Neighborhood School Enrollment-FAQs

Q: Do I need to apply to enroll in my neighborhood school?
A: No, students enroll at their neighborhood school without applying for Choice. School Choice applications are only necessary if you want your child to attend a school other than your neighborhood school, or if you reside outside of SDUSD boundaries.

Q: How do I reach someone in the Neighborhood Schools and Enrollment Options Office?
A: You can reach us by telephone at 619-260-2410 or email at eoptions@sandi.net.

Q: How do I obtain my child’s student ID?
A: You do not need your student’s ID to apply for Choice.

Choice Enrollment Applications

Q: Does it matter when I apply?
A: Yes, to receive a priority, the application must be received during October 4 – November 15, 2021. The process is not a “first come, first served,” so you do not need to be first to apply. A family that applies on the first day has no advantage over a family that applies on the last day just because they applied earlier. However, Choice applications received after the deadline will be processed in date and time order they are received without any priority.

Q: How do I know my application was received?
A: An e-mail confirmation will be sent to the e-mail address on your student’s application immediately after submission. If you do not receive an email, you will need to submit again.

Q: Do I need a computer to apply?
A: No, you can now access the Choice application on your smartphone, tablet or similar device.

Q: Can I use my child’s grandparents’ or other relative’s address on the application?
A: No, you may not use a relative’s address. You must use your child’s resident address, which is defined as where the child sleeps on school nights.

Q: My ex-spouse and I share custody of our child. Can we list both addresses to apply for School Choice?
A: No, only one address may be used; your child’s neighborhood school will be based on the address listed on the Choice application.

We encourage parents to work together when creating a Choice application. Multiple applications cannot be submitted and will be discarded. Disputes between parents about the submitted application will cause the application to be removed from the lottery process.

Q: How are students selected for Choice enrollment at a school?
A: Students are selected through an unbiased, random computerized lottery system, utilizing a priority structure. Enrollment is based on space available at each grade level. For details see: Enrollment Priorities.
Q: How is available space at the school determined?

A: Our district’s instructional Facilities Planning Department determines capacity for nonresident students at each school by grade level, using past enrollment data, information regarding community growth or development, and facility capacity. This is reviewed with the principal and school staff.

Q: I need to enroll my child in the after-school Prime Time program but can't until I hear whether she is accepted at one of our Choice schools. I'm afraid there won't be any openings for her if I wait too long. What should I do?

A: Your child is always guaranteed a seat at the school of residence. You can contact your neighborhood school to begin the enrollment process and apply for the before and after school care while you are waiting to see if you are accepted into any of your Choice schools.

Q: I applied last year and enrolled my child into one of the Choice schools. Do I need to apply again?

A: Once enrolled in your school of choice, you do not need to apply again to remain at the school. Your student is Choice for the feeder pattern. Your student will naturally progress to the middle school and high school designated in the cluster of Choice.

The only exception is if you move outside of the school district. In this case, you must reapply as a student from outside the district and submit an approved Interdistrict Attendance Permit from your resident school district.

Q: I applied last year and my child was on a wait list. Do I need to apply again?

A: Yes, wait list are not carried over from the previous year.

Q: I am applying for all of my children to attend the same school. Can I put all of the children on one application?

A: No, you must submit separate applications for each child, unless they are twins or triplets. Multiples are submitted on one application.

Q: Do I have a better chance of being selected for my first choice school if I only make one school choice instead of three?

A: No, the number of school requests is not a factor in the selection process. However, having more than one option can provide more opportunity to your student. You may be offered a second or third choice. If this occurs, your student remains on the waiting list for any higher choices.

Q: Is there a way to find out what the chances are of being selected for my first choice school?

A: No, but there is a published list of rates of acceptance on the Neighborhood Schools and Enrollment Options webpage. This list provides historical data on the percentage of 1st Choice accepted applicants for all schools. This data may provide helpful information but please note that the number of applications and available seats changes yearly.

Q: If I apply to charter schools will it impact my selections?

A: No, charter school applications are separate and kept at the charter school.
Q: My child was not accepted in any of the Choice schools applied for. What can I do?

A: The Choice wait lists are active until the Friday before school starts. As school sites reach out to confirm acceptance of offered seats, there may be some declines. Any student who declines a seat will be replaced by a student on the waiting list. Additionally, your child is guaranteed enrollment in the neighborhood school.

Q: I did not know about the Choice application deadline. Can I still apply for Choice?

A: Yes, you may still apply but will not receive any priority. As a reminder, late applications are processed in time/date order. So applying as soon as possible is important.

Q: I would like to apply for my child to attend a visual and performing arts Magnet school. Is an audition required in addition to submitting the Choice application?

A: There are 2 dedicated Magnet schools for Visual and Performing arts.

