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SCHOOL OF CHOICE POLICY

1) DEFINITIONS:

Choice – is defined as the ability of a pupil to select, for attendance purposes, a school other than the school designated in accordance with Board policy, as that pupil's home school.

Home School Division – is the Division in which a pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) reside, or if the pupil is of the age of majority, the Division in which the pupil occupies a permanent residence.

Eligible Pupil – for the purposes of the choice of school procedures an eligible pupil is a pupil who qualifies under the regulations of Manitoba Education for provincial support while in attendance at a public school.

Resident Pupil – a resident pupil is a pupil who meets the requirements of Section 1 of the Public Schools Act of Manitoba.

Non-Resident Pupil – is a pupil who qualifies to attend a public school in the Province of Manitoba but who does not meet the requirements of Section 1 of the Public Schools Act of Manitoba as a resident of the Turtle Mountain School Division.

2) MAKING APPLICATION TO A SCHOOL OF CHOICE:

All applications for a change of school must be made on the form authorized by Manitoba Education, and must be submitted directly to the school of choice no later than May 15th of the spring term for school assignment effective with the commencement of the following fall term. A copy of all applications received and accepted by May 15 must be distributed to the following no later than June 30: Home School Division, Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s), and Receiving Division.

When a pupil/parent/legal guardian is applying for consideration at more than one school all schools shall be named on an attachment affixed to all applications.

Within the school division any applications past the deadline of May 15th must be submitted directly to the Superintendent for approval.

All applications must receive final approval from the Superintendent.

3) CONSIDERATION PROCESSES FOR PUPILS WISHING TO EXERCISE SCHOOL CHOICE:

Any school receiving an application for school of choice by May 15 must advise the parents or legal guardians and the sending school no later than June 30th whether or not the pupil has been accepted. The receiving school, if in Turtle Mountain School Division, will notify the sending school upon receipt of the application.

5) Pupils wishing to exercise school of choice will:

- a) be required to submit a request for admission to the school of choice on or before May 15th for the next ensuing school year. This request must be submitted on the Manitoba Education approved application form.
- b) be considered in the following order of priority:
 - 1) first priority: pupils previously designated to attend the school in accordance with Board policy and these procedures;
 - 2) second priority: pupils not designated to the school by Board policy but residing in the Turtle Mountain School Division and wishing to attend the school as a school of choice; and
 - 3) third priority: non-resident pupils wishing to attend the school as a school of choice.
- c) be considered for admission only if the school agrees that:
 - 1) space is available in the program of choice and/or the classroom(s) under consideration (see section 5d);
 - 2) the school has available all special equipment or physical accommodations required by the pupil;
 - 3) the program of choice is suited to the age, ability and aptitude of the pupil, and the pupil has all necessary prerequisites for the program and/or grade level of choice;
 - 4) the principal of the school does not believe that enrolling the pupil will be detrimental to the continuity of the pupil's education;
 - 5) the principal of the school does not believe that enrolling the pupil will be detrimental to order, discipline and the well being of other pupils in the school;
 - 6) the school is not required to establish a new program/class to meet the educational/personal needs of the pupil, and
 - 7) after consultation with the Superintendent, the school administration believes that the addition of the pupil will not affect the Division's ability to meet the needs of existing students in the class.
- d) For the purpose of defining space availability the principal shall consider the following circumstances:
 - 1) the number of catchment area and previously designated pupils already enrolled in the program or grade level concerned as of May 15th and the change of enrolment experienced in the identified program or grade level in the previous two school years between the dates May 15th and September 30th
 - 2) the special circumstances of the pupils already designated to the classroom or program. These may include but are not limited to the number and circumstances of special needs pupils, identified behavioural difficulties and anticipated range in academic abilities; and
 - 3) safety considerations such as, but not limited to those associated with laboratory and vocational programs.

6) APPEAL OF SCHOOL OF CHOICE DECISIONS:

Turtle Mountain School Division recognizes that within the guidelines provided by these Administrative Procedures the principal of the school has the responsibility to make decisions with respect to school of choice requests. Notwithstanding the principal's responsibility, refusal by a principal to admit a pupil to a school of choice may be appealed by the parent/legal guardian in writing to the Senior Administration and subsequently to the Board of Trustees.

7) WITHDRAWAL FROM A SCHOOL OF CHOICE:

A pupil who has been approved to attend a school of choice in the Division may withdraw from that school. However, under such circumstances the Division is not obligated to accept return to the previous school and reserves the right to designate the school to which the pupil shall be assigned. Such assignment shall be subject to all provisions identified in this policy.

8) CONTINUANCE IN A SCHOOL OF CHOICE:

Once a pupil has been accepted in a school of choice he or she shall be entitled to continue at that school, year after year, as if a designated pupil of that school.

9) TRANSPORTATION OF PUPILS ELECTING TO EXERCISE SCHOOL OF CHOICE:

For further information regarding transportation of pupils, refer to Policy E-1 (Bus Route Parameters).