

In-District Open Enrollment

The Dubuque Community School District allows K-12 open enrollment in an attendance center other than the home center. The intent of the policy is to give students and parents a choice with certain restrictions / conditions.

Basis for Application

Application for in-district open enrollment may be made based on

- documented medical reasons;
- documented legal reasons;
- imminent and documented change of address for the family;
- sibling in attendance at the building in the same year;
- parent working in the building during the same year;
- child care reasons;
- extenuating circumstances which would create a hardship significantly affecting the learning progress of the student for whom open enrollment is requested;
- extenuating circumstances – as defined by Policy 1001 *Anti-Harassment/Bullying* and/or Policy 1005 *Anti-Discrimination*.

Penalty for Providing False Information

Applications must include accurate information. Applications which contain false information — including information about residence or custody — will be rejected, and decisions based upon that false information will be rescinded immediately. Families may be required to submit verifiable documentation to support applications.

Transportation

Parents of students approved for in-district open enrollment are responsible for transporting their student to the new school.

Elementary

Application Procedures

Students not previously approved for open enrollment must register at the school assigned to their residence. Families wishing to open enroll may secure an In-District Open Enrollment Application from any elementary school or the district office on or after March 15 and must submit a completed application by **4:30 p.m. on May 1** of the school year preceding the school year for which the request is being made. Required documentation must accompany the completed application. The Superintendent (or designee) will review all completed applications submitted by the deadline and will respond in writing by May 30, indicating approval or denial.

Applications received after May 1 will be filed and will be acted upon after elementary registration, with decisions communicated by August 15.

Restrictions and Conditions

The primary factors to be considered in determining approval or denial of the application are availability of appropriate programs, space availability, and class size. Based on actual and/or projected enrollment, the Superintendent may close grade levels in specified schools to new in-district open enrollment in order to comply with class size guidelines. Once an elementary open enrollment request has been approved, the student will attend the requested school for a complete academic year. Students approved for open enrollment do not qualify for district-provided transportation, but may request a “pay ride,” if a route and seat are available. Students who qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch also qualify for free or reduced-cost transportation when space is available on an established route.

Once an elementary open enrollment request has been denied, a second application for the same request will not be considered for the same school year. Parents may utilize the Appeal Procedures outlined below.

Students moving from one attendance area to another during the school year may remain in the original school until the end of the school year and must complete an open enrollment application and be approved in order to remain. For the following school year, they will be expected to attend the school to which their new residence is assigned unless they apply and are approved for open enrollment for the following year.

Review/Approval Procedures

An administrator designated by the Superintendent will review all complete applications submitted by the deadline and will respond in writing by May 30, indicating approval or denial.

Appeal Procedures

When an in-district open enrollment request which was submitted on time is denied, parents may appeal the decision to the Educational Programs/Policy/Strategy Committee of the Board. Requests for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Board Secretary by June 10. The Committee will schedule a hearing to review each case to determine whether or not the policy has been misinterpreted or misapplied, whether further information or changed circumstances merit a reversal of the decision, or whether extenuating circumstances exist which cause a hardship justifying reversal of the original decision. The Committee will respond in writing to all appeals within two weeks of its meeting.

Discontinuing Participation in Open Enrollment

In-district open enrollment requests are granted for one year. To avoid disruption to the student’s educational program, parents wishing to withdraw their student from participation in in-district open enrollment may do so only at the following times and only if sufficient class space is available at the school and grade level to which the student wishes to return:

- prior to the beginning of the school year; or
- at the end of either the first or second trimester.

Parents wishing to discontinue open enrollment must submit a letter to the Superintendent requesting approval.

Secondary

Application Procedures

Students not previously approved for open enrollment must register at the school assigned to their residence. Families wishing to open enroll may secure an In-District Open Enrollment Application from any school or the district office on or after January 15 and must submit a completed application by **4:30 p.m. on March 1** of the school year preceding the school year for which the request is being made. Required documentation must accompany the completed application. The Superintendent (or designee) will review all completed applications submitted by the deadline and will respond in writing by March 30, indicating approval or denial. Applications received after March 1 will be filed and will be acted upon after secondary registration, with decisions communicated by August 15.

