

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS

Purpose/Background

The *Education Act* legislates that the Board shall establish school attendance areas. Board establishes school attendance areas to identify the school that a resident student is designated to attend. In providing high quality learning opportunities for all students, the management of variables such as, but not limited to, facility utilization, transportation, future planning, staff resources, financial resources, technology resources, is necessary.

Foothills School Division (FSD) recognizes that parents may request (or wish) to register their child at a school outside of their attendance area (non-designated, alternate school-of-choice). A review of this request, when being asked for by an FSD resident, is subject to a meeting with their attendance area school Principal and the Principal of the school they are wanting to attend to determine; the provision of appropriate resources, availability of facility space, with the knowledge that transportation is parent-provided.

Students outside the attendance area shall be considered for acceptance in accordance with the following procedures.

Procedures

1. The Principal will accept resident students living within the attendance area for that school as well as students directed to that school by the Superintendent, or designate, unless the Superintendent determines that the school cannot provide programming to meet the needs of that student. Under the Alberta *Education Act*:

Section 4(1)– Subject to this section, a student is a resident student of the board of the district or division in which the student’s parent resides.

Section 4(2) - For the purposes of this section and section 59,

- (a) *a student who is in the care of a foster parent under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act is deemed to be a resident student of the board of the school division in which the foster parent resides, unless subsection (5) applies, and*
- (b) *a student who has a disability and is the subject of an agreement under the Family Support for Children with Disabilities Act is deemed to be a resident student of the board of the school division in which the student resides.*

2. Students are expected to attend their designated school. Students who are registered at a school at the beginning of the year will be expected to complete the year in the same school unless they move to a different school’s attendance area.
3. The operational capacity will be determined annually for each school in the Division. The Superintendent, or designate, shall advise Principals of the operational capacity of their schools.

4. Parents need to take the following into account when considering whether or not to consider seeking to have their children attend an out of attendance area school:
 - 4.1 The parent(s)/guardian(s) have had direct communication, and sign off, with the Principal of the Foothills designated school to discuss reasons for requesting to attend a non-designated school in an effort to create a better understanding for school improvement and have the Principal sign off;
 - 4.2 There is sufficient facility space, personnel and resources in the school in which the parent(s)/guardian(s) wish to enroll their child (normally this means the school is operating at less than 85% of capacity); and
 - 4.3 The parent(s)/guardian(s) agree to transport their child to and from the school or make arrangements in accordance with Policy 16 - *Student Transportation Services*.

5. If the enrollment at the school is not at operational capacity, the Principal shall review the following factors when considering to accept students from outside the attendance area for that school:
 - 5.1 The availability of personnel and resources, e.g., insufficient personnel to educate a student with special needs;
 - 5.2 The size and composition of classes, e.g., an individual class at or near capacity;
 - 5.3 The projected enrollment for the school;
 - 5.4 The effect on other Division schools, if any;
 - 5.5 The Priority of Enrollment Guidelines.

6. If the enrollment at the school is not at operational capacity these Priority of Enrollment Guidelines for students not living in the attendance area for that school will be considered in the following order by the Principal:
 - 6.1 Resident students requiring a particular program offered at that school;
 - 6.2 Resident students who have a sibling attending that school at the time of enrollment;
 - 6.3 Students of staff working at that school.
 - 6.4 Resident students within that community, if there is more than one school;
 - 6.5 Other Foothills School Division students
 - 6.6 Students living outside Foothills School Division
 - 6.7 International students.

7. If a school is at operational capacity and the Principal wishes to accept additional students from outside of his/her attendance area, approval must be obtained from the Superintendent or designate. The following factors will apply:
 - 7.1 Availability of school personnel and resources;
 - 7.2 Size and composition of classes;
 - 7.3 Future projected enrollment of the school;
 - 7.4 Effect on other Division schools;
 - 7.5 The Priority of Enrollment Guidelines.

8. If a school is at operational capacity and the child is refused admission to the school by the Principal, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may apply to the Superintendent or designate, for special consideration. Factors considered include documented rationale for the following:
 - 8.1 Medical
 - 8.2 Psychological
 - 8.3 Educational rationale

9. Parents must complete **Form 1a** for Foothills School Division students seeking to attend a Foothills School outside their attendance area school, parents of students from outside Foothills School Division must complete **Form 1b**.

10. Decisions by the Principal may be appealed to the Superintendent whose decision shall be final.

11. The parents of a student living outside the attendance area of a particular school must arrange for transportation on an annual basis.

12. If students are accepted at an “out of attendance area” school they may continue to attend the school until they transition out of that school. Students should not expect to automatically transition to the school that the out of attendance area school feeds into, unless the above criteria are re-applied.

13. Notwithstanding the foregoing the Division maintains the ability to designate a student to a school outside their attendance area for individual program purposes.

Note 1: Residence of parents will be determined in accordance with Section 4.1 of the Education Act.

- a) A person is deemed to have only one place of residence;
- b) A person’s residence is the place that person ordinarily lives and sleeps and to which, when absent from the residence, that person intends to return.

Reference: Relevant Legislation & Guidelines

Out-of-Attendance Area Application



AP 305 – Form 1a

Student residing within Division

Transfer requests for a particular school may be approved only if space, resources & required programming are available at the FSD REQUESTED school

STEP 1: Parent/Guardian completes (PART A) and meets with the Principal of the FSD **DESIGNATED** school to discuss the rationale for the Out-of-Attendance Area Application.

STEP 2: The Principal of the FSD **DESIGNATED** school signs (PART B) to indicate a meeting with the Parent/Guardian has occurred.

STEP 3: If still interested, the Parent/Guardian may submit the Application to the Principal of the **REQUESTED** school with rationale for request. Applications will be processed prior to May 31st from the upcoming school year.

STEP 4: If the Application is not supported, the Parent/Guardian may appeal the decision by submitting the Application and supporting documentation to the Superintendent or Designate. The Parent/Guardian will receive a formal letter from the Superintendent or Designate advising them of the decision.

Parent/Guardian will be responsible to provide transportation to the FSD REQUESTED school.

PART A: Parent/Guardian/Independent Student to complete section below.

Student Name:	----- (last) (first) (middle)	Date of Birth: ----- (month) (day) (year)
<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		
CURRENT School:	CURRENT Grade:	DESIGNATED School:
REQUESTED School:	REQUESTED Grade:	Requested for the 20_____- 20_____ school year
Residence Address: (or 911 Address)		Postal Code:
Name of Parent/ Guardian/Independent Student Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr.	(last) (first) Email Address:	Home Phone: Business Phone: Cell:
Name of Parent/ Guardian/Independent Student Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr.	(last) (first) Email Address:	Home Phone: Business Phone: Cell:
Signature of Parent/Guardian/Independent Student:		Date of Request:

ATTACH A LETTER OF RATIONALE that must specify in detail the educational, psychological/emotional, or medical needs of your child and why the **REQUESTED** school would be better able to meet those needs (attach letters of support from trained professionals).

PART B: Principal of FSD DESIGNATED school to complete section below.

Signature of Principal to indicate meeting with family has occurred:	Date:
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PART C: Principal of REQUESTED school to complete section below.

Approved Not Approved	Rationale:
Signature of Principal:	
Date:	

