

STUDENTS

School Admissions: Entrance, Placement and Transfer*Age*

No pupil may be enrolled in the kindergarten or first grade whose 5th birthday does not occur on or before September 10 of the school year in which the child registers to enter school. No pupil may be enrolled in the District if that pupil has reached his or her 19th birthday on or before September 10 of the school year in which the child registers to enter school. A waiver of the age limitation may be requested where there are exceptional circumstances and must be reviewed and approved by the Board in an executive session. The Trustees may also admit an individual who has graduated from high school but is not yet 19 years of age even though no special circumstances exist for waiver of the age provision or a student who is not yet 19 years of age and experienced educational disruption and was awarded a diploma as a result and seeks access to reasonable curriculum designed to advance postsecondary success.

The trustees shall assign and admit a student who is enrolled in a nonpublic or home school and who meets the age and residency requirements on a part-time basis at the request of the student's parents or guardian.

Enrolling Students Under the age of 5 Before September 10 for Exceptional Circumstances

It is the policy of the District to provide enhanced educational opportunities to students under the age of 5 when individual exceptional circumstances exist.

The administration shall ensure admission, enrollment, and assignment of all qualifying children referenced in this policy. The administration shall place children enrolled pursuant to this policy in either a half-time or full-time program as part of the elementary school program. The administration shall review the criteria set forth in this policy and make the determination whether an individual student or class of students meets the criteria for exceptional circumstances.

The administration shall present the information to the Board for approval. In presenting the information to the Board, the administration shall remove all identifying information in order to protect the privacy rights of the student under state and federal law. The Board shall make the final decision on the enrollment of students under the District's exceptional circumstances policy.

The administration shall include children enrolled pursuant to this policy in the District's calculation of average number belonging (ANB) as reported to OPI to the extent allowed by law.

The Board of Trustees declares the following to be qualifying "exceptional circumstances" within the meaning of that term as used in 20-5-101(3) and "special permission" within the meaning of that term as used in 20-7-117 MCA, that merit waiving the age provisions of 20-7-117 MCA for qualifying children under 5 years of age

- 1 A child at least 3 years of age with a disability qualifying the child for services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- 2 A child who is 4 years of age or older on or before September 10 of the school year in which enrollment is to occur who meets one or more of the following:
 - a. Meets the income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced priced meals under the National School Lunch Program;
 - b. Is Limited English Proficient within the meaning of Title III of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act;
 - c. Is Gifted and Talented within the meaning of that term as used in 20-7-901 MCA;
 - d. Is an enrolled member of a federally recognized American Indian Tribe;
 - e. Is homeless as defined in 42 U.S. Code § 11302, or as determined by the administration, exhibits other characteristics or lives in circumstances that are uncommon, unusual, atypical, rare or otherwise distinguished from ordinary or typical which place the child at risk of failing to achieve at adequate levels,
 - f. Is an at-risk student as defined in Section 20-1-101(4). MCA;
 - g. Child's status as a member of a military family with prior enrollment.

The administration is authorized to enroll students in a manner consistent with this policy and to develop procedures to implement this policy.

Entrance – Identity and Immunization

Students enrolling in the District for the first time must present a birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity and age within 40 days, as well as proof of residence. Students must also provide additional student records including original immunization records within 30 days. If the parent of the student does not provide proof of identification within 40 days, the District shall notify the Missing Children Information Program and a local law enforcement authority of the fact that no proof of identity has been presented for the child.

Students who are homeless, in foster care, or are the child of a military family are entitled to immediate enrollment regardless of presentation of the required documentation. Nonresident students shall be admitted when required by law or as permitted by District policy.

A student who transfers from one school district to another may photocopy immunization records in the possession of the school of origin. The District shall accept the photocopy as evidence of immunization. When a student enrolls in the Helena School District the school the student left must send the original immunization records within thirty (30) days after the student has transferred out.

Parents who choose not to immunize their child based on religious tenets must annually submit to the District a signed [religious exemption statement](#) prescribed by the State of Montana. The form must be presented to the District prior to the child's first day of attendance. The statement must be maintained as part of the student's immunization records. The District will also accept medical exemptions as required by law.

Placement

The goal of the District shall be to place students at levels and in settings that will enhance the probability of student success. Developmental testing, together with other relevant criteria, including but not limited to, health, maturity, emotional stability, and developmental disabilities, may be considered in the placement of all students. Final disposition of all placement decisions rests with the Principal subject to review by the Superintendent. If a student is assigned to a school in the District outside of the adopted school boundaries applicable to that student, this decision is subject to the District's Uniform Grievance Procedure. Upon completion of these procedures, the Board's decision regarding the assignment is final.

Children of Relocated Military Families

The Board shall assign and admit a child whose parent or guardian is being relocated to Montana under military orders to a school in the district and allow the child to preliminarily enroll in classes and apply for programs offered by the District prior to arrival and establishing residency. The student may attend classes during preliminary enrollment and may receive offsite instruction if not present in the District.

Transfer Students

Resident students seeking to transfer to a District school will be admitted and placed pursuant to the terms of this policy. The District will request the student's records from the prior school district prior to making any final decision on placement.

Elementary students shall be placed at their current grade level on a probationary basis for a period of two weeks. Should any doubt exist with the teacher and/or Principal as to grade and level placement of the student, the student shall be subject to an educational assessment to determine appropriate grade and level placement.

High school students shall be placed according to the number of credits earned in their previous accredited school districts, subject to Montana Accreditation Rules and Standards and local alternate procedures for earning credit.

Cross References:	Policy 1085	Uniform Grievance Policy
	Policy 2090	Credit Transfer, Assessment for Placement Policy
	Policy 3020	Education of Homeless Youth
	Policy 3023	Education of Children in Foster Care
	Policy 3155	Part-time Attendance

Legal References:	§ 1-1-215, MCA	Residence -- rules for determining.
	§ 20-5-101, MCA	Admittance of child to school (revised by House Bill 946)
	§ 20-5-403, MCA	Immunization requirements

<u>§ 20-5-404, MCA</u>	<u>Conditional attendance</u>
<u>§ 20-5-405, MCA</u>	<u>Medical or religious exemption</u>
<u>§ 20-5-406, MCA</u>	<u>Immunization record</u>
<u>§ 20-5-502, MCA</u>	<u>Enrollment by caretaker relative -- residency -- affidavit</u>
<u>§ 20-7-117, MCA</u>	<u>Kindergarten and preschool programs</u>
<u>§ 44-2-511, MCA</u>	<u>School enrollment procedures for missing children</u>
<u>10.55.701, ARM</u>	<u>Board of Trustees</u>
<u>10.55.906, ARM</u>	<u>High School Credit</u>
<u>10.16.3122., ARM</u>	<u>Local Education Agency Responsibility for Students with Disabilities</u>
	<u>Individual with Disabilities Act Federal Rehabilitation Act 1973</u>
	<u>National School Lunch Act (Public Law 396, 79th congress, chapter 281, 2nd session)</u>
	<u>Title III, ESEA (English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement Act</u>
	<u>McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 (Pub. L. 100-77, July 22, 1987, 101 Stat. 482, U.S.C. §11301 et seq)</u>
<u>House Bill 352</u>	<u>Targeted Interventions to Support 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency</u>

Policy History:

Adopted on: 2.12.2013

Revised on: 10.8.2013, 12.10.2019, 10.11.2022, 6.13.2023, 2.13.2024

Reviewed on: