

Admissions, Residency, and Attendance Required Admission and Registration Credentials for Students

I. PURPOSE

To establish the admission credentials required for students entering Stafford County Public Schools (SCPS) for the first time.

II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND REGISTRATION CREDENTIALS

• Proof of Residency

Residency is defined as the domicile of an individual, meaning that the individual lives in a locality with the intent to make it a fixed or permanent home. Domicile requires more than a bodily presence as an inhabitant in a given place, it requires bodily presence and eating and sleeping as a permanent home. Under no circumstances can a family or a student have two residences for school enrollment purposes. School staff must verify information provided to ensure the residence is located in Stafford County and that the student is enrolled in the school serving the residence area.

Students new to Stafford County Public Schools (SCPS) will complete the registration process at the appropriate level school which serves their home address; unless a student transfer request has been approved for individual student needs. In this case, the student will register at the receiving school rather than at the base school. Residence in Stafford County in the base school's attendance area must be verified prior to beginning the registration process.

1. Proof of residence within the school's attendance zone is customarily required. One of the documents set forth below must be presented:
 - a. Deed for residential property or contract, or current property tax bill for a residential property in Stafford County ; **or**
 - b. Current rental or lease agreement for a period of at least one year of a residential property; **or**
 - c. Contract or lease free of contingencies to occupy a Stafford County residence within two months of the date of enrollment; **or**
 - d. Residence manager's letter on company letterhead stating residence is corporate residence located in Stafford County; **or**
 - e. Weekly receipts for temporary residence in a hotel or motel for up to 60 days (this option will require renewal or evidence of more permanent residency within 60 days of enrollment); **or**
 - f. If the family is living in a residence of a friend or relative, the homeowner or leaseholder must provide a Notarized Affidavit of residency attesting to bona fide residency in Stafford County regarding this fact (**Attachment B**) in addition to the lease or deed of the homeowner or leaseholder.
2. In addition to proof of documentation outlined in **Item 1**, the parent or guardian must provide **two** official documents showing the name of the parent or guardian and the Stafford County address of the residence where the family is living. Acceptable documentation includes:
 - a. utility bills for most recent two months that may include water, gas, electricity, land line telephone or utility hook-up paperwork;

- b. vehicle related documents that may include current driver's license, registration, insurance policy or paid insurance bills which match address of residence;
 - c. employment verification that may include current payroll stubs, current employer verification on company letterhead, or similar documents deemed acceptable by the school principal;
 - d. tax document that may include current forms of personal property tax bill, IRS-1099, IRS-1040, IRS-W2, or IRS-W4;
 - e. other official correspondence from a governmental agency,
 - f. medical bills dated within the past three months, and
 - g. consecutive bank statements from the last two months.
3. For a student who may be considered homeless as defined by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Va. Code 22.1-3, school staff should consult the **Coordinator of School Social Work Services and Homeless Education Liaison**.
 4. Certain other students may be admitted into the public schools of the division and may be charged tuition in accordance with Va. Code 22.1-5 and pursuant to SCPS Board regulations.
 5. No child of a person on active military duty attending a school free of charge in accordance with this policy shall be charged tuition by the division upon such child's relocation to military housing located in another school division in the Commonwealth, pursuant to orders received by such child's parents to relocate to base housing and forfeit his military housing allowance. Such children shall be allowed to continue attending school in the division and shall not be charged tuition for attending such school. Such children shall be counted in the average daily membership of the division in which they are enrolled. Further, the division in which such children are enrolled subsequent to their relocation to base housing shall not be responsible for providing for their transportation to and from school.
 6. Residency requirements also apply to emancipated students who have reached 18 years of age.

The principal and his/her designee may defer one verification document for an individual who has recently established residency. The child should be provisionally enrolled with the additional verification provided within 60 days of enrollment.

- **Proof Of Custody**

The student to be enrolled must be accompanied by the parent, court-appointed guardian, or legal custodian*. The accompanying adult may be required to present a photo identification card.

1. The child's legal name that is on the birth certificate shall be considered the student's official name and shall be entered in the SCPS student record. A court document attesting to a change of name is required before any changes can be made to the student record. Changes of name or other data in a foreign birth certificate must be supported by a document issued by the United States government or by an official identification document of the country of origin.
2. In circumstances of joint or shared custody, the residence of the child is determined by where the child spends the major portion of time. To be considered a resident of a school's attendance zone in Stafford County, the child must spend more than half of the time with the parent who resides in Stafford County and in the particular attendance zone for the school in which the child is enrolled.