Restrictions and Conditions

The primary factors to be considered in determining approval or denial of the application are availability of appropriate programs, space availability, and class size. Approval of open enrollments will be monitored to maintain equivalency between schools. Once a secondary open enrollment request has been approved, the student will attend the requested school for the complete academic year and may remain at the requested school for the remainder of the middle school or high school career without submitting another application if remaining at the same primary home address. Each subsequent move will void the prior approval and necessitate filing for open enrollment. Students approved for open enrollment do not qualify for district-provided transportation, but may request a “pay ride,” if a route and seat are available. Students who qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch also qualify for free or reduced-cost transportation when space is available on an established route.

Once a secondary open enrollment request has been denied, a second application for the same request will not be considered for the same school year. Parents may utilize the Appeal Procedures outlined below.

Review/Approval Procedures

An administrator designated by the Superintendent will review all complete applications submitted by the deadline and will respond in writing by March 30, indicating approval or denial.

Appeal Procedures

When an in-district open enrollment request which was submitted on time is denied, parents may appeal the decision to the Educational Programs/Policy/Strategy Committee of the Board. Requests for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Board Secretary by April 10. The Committee will schedule a

hearing to review each case to determine whether or not the policy has been misinterpreted or misapplied, whether further information or changed circumstances merit a reversal of the decision, or whether extenuating circumstances exist which cause a hardship justifying reversal of the original decision. The Committee will respond in writing to all appeals within two weeks of its meeting.

Discontinuing Participation in Open Enrollment

In-district open enrollment requests are granted for a minimum period of one year. To avoid disruption to the student's educational program, parents wishing to withdraw their student from participation in in-district open enrollment after one year may request to do so only at the following times and only if sufficient class space is available at the school and grade level to which the student wishes to return:

- prior to the beginning of the school year;
- for middle school students, at the end of either the first or second trimester;
- for high school students, at the conclusion of the first semester or school year.

Parents wishing to discontinue open enrollment must submit a letter to the Superintendent requesting approval.

Adopted: September 20, 1993
Revised: November 11, 2013
Revised: August 8, 2016

In-District Open Enrollment

Receipt of Applications

Applications for in-district open enrollment will be officially filed when they are received by and stamped for date of submission in the office of the Superintendent.

Adherence to Established Deadlines

The timeline for submission of in-district open enrollment applications will be adhered to strictly. Applications filed after the deadline will not be considered until after August registration. The exception to this guideline will be for students newly enrolling in the district after the deadline. Applications from those new district enrollees will be considered on an individual basis, and acted upon as soon as they are submitted, dependent upon availability of space and staffing at requested schools.

Required Documentation

In addition to submitting a fully complete application form, families requesting in-district open enrollment must provide, upon request and when appropriate, documentation which supports their application, such as proof of residence, physician statement, court or police order.

Determination of Available Elementary Classrooms for Open Enrollment

The Superintendent and/or designee will meet with building principals to review actual and projected enrollments by grade level. Using the Class Size Guidelines and considering programs and physical space within each building, the Superintendent will determine those grade levels at each school which must be closed to in-district open enrollment applications. For those grade levels and schools where open enrollment applications may be accepted, the Superintendent will establish the number of such applications which may be approved for the next school year.

Determining Priority for Approval of Applications

If the number of in-district open enrollment applications exceeds the number which has been determined may be approved for the requested school and grade level, the following reasons will be considered:

- documented medical reasons;
- documented legal reasons;
- imminent and documented change of address for the family;
- sibling in attendance at the building in the same year;
- parent working in the building during the same year;
- program reasons;
- child care reasons;

- extenuating circumstances which would create a hardship significantly affecting the learning progress of the student for whom open enrollment is requested.

Determining Approval of Secondary Open Enrollment Applications

The number of requests to attend another middle school or high school will be monitored to maintain equivalency between schools. Approximately equal numbers of requests will be approved from one school to another, with applications considered as described above.

Restrictions Related to Students Receiving Special Education Services

In-district open enrollment requests for students receiving special education services shall be granted only if the requested school maintains a special education program appropriate to the student's needs and if the requested school has adequate staff and space. Final determination of such requests will be made by the Superintendent in consultation with the director of special education, principals, and parents.