

SCHOOL CHOICE GUIDELINES

PLEASE KEEP FOR YOUR REFERENCE

According to Mass General Law, all school-age children who live in Massachusetts are entitled to attend a public school free of charge and all children between the ages of 6 and 16 must attend school. Most children attend school in their home district, the school district in which they reside. The School Choice Program which Easthampton Public Schools (EPS) participates in allows parents the opportunity to have their children attend our schools while residing in a surrounding town.

As a parent of a student applying to the School Choice Program, I understand and agree to the following guidelines:

- There are a limited number of School Choice seats and participation in the School Choice Program is determined by The Easthampton School Committee's annual vote.
- **An Application is required for each student applying and must be received by the deadline in order to be considered in the lottery. Those applying after the deadline will be considered on a first come first served basis, based on availability or placed accordingly at the end of that grade's waitlist. Applications must be received by June 3, 2016 in order to qualify for the lottery.**
- Applications from siblings of students already enrolled in Easthampton Public Schools under the School Choice program and who will remain in the School Choice program during that school year will, by law, receive priority in placement. Such students will be accepted first, **IF** space is available in the grade they are seeking. If there are more applicants than the number of seats, a random drawing will be conducted among them to determine placement.
- Once siblings have been placed, the remaining vacancies will be filled by a random drawing.
- Should the number of applications exceed the number of vacancies, all applicants not accepted will be randomly selected and placed, in the order of their selection, on a waitlist.
- Parents will receive a Notice of Acceptance via mail, which must be signed and returned to the School Choice Coordinator.
- Your home district does not have to approve your child's application for admission to EPS.
- If your child is accepted into the program, the student is entitled to attend EPS through high school graduation, if continuously enrolled. School Choice Students who withdraw from Easthampton Public Schools will also be withdrawn from the School Choice Program.
- **There are no openings in the Behavioral, Alternative or Specialized Special Education Programs.** However, mainstream classes can provide special education services, with the exceptions above. Students currently receiving Special Education Services will be required to provide a current IEP during Enrollment.
- Your child may be denied a School Choice Seat based on past school disciplinary actions in accordance with MA General Laws.
- **Bus Transportation is not available for School Choice students.** Therefore, it is your responsibility to provide daily transportation and to ensure students **arrive at school on time** and are **promptly picked up after school**. School Choice students may fully participate in all school activities including after school programming and are subject to the same rules, guidelines and Code of Conducts as resident students.
- Students accepted into the School Choice Program must be REGISTERED in Easthampton Public Schools. For information on registration requirements please contact Lynn Moran at 413-529-1500.
- Former residents of the Easthampton Public School District who move out of town but wish to have their children remain as students in Easthampton Schools do not have a unique claim to the seats their children vacated and must apply as any other non-resident.
- The School Choice Lottery will take place no later than Wednesday June 8, 2016 with notifications mailed within one week following the lottery.

