

ENROLLING IN A FLORIDA PUBLIC SCHOOL

Enrollment is the first step on the journey to a Florida education. It's the beginning of an exciting time for the family. Preparation is the key to making enrollment successful.

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:

☐ Duval, it is www.duvalschools.org

☐ St. Johns, it is www.stjohns.k12.fl.us

☐ Clay, it is <https://www.oneclay.net/>

☐ Nassau, it is [www.edline.net/pages/Nassau County School District](http://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. You may use PCS orders and a Page 2 for enrollment purposes.
- 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. You may obtain your child's records on the Florida form at the immunization clinic at Naval Hospital Jacksonville, an appointment is not necessary.

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 building capacity restrictions, as detailed in the Class Size Amendment to the Florida Constitution, in the placement of eligible military dependent students.

STEP UP FOR STUDENTS SCHOLARSHIP: There are several scholarships available for students with unique abilities, private schools, homeschool costs, and transportation. To find more information or see if you qualify, visit: www.stepupforstudents.org

YOUTH SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM: Military families experience frequent relocations. The transition to a new community and school can be challenging. Youth may be uncomfortable meeting new peers and may be unaware of opportunities to become involved with their new school or community. The Youth Sponsorship Program provides you access to positive peer groups and social activities helping Navy children feel connected at their new duty station. Please visit the SL webpage at navymwrjacksonville.com for access to the Youth Sponsorship request.

LEGISLATION: Florida laws for educating children are very specific. Many laws have been put in place to protect military children as they move into the state of Florida. Most importantly:

- SB 662 This bill states that active duty military families transferring to a military installation in Florida will not have to wait until they establish residency in Florida to present their transfer orders to any Florida school district to enroll in school or avail themselves of that school district's controlled open enrollment options
- HB 633 The bill also provides that a student whose parent is on active military duty and is transferred within the state after the controlled open enrollment window may enroll in any school within the state.

Teri Wanamaker is the School Liaison for NAS Jacksonville. If you have questions about this article or questions about enrolling in another local school district, she can be reached via email at teri.j.wanamaker.naf@us.navy.mil or by phone at (904) 778-2236 [office] or (904) 238-6821 [cell].