3. A legal guardian, must provide a copy of the adoption decree, court appointed guardianship documents, or custody order. A person seeking custody of the child must provide a copy of the custody petition with a case number and the date and time of the hearing. School staff may use the copy of this petition to enroll a student provisionally. Within ten calendar day after the hearing date, the petitioner will return to the school with a copy of the court order granting custody. A person *in loco parentis* who does not have legal custody and does not plan to seek legal custody must be referred to the principal who in turn may consult with the **Office of the Executive Director for Administration and Legal Services** or the SCPS Superintendent's designee on arrangements before enrolling the student.
4. *Exception - The student is emancipated, is 18 years of age or older and is not living with the parent(s); or the student is homeless and is not living in the custody of the parent.

- **Proof Student of School Age**

Pursuant to Va. Code 22.1-3, Stafford County Public Schools shall be free to each Stafford County resident whose fifth birthday falls on or before September 30 of the school year and who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1 of the school year.

Exceptions: Students who qualify for special education, who have not graduated and who have not reached 22 years of age on or before September 30 of the school year may continue to be enrolled as determined by their Individualized Education Plan. This exception also applies to students with limited English proficiency, who qualify for extended educational services and who have not reached 22 years of age on or before August 30 of the school year. Individuals falling outside of the age parameters indicated above shall not be enrolled unless specific programs are developed and approved by the School Board for such individuals or enrollment is otherwise required by law.

Each student to be enrolled for the first time in SCPS must present an official (certified) birth certificate. The complete legal name of the student, date of birth, and name(s) of parent(s) will be recorded as documented by the birth certificate. A copy may be made for the Student Educational Record and the original returned to the parent/guardian. If a certified copy of the student's birth certificate cannot be obtained, the person so enrolling the student shall submit an affidavit (**Attachment A**) giving the student's age and explaining the inability to present a birth certificate. A baptismal record, a hospital record, a passport, or a bona fide record may be used as documentation in support of the affidavit.

In case a child cannot meet the above requirement, the principal shall enroll the child temporarily for 30 days to allow the parent time to present the required birth certificate or affidavit.

In addition to residency, you will need to provide the following documentation:

- **Proof of Immunizations/Physical Examination**

It is important that you are aware of the state laws and regulations regarding your child's enrollment in school. The original birth certificate must be verified at the time of registration as well as proof of residency, social security card, if available, and transfer slip or copy of previous report card when appropriate.

A new preschooler, kindergarten student, or first through fifth grader entering a public school for the first time must furnish a physical examination /School Health Entrance Form (MCH 213) performed no earlier than twelve months prior to the date of entering kindergarten or elementary school. This physical exam is to include all components as stated on the MCH213. A signed Certificate of Immunization (part 2 of MCH213) must be presented prior to entry. Students entering grades 6-12 do not need to provide physicals for school entry unless they have visited

outside the United States for longer than 3 consecutive months prior to school entry. All new students in grades 6-12 must provide a current Immunization record. A TB Risk Assessment and School Health Information form must also be completed at the time of registration for all new students. No child may be admitted to school without the required components for his school level. You may also visit our website at www.staffordschools.net for further information and forms under Parents, "Enrollment".

The following immunizations are required of all students entering SCPS:

- Four doses of DTaP, with one dose after the fourth birthday
- Four doses of IPV/OPV, with one dose after the fourth birthday
- Two doses of Measles and Mumps vaccine, and one dose of Rubella vaccine (usually given as MMR), first dose given at age 12 months or later and second dose is usually given at 4 years old or before entering school
- Three doses of Hepatitis B following the recommended schedule
- Two doses of Varicella vaccine for students, first dose given at age 12 months or later and second dose is usually given at 4 years old or before entering school. Students who started Kindergarten before fall of 2010 only need 1 varicella (grades K-9 for 2018-19 school year).
- A Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) booster is required of students in grades 7-12
- An HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccine is recommended for all students entering 6th grade

Students entering Preschool are required to have age appropriate immunizations of the above listed immunizations and also the following:

- A Pneumococcal vaccine (PCV) booster is required of all students age 24 to 60 months
- HIB vaccine 2-3 doses required for students up to 60 months of age.

Immunization records must show the month, day, and year of vaccines received as well as signature of health care provider. All vaccines must be given following the recommended spacing schedule for that vaccine.

Should you need assistance in obtaining the necessary immunizations for your child and/or health records, please call your child's physician or the Stafford County Health Department at (540) 659-3101. The Stafford County Health Department offers free immunizations every Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

- **School Records/Transcripts/IEPs**

School records and/or original transcripts are preferred of secondary students. It is helpful if transferring students provide a report card from their previous school. After registration is completed, the Stafford County Public School will request a transfer of records from the previous school attended.

