



Okaloosa County School District
Registration Information for Military Families for the 2021-2022 School Year
February 26, 2021

Okaloosa Schools welcomes all military families PCSing into our area for the 2021-2022 school year. Our goal is to make the educational transition for students of active duty military personnel as seamless as possible. We believe that Okaloosa County is a terrific place to live and raise a family, and whether your family is here for two years or ten, we pledge to be of service to you and your children throughout your time here.

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; *Schools* 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 beginning the registration process for your student(s) at that school will be available at www.okaloosaschools.com beginning February 26th. 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 February 26th.
 - 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 the 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. School personnel will be available throughout the summer to assist military families in completing their registration. Schools will be contacting those who complete the online registration process.

7. ***Will I be able to communicate with someone from the school prior to arriving to the area if I need to?***
 - a. Yes, Registrars, Guidance Counselors or a school administrator will be available during the summer to help with class schedules.

8. ***Are summer activities like athletic and band being held?***
 - a. We absolutely anticipate summer activities occurring, though we expect some modifications based on conditions at that time. Your school will have information on summer activities as soon as final decisions are made.

9. ***Will the school district have a virtual option for students next fall?***
 - a. The district created *mySchool* Online for this school year in response to COVID in order to keep students connected to their neighborhood schools. Based on funding decisions at the state level, that model may not be available in the fall.
 - b. However, other virtual education options for students existed prior to the COVID pandemic and will be in place going forward for those who choose not to return to the school building.

10. ***Are masks mandatory for students and staff in Okaloosa County for this school year?***
 - a. Masks are strongly recommended whenever social distancing cannot be maintained. Masks are required on school buses. (NOTE: Masks are required on campus at Eglin Elementary which is located on Eglin AFB.)
 - b. All COVID-related policies will be reviewed this summer.

