
Toronto District School Board

Policy P013

Title: Out-of-Area Admissions (**formerly Optional Attendance**)

Adopted: October 27, 1999
Effectuated: October 27, 1999
Revised: May 3, 2000, December 15, 2004, May 25, 2022, **May 24, 2023**
Reviewed: May 25, 2022, **May 24, 2023**
Authorization: Board of Trustees

1. RATIONALE

The Out-of-Area Admissions Policy (P013) (the “Policy”) supports implementation of the legislative requirements as outlined in Section 171(1), para. 7 of the *Education Act*, which authorizes the Toronto District School Board to determine attendance areas for each school and assign students to particular schools based on the address of the parents/guardians.

This Policy aligns with Board policies, including the Equity Policy (P037), Human Rights Policy (P031) and is consistent with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. This Policy supports the Board’s commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Actions and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation.

2. OBJECTIVE

- To provide policy direction about access to schools outside a student’s designated attendance area; and,
- To affirm the Board’s commitment to providing strong programming in local schools and to ensure equitable educational access, experiences, and opportunities for all students in alignment with the recommendations made in the Enhancing Equity Task force, the equity priorities of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and the vision of the Secondary Program Review.

3. DEFINITIONS

Alternative Schools refer to smaller school environments providing unique pedagogy, forms of governance, and staff/student/parent/guardian involvement that are open to any resident of Toronto. Each alternative school has a distinct

identity and focus and provides an educational experience suited to individual learning styles/preferences and/or needs.

Before and After-School Programs refers to licensed child care programs, extended day programs, authorized recreation, and skill building programs in schools serving junior kindergarten to grade 6 students before the school day begins, and after it ends, as defined in the *Child Care and Early Years Act (2014)*.

Board refers to the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the "TDSB".

Central Student Interest Programs refer to educational programs offered in some Elementary and Secondary Schools. Programming has a specific focus and students apply to participate in the Central Student Interest Program.

Central Student Interest School refers to an Elementary School or Secondary School with no Designated Attendance Area. All students at the TDSB are eligible to apply to attend and are required to follow application processes.

Child Care refers to licensed early learning and care programs for children from birth to 3.8 years of age.

Designated Attendance Area refers to the geographic area served by a designated school.

Designated school by address refers to the school identified by the primary residence of the parent/guardian/adult student.

Elementary school refers to Grades Kindergarten to 8, or a part thereof. All Elementary Schools offer Regular Programming. Some may offer Central Student Interest Programs, Intensive Support Programs or Intensive French Programs.

Feeder school refers to a school from which many or most students progress from an elementary school to a designated elementary or secondary school based on the attendance area or program.

Intensive Support Program (ISP) refers to Special Education programs designed to support communities of students with an identified exceptionality who have behavioural, communication, intellectual, or physical needs.

Local Programs refer to interest-based programs within a school with a specific focus (e.g., Math/Science, Specialist High Skills Major) that are available only to students registered at that school.

Out-of-Area Applicant refers to a student who applies to a school located outside of their designated attendance area.

Secondary School refers to Grades 9 to 12 where students earn Ontario Secondary School credits. All Secondary Schools offer regular programs. Some may also offer Central Student Interest Programs, Intensive Support Programs or Intensive French Programs.

TDSB refers to the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the “Board”.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Education holds the primary responsibility for overseeing the implementation of this Policy. Within the Director’s Office, the responsibility for the day-to-day management and coordination of the Policy is assigned to the Associate Director, Student Well-Being and Innovation.

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and staff, including principals, superintendents, and school personnel, involved in the application and registration processes for students seeking to register in a school that lies outside of their designated attendance area.

This Policy does not apply to:

- placements into Special Education Intensive Support Programs (ISPs). Students access these programs through the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process;
- students whose placements are facilitated by the Caring and Safe Schools department;
- the application processes for Central Student Interest Schools or Central Student Interest Programs. See the Student Interest Programs Policy (P100)
- the application processes for Elementary and Secondary Alternative Schools. See the Alternative Schools Policy (P062).
- the application processes for Local Programs. See the Student Interest Programs Policy (P100).

6. POLICY

6.1. General

- 6.1.1 The Board is committed to supporting strong, accessible, and inclusive community schools that provide educational programs for the diverse needs of its students.

