

Enrollment Procedures for Resident and Non-Resident Children

On November 25, 2019, Monica L. Washington, Director of PDE School Services Office, released a PennLink to all LEAs titled, *Enrollment Procedures for Resident and Non-Resident Children*. The purpose of this Penn*Link is to remind school districts and charter schools, including cyber charter schools ("school entities"), of their obligations regarding enrollment procedures for resident and non-resident children. It states that, "Every child of school age who is a resident of a Pennsylvania school district is entitled to a public school education. This entitlement applies equally to resident students residing with their parent(s); to non resident students living with a district resident who is supporting the child gratis and seeking enrollment under section 1302 of the Public School Code, 24 P.S. §13-1302; to nonresident students living in a facility or institution; and to nonresident students living in a foster home or experiencing homelessness. Except when a child is in foster care or experiencing homelessness, whenever a child of school age is presented for enrollment by a parent(s), school district resident, or any other person having charge or care of the child, a school entity shall require that the following information be documented before enrolling the child and allowing the child to attend school:

1. Proof of the child's age;
2. Immunizations required by law;
3. Proof of residency. Acceptable documentation includes: A deed, a lease, current utility bill, current credit card bill, property tax bill, vehicle registration, driver's license, DOT identification card. A school district or charter school may require that more than one form of residency confirmation be provided. However, school entities should be flexible in verifying residency, and should consider what information is reasonable in light of the individual family's situation. For example, if a lease agreement or a statement from a landlord cannot be provided, school entities must work with families to identify alternative proofs of residency);
4. Parent Registration Statement;
5. Home Language Survey.

More information on each of these items can be found within the Pennsylvania Department of Education's ("Department") Enrollment of Students BEC and related Frequently Asked Questions, which are available on the Department's [website](#). However, students in foster care or who are experiencing homeless are entitled to be immediately enrolled, despite a lack of documentation.

When the required enrollment documentation is provided, a school entity must enroll non-resident children and permit them to attend school. A child should be permitted to attend school on the next school day after the day on which the child is presented for enrollment, and in all cases within five (5) business days of the school district's receipt of the required documentation. [22 Pa. Code §11.11\(b\)](#).

Importantly, for enrollment determinations, a school entity *may not request or require any of the following*: a Social Security number; the reason for a child's placement if not living with natural parents; a child's or parent's visa; or agency records. At no time may a child's right to be admitted to school be conditioned on the child's immigration status. School entities often seek to obtain information from families in addition to the required items discussed above. Although they may ask for any of this information, it may not be required as a condition of enrolling or admitting a child and enrollment may not be delayed if the documentation is not provided.

Finally, every school entity must adopt a written policy on student admission, which policy shall be a public record. [22 Pa Code § 11.41](#). The Department recommends that each school entity review its admission policies and procedures to ensure compliance with all relevant laws.

Please direct any questions on this subject matter to the School Services Office at [717-783-3750](tel:717-783-3750).