

DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

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ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ENROLLMENT

- Decatur City Schools requires the person wishing to enroll a student to have either sole, physical, primary and/or educational rights awarded by a court. Proof of these rights related to custody may be required. In custody situations where no court documents exist, the enrolling parent must be listed on the birth certificate and additional information may be required, as well as a scheduled enrollment conference.
- The only paperwork Decatur City Schools accepts regarding the transfer of custody/guardianship are court documents (such as Court Orders). Decatur City Schools does not accept notarized documents such as delegation of parental authority, power of attorney or any other such paperwork which provides non-court approved transfer to custody of a child.

6.1.2 Eligibility for Admission to Decatur City Schools

- b. Definition of a Bona – Fide Resident – A child's status as a bona fide resident of Decatur shall be determined on a case by case basis. As a general rule, a child shall be considered a bona fide resident of the place where the parent or legal guardian having the legal primary/physical custody or control of such child permanently resides. Where it appears that a child is living at an address in Decatur for the sole or primary purpose of establishing residency for school zone or admission purposes, such child shall not generally be considered a bona fide resident. Where the family of a child has heretofore resided in a permanent home outside Decatur and the child and one or more, but less than all, members of the family obtain a dwelling within Decatur, but the remainder of the family remains in the same permanent house outside Decatur, such child generally shall not be considered a bona fide resident of Decatur except in those cases where there has been a divorce or legal separation and the child is in the legal primary/physical custody of a parent who has established residency in Decatur incident to the divorce or legal separation. It is the intent of this policy to deny resident status to those who are living in Decatur solely or primarily for purposes of establishing residency for school purposes.

In order for a child to establish a bona fide residence in Decatur, or in a particular school zone in Decatur, separate and apart from the residence of the child's parent or other person having lawful custody or control of such child under a court order, such child must establish to the reasonable satisfaction of the Superintendent or his designee that (a) the child presently intends to remain in Decatur or such school zone permanently, or for an indefinite period of time or for a definite period of time ending on a date after, and ascertainable without reference to, the current school year; and (b) the child's presence in Decatur or such school zone is not primarily or solely for the purpose of attending the Decatur public schools or the school facility serving students residing in such school zone.

The bona fide resident child of a Board employee shall attend either (1.) the school for which the student is zoned based upon the residence address; (OR) (2.) the school at which the Board employee works, or such applicable school zone as if the student lived at the school facility. If a Board employee's resident child was accepted for attendance during the previous school year at a school other than as defined herein, then that student shall be "grandfathered" and shall be allowed to continue at such school until the end of the grade levels at such school. At that time, the student must return to the correct zone system provided herein.

All children who do not qualify as bona fide residents of Decatur under the above definitions and standards shall be considered "nonresidents."

- DHR placement via an Official Safety Plan is acceptable for enrollment purposes for the length of the plan.
- Parents must use their physical home address to enroll. Parents having multiple addresses may be subject to a request for additional documentation and a scheduled conference to determine enrollment eligibility and school placement based upon the address in which a homestead exemption is claimed. This is subject to verification. Use of another individual's address for the purpose of securing another school or convenience is not allowed.
- Acceptable proof of residence includes a current Decatur Utility bill, a current lease with the parent/child listed on the lease and contact information of the leasing agent, or a sales contract dated within 30 days of closing.

Affidavits for individuals not able to secure any of the above will require notarization by both parties and current utility bill of the **owner** of the residence. Affidavits are not accepted on complexes with a leasing agency. Example: A leasee from complex ABC cannot be the signee unless the ABC lease allows the unit to be subleased, allowing someone to use that address.

All enrollments are subject to home check and verification as needed by the school system. This includes verification that the enrolling parent/legal guardian continues to reside at the address provided.

SCHOOL ZONES

- Decatur City Schools does not allow students to attend a school out of their assigned school zone. School assignments are based on the physical residence of the parent or legal guardian (as determined by DCS). Use of another individual's address for the purpose of securing another school or convenience is not allowed.

6.1.3 Attendance Zone and Class Assignment

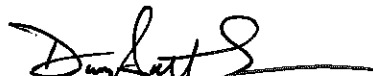
- a. Attendance Zone Assignment – Students will be assigned to the school serving the attendance zone in which his or her parent(s) or legal guardian who has physical custody reside(s). A student whose parent or legal guardian moves from one attendance zone to another during the school year will be transferred to the school attendance zone in which the new residence is located. The student may be permitted to remain in the school attendance zone that serves the former residence until the end of the school year with the approval of the Superintendent. A parent or legal guardian who has documented plans to move to a new attendance area during the first or second grading period of the school year may have his or her child enrolled in the school serving the new residence upon approval by the Superintendent or his or her designee.

Should Decatur City Schools begin accepting "tuition paying nonresident" students, that process will allow non Decatur residents to pay tuition to attend Decatur City Schools. It does not allow for such individuals to request a specific school nor does it allow residents of Decatur to pay to attend a certain school for which they are not zoned.

We hope this information helps to answer questions that you may have. All employees of Decatur City Schools must follow procedures and abide by the policies established by the School Board.



Dr. Michael Douglas
Superintendent



Dwight Satterfield
Operations and School Safety Supervisor
(Enrollment)