- 6.1.2 Each student who is eligible to attend school will have the right to attend the regular program in a designated school in accordance with this Policy, based on the primary address of the student's parents (or either parent) or of the student's legal guardian. In the case of an adult student, the address where the student resides will determine the appropriate designated school.
- 6.1.3 The application process for attendance at a school other than the student's designated school will be communicated annually to students, and parents, guardians/caregivers through the TDSB website.
- 6.1.4 In the 2023-2024 school year and subsequent years, parents/guardians/caregivers, on behalf of their children, or students who are 18 years or older (as well as students 16 years or older who have withdrawn from parental control) may apply for one (1) regular program/ French Immersion/ Extended French school outside of their designated attendance area.

6.2. Regular Schools (Elementary)

- 6.2.1 Children from out-of-area who are enrolled in the school-based pre-school child care program prior to the end of February of the year they are to begin Junior Kindergarten, and who will be enrolled in the Before- and After-School Program ("BASP") at that school, have the option of attending the school in which the child care is located. No Out-of-Area Admissions process is required.
 - a) If these students no longer attend the BASP prior to the end of Grade 3, they may remain at the current school (and in the same educational program) until the end of the current school year. They are then required to attend their designated elementary school by address. BASP Supervisors are responsible for sharing information around departing families with school administrators.

Students withdrawn from the BASP prior to the end of Grade 3 may apply to remain at the current school via the Out-of-Area Admissions process.
 - b) In situations where students from out-of-area exceed the age limit or are demitted from a child care program due to operator policy changes, those students may remain in the school until the end of the grade range of that school.
 - c) Students who wish to attend the school at the next level into which the school feeds will be required to apply for Out-of-Area Admission to the school they wish to attend.

- d) Should a student from Out-of-Area register in school-based pre-school child care after the end of February in the year they are to begin Junior Kindergarten, the family will be notified by the child care operator that they will not have access to attend the school in September for junior kindergarten.

6.2.2 In-area elementary school students who move out-of-area during the school year may remain at the current school (and in the same educational program) until the end of the current school year (unless the next school year is a graduation year from that school), or may register in the new designated school.

- a) If these students are currently enrolled in the BASP and the new designated school's BASP cannot accommodate them, they may remain in their current school (in the same educational program).
- b) Students who wish to attend the school at the next level into which the school feeds will be required to apply for Out-of-Area Admission to the school should they wish to attend.

6.3 Regular Schools (Secondary)

6.3.1 In-area secondary school students who move out-of-area during the school year will be allowed to remain at the current school until graduation in the same educational program, or register in the new designated school.

6.4 Schools with French Immersion/Extended French Programs

6.4.1 All students whose parents/guardians reside within the City of Toronto and are eligible to attend a school operated by the Board will have the option to attend a French Immersion/ Extended French program.

- a) Entry to child care does not guarantee access to a French Immersion/Extended French program in that school.

6.4.2 If a student wishes to attend a French Immersion/ Extended French program at a school other than their designated [French Program school by address](#), the student must apply for Out-of-Area Admission at the requested school. The directions set out in Section 6.2 and 6.3 of this Policy for Regular Schools will apply. No transportation will be provided.

- a) Once admitted to a French Immersion/Extended French program at a school through Out-of-Area Admission, students may complete the grade range of that school.
- b) Students who wish to attend a school at the next level into which the [French Pathway](#) feeds will be required to apply for Out-of-Area Admission to that school.

6.5 Out-of-Area Admissions Status & Random Selection Priorities: All Schools

6.5.1 Board staff will determine the Out-of-Area Admissions status of schools annually, determining which schools may accept applications from students outside the designated attendance area based on school capacity and projected enrollment by grade.

- **Closed** - the school may not admit any students from Out-of- Area. No students may apply for Out-of-Area Admissions.
- **Limited (Siblings)** - Only students with a sibling currently attending and returning to the requested school may apply for Out-of-Area Admissions.
- **Limited (Siblings or Feeder School)** - Only students with siblings attending and returning to the requested school or students attending a feeder school may apply for Out-of- Area Admissions.
- **Limited** - the school may admit students from all of the priorities listed, as space is available. All students may apply for Out-of-Area Admissions.

6.5.2 Based on the Out-of-Area Admissions status of schools, students will be provided with opportunities to access schools outside their designated area by applying as an Out-of-Area applicant.

