

ENROLLING IN A FLORIDA PUBLIC SCHOOL

Enrollment is the first step on the journey. It's the beginning of an exciting time for the family. Preparation is the key to making enrollment successful. Florida laws for educating children are very specific. All children must attend school until they reach the age of 16. This is Florida law.

If your children will be enrolling in a Florida public school, all of the information you'll need for enrollment can be found on the district's website. For

- ✓ Duval, it is www.duvalschools.org
- ✓ St. Johns, it is www.stjohns.k12.fl.us
- ✓ Clay, it is www.clay.k12.fl.us
- ✓ Nassau, it is www.edline.net/pages/Nassau_County_School_District.

The following is a summary of the timely information available on their sites which includes everything from lunch menus to school schedules to up-to-date enrollment information.

SCHOOL SITE LOCATOR: A student's street address determines the school of attendance, unless the student has exercised a school choice option. Every residential address has a School Feeder Pattern, which assigns students to an Elementary School (*Kindergarten through Grade 5*), Middle School (*Grades 6-8*) and High School (*Grades 9-12*). For most of these districts, the locator is on the site's homepage.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION:

- Results of a physical (school-entry health exam) performed within one year of the date of enrollment
- Proof of home address. Duval requires 2 proofs.
- Proof of all required immunizations (Florida certification of immunization, DH Form 690) or an exemption. Again, if the child had the exam in another state, the base clinic can transfer this info to a Florida card.
- Kindergarten and First Grade Students: certified birth record. Acceptable birth records include the following:
 1. original certified birth record;
 2. duly attested Certificate of Baptism;
 3. insurance policy on the child's life that has been in force for at least two years;
 4. affidavit of age sworn by parent and signed by a public health official;
 5. passport or certificate of arrival in the United States indicating the age of the child; or
 6. academic transcript with record of age in the child's school, stating the DOB.

ACADEMIC RECORDS: When a child has been enrolled in another school district, parents are asked to provide the latest report card from that district and transcript if applicable. Most schools will accept an unofficial record (a hand-carried report card, for example) for registration, but the school will then request official records from the previous school.

SCHOOL PHYSICAL EXAMS: Florida law requires all school children have the appropriate health exam and immunization documentation. The physical examination must be performed by a health care provider licensed to perform physical exams and must be completed within the past 12 months (This is not an annual exam.). The school entry health exam (form DH 3040) is a requirement for students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade who are making their initial entry into a Florida school.

A "new entrant" is a child entering a school in Florida for the first time or entering after having been absent from a school for more than 12 months or one school year. You have up to one year prior to entering the Florida school system in which to obtain the school entry health exam.

For students transferring to a Florida school, a comparable form from another state would be acceptable, if completed within one year.

IMMUNIZATIONS: A certificate of immunization (form DH 680) is also a requirement for all children in grades kindergarten through 12th grade), for entry and attendance in Florida schools. The form is valid until the child enters seventh grade, at which time a new form will be issued when additional immunization requirements are met.

Contact the appointment line to schedule your children for school or sport physicals with a NBHC Mayport provider at (904) 542-4677. For additional immunization questions, please call (904) 270-4305. Additionally, for your scheduling convenience NBHC Mayport will have a special clinic on Saturdays during the months of July and August.

OPTIONAL: a Social Security number. Federal law does **NOT** allow schools to require a social security number for school enrollment.

BUS INFORMATION: State law requires bus transportation for students who live two miles or more from the schools they currently attend. The school district also provides special bus services for students in certain Exceptional Education programs, regardless of distance under specific guidelines. For more information, contact the Transportation Department at

Duval: 904-858-6200
St. Johns: 904-547-7810

Clay: 904-284-6526
Nassau: 904-225-9404

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM (Free and Reduced Meals for Students): The four districts participate in the National School Lunch Program. Under federal guidelines, some students qualify for free or reduced breakfasts and lunch. The Family Application for Meal Benefits (Free and Reduced Meals for Students) is available online at the district's website.

MILITARY DEPENDENT CHOICE OPTION: Florida Statutes provide that dependent children of active duty military personnel who otherwise meet the eligibility criteria for special academic programs shall be given first preference for admission to such programs even if the program is being offered through a public school other than the school to which the student would generally be assigned. However, the district will follow class size restrictions, as detailed in the Class Size Amendment to the Florida Constitution, in the placement of eligible military dependent students. No students will be placed in a school or program that causes a class to exceed class size for that grade thus placing that school out of compliance with state law. For changes to Duval's eligibility requirements, go to www.duvalchoice.com.

JOHN M. MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: This is a statewide program for students with disabilities who are not making adequate progress in the current school. A public or private school may be selected, and the State will provide partial funding for a private school. The student must have been classified as an ESE student (not gifted) with a current IEP or a 504 Plan for the 2014-2015 school though not necessarily in a Florida public school.

If you have additional questions concerning enrollment, school choice, special needs, or any other educational issue, please contact me at the email or phone numbers below.

Sharon Kasica is the School Liaison Officer for NS Mayport. If you have questions about this article or questions about enrolling in another local school district, she can be reached via email at sharon.kasica@navy.mil or by phone at (904) 270-6289 X1305 [office] or (904) 993-5860 [cell]. Or you can schedule a meeting with her in her office in Building One.