

**ABC Unified School District
Schools of Choice (SOC)
Parent & Guardian FAQ's**

This guide answers the most common questions that families have about Schools of Choice (SOC). If you read this document in full and still have questions, please contact your student's school or the office of Child Welfare & Attendance.

Important application dates:

March 2, 2020 at 12:00 Midnight	Schools of Choice Applications Open
March 31, 2020 at 3:00 PM	Schools of Choice Applications Close
April 29, 2020 at 2:00 PM	Schools of Choice Lottery Run
May 1, 2020 at 10:00 AM	Schools of Choice Notifications Begin
June 1, 2020	Schools of Choice Ends

General Questions

Q: What is “Schools of Choice?”

Schools of Choice (SOC) is an open enrollment process for students seeking attendance in an ABC school that is not the “home school” based on the family’s address. SOC is done via online application and students are selected based on a random, unbiased, “lottery” process. SOC results depend on many factors including pupil enrollment by school and grade level, district capacity, and the total number of applicants vs. openings. If a family seeks SOC for multiple children, a separate application must be submitted for each individual student.

ABC Schools of Choice Applications are online at: <http://www.abcschoolsofchoice.com/>

To assist families with SOC applications, Child Welfare & Attendance (CW&A) will have additional staff at the ABC District Office during business hours (M-F, 8:30-4:30). Chromebooks will be available for parent/guardian use.

Q: Is my student eligible to apply?

Students who will be in grades K-12 in 2020-2021 may apply. All applications will be reviewed and verified by district personnel. A submission will be ineligible if:

- It is received after the deadline
- It is incomplete or is missing required documents

- It is found to be inaccurate, dishonest, misleading, or fraudulent

ABC does not offer SOC for the following:

- Early Intervention Program (EIP)
- Head Start or Preschool
- Transitional Kindergarten (TK)
- Tracy High School
- Whitney High School

Q: Where can I learn more about the schools in ABC?

The following links will direct you to learn more about the district’s award-winning schools and programs.

[Explore ABC Schools](#)

[ABCUSD Magnet Schools](#)

[School Accountability Report Card \(SARC\)](#)

[CA School Dashboard](#)

Q: How does the lottery work? How and when do I know if my student is accepted?

All eligible applications will be included in the SOC lottery. The unbiased selection process is automated through the external application website. Initial results will be e-mailed on May 1, 2020 @ 10:00 a.m. with notification of the student’s status (accepted, placed on a waitlist, or declined). As other applicants accept/decline SOC, the automated system will continue to “run” the lottery waitlist. On June 1, 2020 the SOC Open Enrollment period will close.

If your child is offered enrollment to his/her School of Choice, you have 48 hours from the time of the e-mail notification to accept or decline admission. If the applicant does not respond within 48 hours, the SOC system will auto-decline and the opening will be offered to the next candidate on the waiting list.

Q: How many schools can I apply to?

You may apply for up to four schools. If you apply to multiple school sites, you must rank them from highest to lowest priority (first choice to last choice). You are not required to select four choices. Please do not apply for a school if you do not intend to accept that choice.

Q: What is the likelihood that my child will be accepted to the school(s) I apply to?

There is no way to calculate or predict SOC lottery outcomes. The results depend on many factors including pupil enrollment by school and grade level, district capacity, and the total number of applicants vs. openings. When available, there will be a listing of the number of SOC openings by school and by grade level on the ABCUSD website.

Q. If I only list one school, will I have a higher chance of getting that school?

No. The results will follow the same unbiased, lottery selection process regardless of how many schools you select.

Q: Is it true that some students have higher priority than others?

ABCUSD Board Policy 5116 (effective 11/05/2019):

Residence in ABC

1. Sibling applicants of students who will continue attending the school in which the applicant is applying
2. Students who reside in ABC, including students who are in specialized programs (pending availability)

Students of Permanent ABC Employees

3. Sibling applicants of students who will continue the school in which the applicant is applying
4. Continuing students who are transitioning to 7th or 9th grade

Inter-District School Permits

5. Sibling applicants of students who will continue attending the school in which the applicant is applying
6. Continuing students who are transitioning to 7th or 9th grade

New Students

7. Students of permanent ABC employees
8. Students requesting an interdistrict permit

Q: I currently have three elementary-aged children applying to SOC. How can I make sure they are accepted to the same school?

As listed above, SOC Priorities #1, #3 and #5 are given to students who have a sibling *currently attending, and continuing in*, the same school to which the applicant is applying. If none of your children are *currently attending* the SOC then there will not be any established priority. There is no way to ensure that all three children will be accepted to the same school.

Q. Is it possible that my student will not be selected for SOC?

Yes. It is possible that an applicant will be declined for all schools to which (s)he applies.

Q: I applied for Schools of Choice and my student was not accepted. Now what?

You must enroll your student in his/her home school based on the address of residence. **There are no appeals to Schools of Choice.**

Q: What are the laws and policies that relate to Schools of Choice?

ABCUSD Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5116

Q. My child has a disability and has 504/IEP Accommodations. Can my student apply?

Students with disabilities (504 Accommodations or IEP) may apply to SOC. Admission may be based upon the school/district's ability to provide appropriate accommodations and services in the 504/IEP. Placement of students with IEP's are subject to review by the department of Special Education.

Q. The SOC Openings currently says there are 0 openings for my student's grade level at the SOC. Can I still apply?

The lottery will automatically decline all applications if there are 0 openings for the grade level at the SOC.

