



Okaloosa County School District
Registration Information for Military Families During COVID-19 School
Closures
5/13/2020

During the time of school closures due to COVID-19, Okaloosa Schools will continue to welcome military families PCSing into our county and will assist with all enrollment procedures for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result of school closures at this time, the district is developing an online registration portal through which military families may submit registration information to enroll their student(s). More information can be found below.

1. In accordance with §1003.05, *Florida Statutes* – **Assistance to transitioning students from military families**
 - a. A student whose parent is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation within a school district while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order shall be considered a resident of the school district for purposes of enrollment when the order is submitted to the school district and shall be provided preferential treatment in the controlled open enrollment process of the school district pursuant to s. 1002.31.
 - b. The District’s Board-approved Controlled Open Enrollment period extends from January 15 – February 15 each year. Beyond that period, families may seek enrollment in any school that has available capacity. If a limited number of seats are available, preferential treatment will be given to students who are dependents of active duty military who are transferring into Okaloosa County along with any other categories as defined by statute.

2. ***How do I find out which school serves my new address?***
 - a. Visit www.okaloosaschools.com; *Parents/Students* drop down menu; >*School Site Locator* and type in the residential address to find the Elementary, Middle and High Schools that service that address.
 - b. A portal for registering your student at that school will be available at www.okaloosaschools.com beginning May 15. The installation School Liaison will be notified and will provide this information to families PCSing to the area. The portal will permit a family to initially register at a school without a known address. *However, the family must provide an address verification before the enrollment can be completed.* A contract to purchase a home, or a lease/rental agreement would be sufficient. If a military family resides in temporary housing, they can enroll their student in the school that serves the temporary housing location. **A second form of documentation is typically required but can be postponed for families PCSing to the area until it is able to be obtained.**

- c. Residency documentation
 - i. In-County Deed, mortgage/HUD statement, monthly mortgage statement, or residential rental/lease agreement, covering the current year [MUST BE ONE OF THE TWO]
 - ii. Automobile or Homeowner's insurance policy or bill, In-County, dated within the last 30 days
 - iii. Parent/legal guardian driver's license ID card with the stated current address as that of the registering address.
 - iv. Mail from employment and /or financial institutions; including checking, savings, property tax record, credit card statements or investment account statements, In-County, dated within the last 30 days
 - v. Mail from Federal, State, County or City government agencies (including city and county agencies), to an In County address, dated within the last 30 days

3. *How do I get approval to enroll my student at a school in an attendance zone that is different from where I will be living?*

- a. Go to www.okaloosaschools.com; *Parents/Students* drop down menu; >Registration>Controlled Open Enrollment
- b. View the list of schools with available seats.
- c. If the desired school is available, complete the request by clicking on the “Apply Now” button.
- d. An email approval will be sent out within five (5) days.
- e. Parents PCSing into the area will not need to know their new local address to request enrollment in a school that has available seats.
- f. Following the email approval of school assignment, the parent may begin the actual registration process with their chosen school which will be available online May 15.
- g. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from school when requesting attendance outside of their attendance zone.

4. *What if the school I wish for my student to attend does not have available seats?*

- a. The way to ensure that your student has a seat in a particular school is to live in that school's attendance zone.
- b. If that is not the case, the parent may submit a Hardship Appeal to the Principal of the school they wish their student to attend.
- c. The Hardship Appeal document is available at the Controlled Open Enrollment site referenced in Question #5.
- d. Principal email addresses can be found on each school's website. A link to each school can be found at www.okaloosaschools.com in the *Parents/Students* drop down menu.
- e. Please keep in mind that schools at capacity do not have space for students who live outside of the attendance zone. In some cases, it may be close to the beginning of the school year before a hardship approval can be granted, if at all.

5. ***What if I don't have an address yet but I want to get my student registered at a school?***
 - a. Military families PCSing into the area can register without an address at any school that has available seats.
 - b. Those schools with available seats are posted in the Controlled Open Enrollment section of our website (see Question #3).
 - c. Families who are in temporary housing may register at the school whose zone includes the temporary lodging (motel, condo, TLF, etc.) if desired.
 - d. However, if a more permanent residence is being established, it is recommended that enrollment wait until the permanent residence is established if at all possible so that the student may attend school that serves that residence.
 - e. The district recognizes that families moving to temporary lodging near the beginning of the school year may have no option but to register with the school serving that location. If a move to a permanent residence occurs before the school year begins, the student enrollment should be transferred to the school that serves the permanent address. If the move occurs after the school year begins, the parent may request for the student to remain at the original school. The district will make every effort to accommodate such a request subject to school capacity and class size requirements.

6. ***How will I complete the registration process once I have selected the school my student will attend?***
 - a. The district is finalizing an online registration portal that families will be able to use during this COVID-19 pandemic to complete most of the registration process remotely. It will be available May 15. The installation School Liaison will be notified when the registration portal is complete.

7. ***Will I be able to communicate with someone from the school prior to arriving to the area if I need to?***
 - a. Yes, though schools are currently at reduced staffing levels, tele-conferencing will be available this summer. Video conferencing may also be used to help students and parents select classes for the fall. Guidance Counselors or a school administrator will be available during the summer to help with class schedules.

8. ***Will summer tryouts, practices, etc. be held, and if so, when?***
 - a. Decisions on summer activities have not been made at this time. Once we have further guidance from the Department of Education, decisions on summer activities will be made and shared with our military families.