Creative Performing Media Arts (CPMA) is a middle school serving grades 6-8. A Choice application is required but an audition is not part of the acceptance process.

San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts (SDSCPA) requires all incoming grades 6-12 students to audition after submitting a Choice application as part of the selection process. Your student must pass the audition to be offered a seat.

Q: I am the parent of twins. Do I need to submit separate applications for each twin?

A: No, twins and other multiples are processed together on one application. Please note that the confirmation emails and other communications may only reference the first child entered on the application.

Q: Who needs to apply for Choice?

A: The following should apply for Choice:

- Students wanting to attend a school other than their resident school
- Students who reside outside of SDUSD
- Students who previously resided within a school resident boundary but have moved.
- Students who would like to attend a Magnet school that does not have resident boundaries.

Q: Who does not need to apply for Choice?

A: Currently enrolled pupils who are residents, currently enrolled Choice pupils who live within the SDUSD boundaries, or students who have been accepted via Choice with a valid Interdistrict Attendance Permit do not need to reapply.

You do not need to apply yearly if you have already been accepted to Choice or if the student is continuing to the middle or high school within the Choice feeder.

**Choice Enrollment Notifications**

Q: When and how will I know that my child is being offered enrollment?

A: Notification is sent during the 1st week of March via the email provided on the Choice application. The email will have an electronic link to accept or decline the offered seat.
Q: What happens if I decline a 2nd or 3rd Choice offer?
A: Your student's name remains on the waitlist for any higher school choice.

Q: What happens once I electronically accept my student's seat?
A: Please contact the school to begin your child's enrollment process.

Q: My email or home address changed after I submitted the Choice application and I might not receive a notification letter. What can I do?
A: Once your application has been processed, we are unable to update your address, email, or phone #. Please make sure to use an email that you will have access to when the lottery results become available in March.

Q: What if my child is not offered a seat to any of their Choice schools?
A: You will need to complete enrollment at your neighborhood school.

Choice Enrollment Priorities

Q: What priority system is in place for Choice?
A: California Education Code only requires one level of priority (sibling pre-enrolled), but SDUSD has 7 levels of priority. The most heavily used by applicants are: 1. Magnet continuity, 2. Sibling pre-enrolled in the school of Choice, 3. Parent is a district employee in the school cluster, and 4. Non-resident child is enrolled in the site's preschool program. After these, priorities are, in order: 5 Resident SDUSD students enrolled in a non-district school, 6. Previous school resident students who have moved. 7. Students currently enrolled in an Open Enrollment Act school, 8 General application and 9 Non-district residents.

Q: How does my child receive “sibling priority”?
A: The sibling must already be attending the desired Choice school and continuing in the next year. Parents must include sibling information on the Choice application and apply during the priority window.

Q: What are the age requirements for students entering kindergarten?
A: SDUSD enrolls students per CA Education Code requirements.

Students must turn 5 by September 1, to be enrolled into kindergarten. No exceptions.

Q: What are the age requirements for students entering TK? What is the difference between UTK and TK?
CA legislation has updated the age requirements for students who are entering transitional kindergarten. By the 2025-2026 school year, students turning 4 by September 1 will be offered Universal Transitional Kindergarten.

SDUSD started the expansion process in the 2021-2022 school year by offering the program in 56 of our elementary sites. Currently, SDUSD is working to identify additional sites to further expand UTK, until all elementary sites are included.
TK is offered at almost every elementary school (except Muir Language Academy & Language Academy). Students must turn 5 between September 2 - December 2 to enroll in TK.

For a list of current sites offering UTK, please click here: UTK Sites

**Interdistrict Attendance Permits**

**Q:** We live out of district. When should we submit an Interdistrict Attendance Permit?

**A:** You must first apply online for Choice during the application period for the schools you are interested in. If and when your child is offered enrollment, you will then need to complete an Interdistrict Attendance Permit (IAP). For more information, please visit: https://www.sandiegounified.org/departments/neighborhood_schools_and_enrollment_options/interdistrict_attendance_permits

**Q:** My child attends currently attends an elementary school with an Interdistrict Attendance Permit, but will be attending middle school next year. Do we need a new permit in order for my child to move on to the corresponding middle school?

**A:** Yes, you will need to renew the Interdistrict Attendance Permit if your child changes school level (elementary to middle; middle to high) or you move to a different resident district. Please note that students must be in good standing with academics, behavior, and attendance for the IAP to be approved.

**Transportation**

**Q:** Will there be a school bus to the school we are applying for?

**A:** There is no transportation to neighborhood schools or for School Choice. Parents must make their own transportation arrangements. Bus transportation is limited to the VEEP and Magnet programs only. Transportation is not guaranteed.