Q. Can I apply for the 2021-2022 school year? I currently have a 7th grader and want to apply for high school when she enters 9th grade.

No. SOC applies only for the immediate upcoming school year (2020-2021).

Residents in ABC Attendance Boundaries Intra-District Attendance

Q: I live in ABCUSD attendance boundaries and want my student to enroll in a school that is not our "home" school. Do I have to apply for Schools of Choice?

Yes. Students must apply to SOC if seeking enrollment in a school that is not the home school based on the residence address. A map of the attendance zones can be found on the ABCUSD website here: [ABCUSD CWA](#).

Q: What is an "intra-district" (within district) permit?

Please reference ABCUSD Board Policy 5116. A small number of students living within ABCUSD may be considered for *intra-district (in-district) permits* to attend a different school within ABC's boundaries. Eligibility is limited to special circumstances (e.g. child care, court orders, medical needs, social adjustment) and assessed on a case-by-case basis. *Intra-district permits* require documentation from a licensed or registered professional that indicates the student's educational needs. The Principal or Superintendent may approve or deny the permit request. Visit your child's home school to begin the intra-district permit process.

Q. I live in ABCUSD attendance boundaries and my student is on SOC. We moved to a different school's attendance zone but still live in ABC. Do I have to re-apply? Will my student lose SOC status?

No. If both your old and new address are within ABCUSD attendance zones, you will not need to re-apply and your child will not lose SOC status. When you move, notify your child's SOC of your new address in a timely manner.

Families Outside of ABC Attendance Boundaries Inter-District Attendance

Q. I live outside of ABCUSD boundaries and want my student to be enrolled in an ABC school. Can I apply for Schools of Choice?

Yes. Families residing outside of ABC are required to complete and submit an *inter-district (out of district) permit with SOC applications* to be released from the district of residence.

First, contact your child's current district of residence to begin the inter-district permit process. The Superintendent or designee of the home district may approve or deny the permit request.

Second, upload the permit to the SOC application with your child's grades, attendance, and discipline record as appropriate. The Superintendent or designee of ABCUSD may approve or deny the permit request. If the permit is not complete at the time of your application, please include whatever documentation is available.

Q. When do I need to submit an inter-district transfer permit? Before or after acceptance to SOC?

The SOC application requires an inter-district permit (release from district of residence) for students living outside of ABCUSD boundaries. Each school district has varying timelines and policies, so it is recommended that you begin the inter-district permit process as soon as possible. At the time of application, include whatever documentation is available. The complete inter-district permit **must** be submitted prior to enrollment at the accepted SOC.

Q: Do I need to re-apply for an inter-district (out of district) permit every year?

According to ABCUSD policies, no, you do not need to complete a new permit every year. **However, please check the policies of your district of residence.**

Q. Do I need to re-apply for an inter-district (out of district) permit if my student is transitioning (from elementary to middle, or middle to high school?)

Yes. If your student is transitioning to middle or high school (entering 7th or 9th grade), you must check in with your school district of residence and are required to apply for a new permit.

Q: I live outside of ABC boundaries. My student attended private school K-8th and did not ever attend our district of residence. Do I need to be released from my home district, even though my child never attended school there?

Yes. California state law requires that students be released from the district of residence before seeking enrollment outside of the family's attendance zone.

Students Accepted to SOC

Q. My student was awarded SOC to a school and we accepted. Can we decline SOC status if we change our minds?

Requests to forfeit SOC status must be received before August 15, 2020. If notification is not received, your student must begin the 2020-2021 school year in the school that you have accepted.

Q. Do I have to reapply for SOC every year?

No. After your student is enrolled at the SOC, (s)he can continue at the school at the K-6, 7-8, or 9-12 level. **However**, if the student is transitioning levels (i.e. elementary to middle, or middle to high school), you will be required to apply for SOC if seeking enrollment at a campus that is not the home school.

For out-of-district students, check-in and verify the policies of the home district. It is possible that the district of residence may require you to apply for a new permit every year.

Q. My student was awarded SOC and has attended the school for a few months but would like to return to his/her home school. Can we leave our SOC mid-year?

These requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Supervisor of Child Welfare & Attendance.

Q. My student was waitlisted for our #1 school choice, and admitted to our #2 school choice. If I accept school #2, will my child be removed from the waitlist for #1?

No. If you accept SOC admission to school #2, then you will remain on the waiting list for school #1 as the lottery runs. SOC officially ends on June 1, 2020.

Q. My student accepted SOC in ABC, but our family moved and now we live in a different school district. Will my student lose SOC status?

Not necessarily, but there are a few requirements. When you move, you must notify CW&A of the address change in a timely manner. Your student will need an *inter-district (out-of-district) permit* from the new district of residence in order to keep SOC status. Visit the new district of residence to request an inter-district permit.

Q. Is it possible for my student to lose SOC status?

Maybe. SOC enrollment may also be at-risk or revoked if a student violates the terms and conditions of permit status (including standards for attendance, academic progress, and behavior). According to ABCUSD BP 5116 "students currently enrolled within their school of

residence shall not be displaced by any other student (Education Code 35160.5).” If a campus is overcrowded, SOC status may be reviewed to accommodate families living within school attendance zones. After acceptance to SOC a student is considered a resident of that school for the entire grade-span unless you forfeit your choice voluntarily, disenroll from the SOC, and/or severe discipline issues warrant placement outside of SOC.