

<b>TUCSON UNIFIED</b> SCHOOL DISTRICT  <b>POLICY REGULATION</b>	REGULATION TITLE: School Choice: Admissions Process for Oversubscribed Schools
	CODE: JFB – R4

Per Policy JFB, each student shall be assigned to an attendance zone school based on the student's legal address. A student wishing to enroll at a school other than his or her attendance zone school may apply to another school through Open Enrollment or the Magnet Program or they may be placed as a Magnet Pipeline student per JFB-R3. This document describes the process and the rules for students who apply to attend a school outside their attendance boundary through Open Enrollment or through the Magnet Enrollment process.

### **Definitions**

Attendance Boundary is the geographic area surrounding a school from which students are guaranteed acceptance to the school.

Child of Employee is a child or ward of an employee, including employees who reside outside the District.

District Resident Student means a student who resides within the school district boundaries.

Grade is a single year of study (e.g. 9th Grade).

Grade Level is the range of grade configurations within the District (ES, K8, MS, or HS).

Magnet Schools and Programs are the programs within a school or the schools which: 1) focus on a theme or specific instructional approach, such as a specific academic area, a particular career or a specialized learning environment; 2) attract students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds; and, 3) encourage students to choose a school other than their attendance boundary school to participate in the magnet theme or instructional approach offered at that program or school.

Nonresident Student is a student who resides in this state and who is seeking enrollment in a school district other than the school district in which the student resides.

Open Enrollment refers to the student assignment provision permitting any District student to apply to attend any school, pursuant to the process set forth herein.

Oversubscribed School is a school where more students are seeking to enroll than available seats in that grade and/or a school that has more students enrolled than the capacity of its facility.

Pipeline Students are students who are placed at the next level of schooling (elementary to middle, middle to high) based on the compatibility of the program, and based on the fact that they were enrolled/participating in the program at the previous school as defined by Policy JFB-R3.

Priority Window is the time period when applications are first accepted for the following school year. Applications received during this time period will be entered in the first lottery.

Resident Transfer Student is a resident student who is enrolled in, or seeking enrollment in, a school that is within the school district but outside the attendance area of the student's residence.

Sibling is a designation given to students who are applying to a school and who already have a sibling attending that school or placed to attend that school.

School Choice is the election by a parent/student, through Open Enrollment or Magnet Enrollment, to attend a school other than the school that services the area in which they reside.

### **Basic Assignment Rules**

1. Students, including Nonresident Students, who are currently enrolled and remain enrolled to the end of the school year, even if they move out of a school's attendance boundary or out of District, may continue, without application, at that school until graduation from that school or until they elect to attend another school.
2. Pipeline students (see JFB R-3) and students who are applying for placement in schools which are not oversubscribed are placed before the lottery.
3. The School Choice application allows the parent to choose whether or not the student should be considered as a Sibling (see the definition above) or if the student has a parent/guardian employed by TUSD. If seats are available in the appropriate grade-school, sibling students are placed after neighborhood and pipeline students. Children of employees are placed after siblings.
4. The School Choice application will indicate whether the student is applying to a magnet program or open enrollment. For example, a parent may choose Tucson High Fine Arts Magnet as their first choice, and Innovation Tech High School Open Enrollment as their second choice.
5. The School Choice application allows parents to choose three schools/programs.
6. Available seats are provided for each school-grade-program based on the projected neighborhood enrollment plus pipeline students, siblings and children of employees as compared to the capacity of the school.
7. The lottery will only apply if the number of applications exceeds the number of available seats (by grade, by school); otherwise, all applicants are placed.
8. The lottery will only make one assignment per student.
9. Magnet students are never placed into open enrollment slots, and open enrollment students are never placed into magnet slots.
10. All District Resident Students are placed before any Nonresident Student. However, Nonresident Students, who are already enrolled in a TUSD school or program or who have a sibling so enrolled, are considered, for the purposes of School Choice placement, as District Resident Students.
11. All other Nonresident Students (i.e. those who are not already enrolled in a TUSD school or program and who do not have a sibling so enrolled) are not considered in

the first lottery; they are placed in the second and subsequent lotteries, after District Resident Students.

12. Students who are not placed, due to a shortage of available seats, and students who receive their second or third choice will remain in the applicant pool to be placed in subsequent lotteries in order to try to place them in their first choice. Once a student is placed in their first choice, they are removed from the pool.

### **Lottery Process**

The schedule below shows the process for accepting School Choice Applications.

November                      Priority Window opens, and applications are accepted.

January                         Priority Window closes.

First lottery run.

Emails are sent to inform parents a lottery has been run, and that they may log into the lottery system to check status and to accept/decline placement if offered. Letters are also sent to parent via U.S. Mail offering placements.

Offer letters are returned, with the parent signature indicating acceptance; parents have two weeks to return the letter to Student Placement and Enrollment.

Two additional lotteries are run at approximately one-month intervals. The application window closes approximately 10 days before each lottery run and the process for parent notification is the same as in the first lottery. After the three lotteries are run, placements are made where there are applications for that school and grade and seats available, with random selection as needed, until each school-grade is filled to the extent possible.

### **Lottery Program**

The lottery is a program to place students into oversubscribed schools. It uses the steps shown below to place all applicants that meet each criterion before going to the next step. (See the flow chart below).

The lottery assigns a random number to each applicant. If in any step, the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats (by grade, by program), applicants will be randomly selected via the lottery to fill those seats.

District Resident Students – The following steps apply to place District resident students, children of employees and nonresident students, who are already enrolled in a TUSD school or program or who have a sibling so enrolled. Nonresident students, who are not already enrolled in a TUSD school or program and who do not have a sibling so enrolled, are placed in the second and subsequent lotteries after all District resident students are placed (see below).

1. Choice # – All first choices are run first. If a student cannot be placed in their first choice they are run, after all first choices are placed, in a lottery for their second choice. Then, if still not placed, they are run following the same process for their third choice. Students who are placed in their second or third choice are kept in the lottery pool and are eligible for placement in subsequent lotteries to place them in their highest choice if that becomes available.
2. Sibling – If a student has a sibling attending their school of choice, or placed in that school in an earlier lottery, they are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade and by program).
3. Children of Employees – Children of employees are placed if seats are available (by grade, by program). This includes nonresident students (i.e. from outside the District).
4. Any Not Placed – All remaining District resident students are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade, by program).

Nonresident Students – The following steps apply to the second and subsequent lotteries to place nonresident students after all District resident students are placed; nonresident students are not placed in the first lottery.

1. Choice # – All first choices are run first. If a student cannot be placed in their first choice they are run, after all first choices are placed, in a lottery for their second choice. Then, if still not placed, they are run following the same process for their third choice. Students that are placed in their second or third choice are kept in the lottery pool and are eligible for placement in subsequent lotteries to place them in their highest choice if that becomes available.
2. Any Not Placed – All nonresident students, not already placed, are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade, by program).

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**Legal Ref:** A.R.S.15-816 *et seq.*

**Cross Ref:** Policy JE - Student Attendance; Policy IKE - Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration; Policy JB – Equal Educational Opportunities; ; Policy JC – Student Attendance Boundaries; Policy EEA – Student Transportation; Policy AC - Discrimination

