

Out-of-Boundary Guidance

Introduction

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) strives to provide a world class education that prepares all students, regardless of background or circumstance, for success in college, career and life. DCPS participates in the citywide lottery to allow parents and students the option of attending schools outside of their neighborhood, or in-boundary, school. Students who attend school out of their neighborhood are considered out-of-boundary students. This guidance will deliver the attendance rules for out-of-boundary students. This guidance does not apply to students enrolled in preschool or pre-kindergarten programs. Questions about this guidance shall be directed to dcps.policy@dc.gov.

Attendance Practices and Procedures

Out-of-boundary students are entitled to attend their enrolled school through terminal grade. These students are expected to attend their classes regularly without disruption to receive continuity of instruction and engage with their peers and school community. If an out-of-boundary student becomes chronically truant over the course of the year, the school may decide not to permit the student to return for the following school year. Importantly, a student may not be transferred in the middle of the school year unless doing so is necessary pursuant to an involuntary transfer.

Chronically Truant

A school aged child who is absent from school without a legitimate excuse for ten (10) or more days within a single school year¹

Attendance Protocols

The attendance interventions required by the DCPS Attendance Protocol, a copy of which is attached, should be followed by all schools. Schools must deliver and document all attendance interventions for all students and regularly update ASPEN to reflect their work. Schools shall conduct the following actions when faced with a truant student:

1. Schools must contact families in a timely manner when a student has the equivalent of 1 day of unexcused absence.
2. After 5 unexcused absences or 10 unexcused tardies, schools must inform parents in writing that their child may be asked to return to their neighborhood school, for the following school year, if they reach 10 unexcused absences or 20 unexcused tardies during the course of the existing school year.
3. If a student reaches 10 unexcused absences or 20 unexcused tardies, a principal **must** notify the family in writing if it is decided that their child will not be permitted to return for the following school year.
4. A copy of the notification letter shall be delivered to the instructional superintendent of the out-of-boundary school and the principal of the student's in-boundary school.

For further information about attendance interventions, please see the Attendance Guide FY16-17.

¹ 5-A DCMR §2199

Student Transfers

When considering changing schools, schools and families shall look at several factors, including but not limited to:

- Student's needs and desires
- Age of the child or youth;
- Distance from student's residence and potential new school
- Attendance Interventions provided and response to said interventions

Appeal Process

Out-of-boundary students who are involuntarily transferred to their neighborhood school have the right to the following:

- *Administrative conference*—this meeting will include the parent, school administrator and student. It will be an opportunity for the school to share information about the proposed involuntary transfer and discuss the location options with the student and the parent. Parent will receive a hard copy of the proposed notice of involuntary transfer documentation along with a notice of the parents' right to appeal. This information must also be forwarded to the parent via Certified Mail.
- *Mediation*—Parents may request a mediation review of the documentation, which can be conducted by the Director of Student Attendance or a designee prior to the hearing phase.
- *Review Hearing*—Parents may request a hearing to review the proposed involuntary transfer by the DCPS Student Placement Office within 7 school days of receiving notice. The Student Placement Office will coordinate the hearing with the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE). The OSSE shall conduct a hearing to examine the facts and circumstances of the incident and render a recommendation. A family wishing to request a hearing should begin the process by contacting the DCPS Student Placement Office at 202-939-2004.