In order to assist in the appropriate placement of students within the instructional program, providing a copy of the student's most current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for students receiving special education services is encouraged at the time of enrollment.

- **Notice of School Status**

If a child has been previously enrolled in a public or private school outside of Stafford County, the parent or legal guardian or person in loco parentis must provide a sworn statement or affirmation indicating whether the child has been:

1. Expelled from attendance at a private or public school for violation of policies related to

weapons, alcohol or drugs, or the willful infliction of injury to another person. This document shall be maintained as a part of the student's scholastic record, and

2. Found guilty of or adjudicated delinquent for any offense listed in Va. Code 16.1-260.G or any substantially similar offense under the laws of any state, the District of Columbia, or the United States or its territories. This document shall be maintained by the Superintendent and by any others to whom he/she designates, separately from all other records concerning the student.

However, if the school administrators of the School Board take disciplinary action against a student based upon an incident, which formed the basis for the adjudication of delinquency or conviction for an offense listed in Va. Code 16.1-260.G, the notice shall become a part of the student's disciplinary record.

When the child is registered as a result of a foster care placement, the information required under this subsection must be furnished by the local social services agency or licensed child-placing agency.

- **Homeless Students**

Federal and state laws require that school divisions facilitate the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children. Should any individual appear to meet the definition of homeless or attempt to enroll a child who may be considered homeless, the principal must contact the **Coordinator of School Social Work Services and Homeless Education Liaison** or the SCPS Superintendent's designee to request assistance in making arrangements for the education of the child including school selection, enrollment, transportation and coordination with other local agencies as appropriate.

1. Homeless refers to an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and who has a primary nighttime residence that is:
 - a. A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill,
 - b. An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
 - c. A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used, as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
2. The following categories of children should be considered homeless:
 - a. Children or youth in homeless shelters;
 - b. Children or youth living in trailer parks and camping grounds because they lack adequate living accommodations;
 - c. Doubled up children and youth, if they are doubled up because of a loss of housing or other similar situation;
 - d. Children of migratory families, to the extent that they are staying in accommodations not fit for habitation;
 - e. Children and youth who have run away from home and are living in runaway shelters, abandoned buildings, the streets, or other inadequate accommodations;
 - f. Children or youth living in homes for unwed mothers if they have no other available living accommodations;
 - g. Children or youth who remain in a hospital beyond the time they would normally stay for health reasons because they have been abandoned by their families, and;

- h. Children or youth whose parents or guardians will not permit them to live at home and as a result they live on the streets, in shelters, or in other transitional or inadequate accommodations.

- **Foster Care Placements**

If the person enrolling a child who has been placed in foster care by a local social services agency is unable to produce a report of a comprehensive physical examination and/or proof of immunizations, the student shall be immediately enrolled; however, the person enrolling the child shall provide a written statement that, to the best of his/her knowledge, the student is in good health and is free from communicable or contagious disease. In addition the placing social service agency shall obtain and produce the required documents or otherwise ensure compliance with the statutory requirements for the foster child within 30 days after the child's enrollment.

- **Residency in Question**

If a principal receives information indicating that a student resides outside of Stafford County or the attendance area if not on an approved waiver, the principal shall send a letter to the parent or legal guardian or person in loco parentis that requires satisfactory proof of residency within five school days. If satisfactory proof of residency is not provided within five days, the principal will notify the parent or legal guardian or person in loco parentis that the student will be withdrawn from school at the end of an additional five days.

During the five-day period, the parent or legal guardian or person in loco parentis may appeal the withdrawal in writing to the **Office of the Executive Director for Administration and Legal Services** or the SCPS Superintendent's designee. The Office of the Executive Director for Administration and Legal Services or the Superintendent's designee will conduct hearing and will issue a final decision. During the appeal period the student may remain enrolled. If the decision of the principal is upheld by the Office of the Executive Director for Administration and Legal Services or the Superintendent's designee the student will be immediately withdrawn.

Any person who knowingly makes a false statement concerning the residency of a child in the school division or school attendance zone, for the purpose of attending a school outside their resident attendance zone, shall be guilty upon conviction of a Class 4 misdemeanor and shall be liable for to the school division for tuition charges for the time the student was enrolled, in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

A. EXCEPTION

The **Office of the Executive Director for Administration and Legal Services** or the SCPS Superintendent's designee may waive these requirements to the extent necessary to comply with national security requirements, to protect the safety of the registering student, or to comply with applicable state and federal requirements for the enrollment of homeless children.

Legal Reference:

Code of Virginia, Sections 22.1-1, 22.1-3, 22.1-3.1, 22.1-5, 32.1-46