enroll as a Louisiana Public School Choice student:

1. The student was expelled for disciplinary reasons in the preceding school year;
2. The student was suspended more than once in the preceding school year;
3. The student was involved in more than one fight or other act of violence on school grounds in the preceding school year;
4. The student was found in possession of any illicit drug or narcotic on school grounds in the preceding school year;
5. The student had more than ten (10) unexcused absences during the preceding school year.

After enrollment a student shall become ineligible to continue enrollment as a Louisiana Public School Choice student when any of the following apply:

1. The student is suspended more than once in the school year;
2. The student is expelled for disciplinary reasons during the school year;
3. The student is involved in more than one fight or other act of violence on school grounds during the school year;
4. The student is found in possession of any illicit drug or narcotic on school grounds during the school year;
5. The student has more than ten (10) unexcused absences during the school year.

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF CHOICE

For the purposes of this policy, a *program of choice* shall mean a public high school program that allows a student to concurrently pursue a high school diploma and one of the following:

1. A postsecondary degree, credential, or certificate.
2. A state-registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship.

A student may enroll in a program of choice offered within his/her school system, without regard to attendance zones, provided that both of the following apply:

1. The program of choice and the high school offering the program have available capacity at the appropriate grade level.
2. The program of choice is not offered at the public high school in which the student was most recently enrolled or would otherwise attend.

Capacity for each high school and each program of shall be determined as provided above under Louisiana Public School Choice, and the transfer request period shall be the same as for Louisiana Public School Choice.

The School Board shall determine and make available the process for submitting a transfer request, admission requirements, if any, for each program of choice, and the process for requesting review by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:4035.1 of a denial of a request to transfer to a program of choice.

The School Board shall partner with local businesses and public postsecondary education institutions to grow programs of choice that are relevant to the school's local area and to the state and that lead to careers in high-demand, high-paying fields, and work to ensure that programs of choice are evenly distributed, to the greatest extent possible, among the high schools in the school system.

The authority to enroll a student in a program of choice shall not be permitted and shall not be exercised if doing so violates an order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

The provisions of this policy shall not be construed as requiring a high school or a program of choice with selective admission requirements to enroll a student who does not meet the admission requirements, regardless of whether the school or program of choice has available capacity.

Revised: August, 2004

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Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:105, 17:4035.1, 17:4035.2; Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System, Bulletin 111, Louisiana Department of

Education; Board minutes, 12-19-02, 10-21-04, 10-16-14, 10-21-21, 5-12-22, 9-15-22.