



Okaloosa County School District
Registration Information for Military Families
Updated March 2, 2022

The Okaloosa County School District welcomes all military families PCSing into our area. 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. **TO ENROLL YOUR STUDENT FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR** - PCSing families who are enrolling to attend school this Spring may use the current year Registration portal. Go to www.okaloosaschools.com to the **Schools** drop down menu to find the registration portal. Select 2021-2022 school year enrollment.
 - c. **TO ENROLL YOUR STUDENT FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR** - The district is transitioning to a platform called FOCUS beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. A portal for beginning the Remote Enrollment Registration Process for your student(s) for the upcoming school year will be available at www.okaloosaschools.com beginning February 22nd. The installation School Liaison will be notified and can assist in directing PCSing families to this registration portal. Parents will create a parent account first and then register their student(s). Final registration is completed at the school site. *Parents are not required to input a county residential address in order to create a parent account, but are required to input an address to register their student(s).*
 - d. A contract to purchase a home, or a lease/rental agreement would be sufficient to provide an address. If a military family resides in temporary housing, they can enroll their

student in the school that serves the temporary housing location address. **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.**

- e. 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
 - vi. This documentation is NOT provided during the online enrollment process but is provided later at the school to complete enrollment.
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. The initial Controlled Open Enrollment application period for 2022-2023 is from January 15 – February 15. After that time, parents can continue to apply for schools with available seats.
 - d. If the desired school is available, complete the request by clicking on the “*Apply Now*” button.
 - e. An email approval will be sent out within five (5) days.
 - f. Parents PCSing into the area will not need to know their new local address to request enrollment in a school that has available seats.
 - g. Following the email approval of school assignment, the parent may begin the actual registration process with their chosen school which will be available online in February beginning February 22nd. At any time, the parent is encouraged to reach out to the school for assistance.
 - h. 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 that the student remain at their current school. The District will make every effort to allow the student to remain while still meeting class size requirements in Florida.
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. ***What OCSD Charter Schools are available, and what is the enrollment process/and is transportation provided?***
- a. A list of public charter schools in Okaloosa County is available at <https://www.okaloosaschools.com/schools/directory/charter> . The links provided will take parents to the individual charter school's website. Information on enrollment can be provided by contacting the charter school directly.
9. ***What is the process for a PCSing new student that already has an IEP from their previous school? Will the student receive their accommodations upon enrollment?***
- a. When a student enrolls in a District school with an IEP, the school will provide comparable services to the best of its ability. A transfer IEP meeting will be held within 30 days to review and create an IEP for the student in our district.

- b. The Staffing Specialist assigned to each school assists with this process. The school's Guidance Counselor and Registrar should be notified by the parent if the student is coming with an active IEP. Once a student is enrolled, the school will set up a transfer IEP meeting with the parent within 30 days to either keep or adjust the accommodations as needed.

10. ***What is the process for a student to receive special education services through an IEP if that is not currently the case?***

- a. The State of Florida utilizes the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process which allocates resources in direct proportion to student needs. If a student is showing academic or behavior needs, the student would be referred to the MTSS Committee at the school. The MTSS process would discuss the needs and implement tiers of strategies and interventions to support the student. Based on student's response to the interventions, interventions may be added, or changed. A specific timeline is not set due to the individual needs of each student. Some students are successful with the tiered support. Other students are referred for assessment to consider ESE eligibility.
- b. If, instead, a parent requests that the school conduct an evaluation to determine whether their child is a child with a disability in need of special education and related services, the school district must within 30 days, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise in writing:
 - 1. Obtain consent for the evaluation or provide the parent with written notice in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C., explaining its refusal to conduct the evaluation.
 - 2. The District's Standard Policies and Procedures document that covers this information and more is available on our website in the ESE Department.
 - 3. Your school's Exceptional Student Education Staffing Specialist is the best point of contact to answer questions and provide support throughout the process.
- c. For more information on Exceptional Student Education in Okaloosa County Schools, visit <https://www.okaloosaschools.com/depts/ese>.