6.5.3 Based on current school enrolment and projected enrolment numbers, the school Principal (in consultation with Central Staff) will determine if space is available at the requested school in each grade. Spaces will be filled by grade according to the admission priorities. For each of the admission priorities, a random selection process will be undertaken if the number of applications exceeds available spaces.

Priorities for out-of-area admission will support family cohesiveness (K-8), educational continuity, feeder school group/program continuity, and current TDSB students.

Priorities (Appendix A) may change to meet the needs of the system and will remain aligned with the equity priorities outlined in

the TDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and recommendations from the Enhanced Equity Task Force Report.

- 6.5.4 The TDSB will not be responsible for providing transportation for students admitted through Out-of-Area Admissions. Transportation is the responsibility of the applicant.
- 6.5.5 Students admitted through Out-of-Area Admissions who wish to return to their designated school by address may do so at an appropriate transition point (e.g., end of term, semester change, beginning of school year) at the request of the student/ family. If the requested school's Out-of-Area Admissions status is "Closed", a switch may not be possible until the following semester or transition point.
- 6.5.6 Students with more than one designated school by primary address of residence can only switch from one school to the other through the Out-of-Area Admissions process. If the requested school's Out-of-Area Admissions status is "Closed", a switch will not be possible.
- 6.5.7 In keeping with Truth and Reconciliation, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students will be supported outside of the Out-of-Area Admissions Policy, and given priority access. Admission will be supported at any regular intake time, in Regular Programs, even in schools closed to Out-of-Area Admissions, where possible.
- 6.5.8 Secondary students whose child(ren) is/are enrolled in a child care centre in the catchment area will be supported outside of the Out-of-Area Admissions Policy, and given priority access. Admission will be supported and accommodated at any regular intake time, even in schools closed to Out-of-Area Admissions, where possible.
- 6.5.9 Decisions relating to Out-of-Area Admissions may be appealed through the Superintendent of Education for the requested school.

7. SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director of Education is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this Policy.

8. EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed at a minimum every four (4) years from the effective date.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Random Selection Process Priorities

10. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislation

- *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.*
- *Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2*
- *Ontario Human Rights Code.*

Policies

- Transportation of Students (P020)
- Early Learning and Care (P022)
- Human Rights (P031)
- Equity (P037)
- Student Interest Programs (P100)
- Alternative Schools (P062)
- French-as-a-Second Language (P080)

Procedures

- Transportation of Students (PR504)
- Admission Eligibility Requirements (PR518)
- Alternative Schools (PR584)
- French Immersion/Extended French (PR597)

Other Documents

- Enhancing Equity Task Force: Report and Recommendations, 2017.
- Director's Response to the Enhancing Equity Task Force Report, 2018.
- Multi-Year Strategic Plan
- Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, Ministry of Education, 2016
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Actions, 2015.
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007.

Appendix A: Random Selection Process Priorities

Spaces will be filled by grade according to admission priorities. For each of the admission priorities listed below, in order, a random selection process will be undertaken if the number of applications exceeds available spaces.

Priority 1: (Elementary schools only**) Students who have a sibling currently attending the requested school and that sibling will still be attending the requested school the next school year.

Priority 2: Students currently attending a *feeder school* in the same program as the application to the requested school (i.e. in Regular program if applying to Regular program).

Priority 3: (Elementary Schools only) Current students no longer attending the *Before- and After-School Program* of the requested school wishing to remain at the school (see section 6.2.2) and current students who have moved and wish to remain at the school.

Priority 4: Current TDSB students (and who remain registered as TDSB students for the duration of the school year in which the Out-of-Area application was made).

Priority 5: Other students whose parents'/ guardians' primary residence is in the City of Toronto (e.g. from independent/ private schools, other school boards, home schooling, etc.).

Priority 6: Students whose parents'/guardians' primary residence is outside the City of Toronto.

** students attending a secondary school as of September 2022 may have the sibling rule apply to their younger siblings.

- Applications for September 2023 - Grades 9 - 11 and returning grade 12 students
- Applications for September 2024 - Grades 10 -11 and returning grade 12 students
- Applications for September 2025 - Grade 11 and returning grade 12 students
- Applications for September 2026 - only applies to returning grade 12 students

Effective 2025 - 2026 school year: a new Out-of-Area Admission status of Limited (Feeder School) will be created for Secondary Schools only