

Optional Enrollment Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do I know what middle/high school my child is assigned to?

A. All current fifth- and eighth-grade students will get a letter about November 21, 2008, stating which school they are scheduled to attend. Parents of fifth- or eighth-grade students who do not attend a Tacoma Public School should call Technology Services at 253.571.1189 for assistance.

Q. Where do I get the Optional Enrollment application?

A. The applications will be available beginning November 21, 2008 at any elementary or middle school or from Technology Services, Room 202, Central Administration Building, 601 S. 8th St., Tacoma. If you need further assistance, please call 253.571.1189.

Q. Where and when do I return the application?

A. Tacoma Public Schools
Technology Services, Room 202
Central Administration Building
601 So. 8th St.
Tacoma, WA 98405

Applications will be accepted between the hours of **7 a.m. and 4 p.m. from November 21 to December 18, 2008**. The form may be returned either by mail with a postmark no later than December 18, 2008, or in person to Technology Services, Room 202, Central Administration Building, **no later than 4 p.m. on December 18, 2008**.

Q. Should schools accept completed copies of Optional Enrollment applications?

A. No. All copies must be returned directly to Technology Services, Room 202, Central Administration Building.

Q. When will parents be notified regarding approval or denial of their request for an Optional Enrollment?

A. A letter approving or denying the request will be sent to parents from Technology Services at the end of January 2009.

Q. Does the return time of an Optional Enrollment application determine the outcome of the desired placement?

A. No. The placement has nothing to do with when the request is received. The only factor is that all forms must be **received no later than 4 p.m. on December 18, 2008**.

Q. How is the decision made?

A. Students who reside in the school's attendance area are automatically scheduled for their neighborhood school. The first priority for Optional Enrollment requests will be given to students who have siblings or members of the same household attending the school of choice. Other requests are granted on a random (or "lottery") basis. School capacities may limit the number of Optional Enrollments that can be approved.

Q. I have two children eligible for Optional Enrollment. May I use the same application for both children?

A. No. Each child must have a separate Optional Enrollment application. However, both children will be processed at the same time and will be given the same random priority number.

Q. Is there any consideration given to students with special programs?

A. No special considerations (other than siblings attending the school of choice) are given to students that use the Optional Enrollment process. Some students in special programs are not eligible for Optional Enrollment (i.e., if their special program is only offered at one school, they will be enrolled in that school).

Q. Does the fact that another sibling once attended a school give a student priority?

A. No. The sibling priority is only if the student requesting Optional Enrollment has a sibling who will be attending the requested school at the same time.

Q. If I don't get my choice of schools with the Optional Enrollment process, can I be placed on a waiting list?

A. No. There are no plans for waiting lists at this time.

Q. My child care provider lives in the area of the optional choice school. Does that give me priority?

A. No. No special considerations (other than siblings attending the school of choice) are given to students who use the Optional Enrollment process.

Q. Does the district provide busing for students who are granted the optional enrollment?

A. No. Transportation for Optional Enrollment students is not provided, per Transportation department guidelines. The guidelines are available on the Tacoma Public Schools Web site at www.tacomaschools.org, your child's school or the Transportation office located at 4002 S. Cedar St.

Q. Is there an appeal process if my request is denied?

A. No. There is no appeal process.

Q. I live outside the district, but I am moving into Tacoma after the Optional Enrollment period. What can I do to enroll in the school of my choice?

A. All first-time students in the Tacoma School District have a choice to enroll in any district school if there is capacity.

Q. My child wants to opt into the International Baccalaureate program at Foss High School. Do I get special consideration?

A. Students wanting to attend Foss High School for the International Baccalaureate program should submit an Optional Enrollment application, and like all student applicants, will be randomly selected via a "lottery" process. However, students who were denied an Optional Enrollment into Foss are notified by letter and have the opportunity to transfer to Foss through the Student Transfer Authorization process in August 2009. More information is available from Foss High School, 253.571.7300.