

# **Lafayette County School District Controlled Open Enrollment Plan 2024-2025**

Florida Statute 1002.31 states that beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, as part of a school district's or charter school's controlled open enrollment, and in addition to the existing public school choice programs provided in s. 1002.20(6)(a), each district school board or charter school shall allow a parent from any school district in the state whose child is not subject to a current expulsion or suspension to enroll his or her child in and transport his or her child to any public school, including charter schools, that has not reached capacity in the district, subject to the maximum class size pursuant to s. 1003.03 and s. 1, Art. IX of the State Constitution.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

COE is available to all students who reside with their parent/guardian in Florida. A student's residence is the residence/domicile of his/her parent(s), legal guardian, or other such person as defined by any order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction. The residence is defined as the place in which a student physically lives, sleeps and functions full-time during the school year. If divorced parents have joint custody of a child, they must use one address as the legal residence for enrollment purposes. A student who has been expelled or suspended from public school is not eligible to participate in COE. Because pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) is not a mandatory program, COE options are not available to Pre-K students.

Pursuant to Federal and State statute, COE assignments for students with disabilities (Exceptional Student Education [ESE] and Section 504 students) are contingent upon the school of choice having the program and services specified on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Section 504 Accommodation Plan. If a student with an IEP or Section 504 Accommodation Plan is assigned to a school through COE, school administration may convene a team to ensure the IEP, or 504 Accommodation Plan can be implemented.

The district has the right to revoke approval due to poor attendance, grades, behavior, and/or if the student is chronically tardy to school at any time, or other special reasons designated by the superintendent.

## **Current Choice Students**

All students granted an assignment under the Lafayette County Schools COE Plan may continue to the highest grade level offered in their assigned Choice until:

- a) The student is enrolled in a program which requires a change of schools.
- b) The parent or guardian requests a change of assignment.
- c) The student is expelled or suspended.
- d) The student leaves that public school to attend a private school, charter school, or home education program.
- e) The student moves out of the state of Florida.
- f) It is determined that inaccurate, false, or misleading information resulted in an improper assignment or reassignment.

## **Application Process**

Parents must complete an application for school choice for the subsequent school year during the open enrollment period and have an application ***submitted by May 31<sup>st</sup>*** to facilitate timely decisions and notifications. Applications are accepted outside the open enrollment period, the key factor in granting or denying a request is the capacity of the school.

Lafayette County will accept applications for grade spans (K-12) that have not reached 90% capacity. Grade spans that are open to Choice will be publicized primary through the district website and updated following the end of each 9-week grading period including the following information:

- School program information
- Transportation information

The application for controlled open enrollment can be obtained from the Lafayette County School District website (<https://www.lafayette.k12.fl.us>) or at the Lafayette County public schools for printing. Parents without computer access may seek assistance from the District Office or public library. The application is completed and signed by the parent/guardian and submitted to the Principal of the school of application.

**Lafayette Elementary School:** 811 East Main Street, Mayo, FL 32066, or via fax (386) 294-4320

**Lafayette High School:** 160 NE Hornet Drive, Mayo, FL 32066, or via fax (386) 294-4197

Preference will be given to the following applications when documentation is attached to the application:

- Dependent children of active-duty military whose move resulted from military orders.
- Children who have been relocated due to a foster care placement in a different school zone.
- Children who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of the custodial parent.
- Students residing in the school district.
- Sibling currently attends the requested school.

Once the school receives ALL the required items, the request will be reviewed. Applying does not guarantee that the student will be approved to transfer to the requested school. The parent/guardian will be notified in writing via United States Mail as soon as a decision is made. Due to this process, students will not be allowed to enroll in the choice school at the time the Application is submitted. Once notification of acceptance has been received, the parent/guardian may enroll the student in the approved school. The student must remain in the zoned school until a choice assignment is granted.

### **Lottery**

Once a grade span has reached 90% capacity it is reclassified as frozen to controlled open enrollment. The remaining applications will be given a lottery number. The number is used to weigh the remaining applications should the capacity drop below 90%.

### **Appeals Process for Hardship Cases**

Parents of students who applied during controlled open enrollment and were not approved for placement in a school of choice may request an appeal review based on a documented hardship situation within 3 days of receiving notice of denial. A written appeal describing the hardship must be submitted via facsimile or email to the Director of Teaching and Learning. The appeal committee serves as the contact for appeal requests and coordinates the review of all hardship requests. The results of this appeal are considered final.

Hardships or statutory provisions may affect Choice transfers to schools in all status categories. These provisions include documented medical, emotional, psychological, and legal reasons:

- Availability of day care will not be considered as a basis for hardship beyond the elementary level.
- If a hardship appeal is submitted for medical reasons, including psychiatric, the parent or guardian must submit a Medical Hardship Documentation and Release of Records form, including a physician's statement describing the medical condition of the student and specific medical reasons justifying the request.
- If a hardship appeal is submitted for legal reasons, the parent or guardian must submit documentation of the legal hardship.

### **Transportation**

The parent/guardian is responsible for the transportation of a student approved to attend a school of choice through the controlled open enrollment process.

**Approved: 4/16/2024**