

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · KENTUCKY

School Enrollment in Kentucky: Documents, Calendar and Rights 2026

The familiar line "go to the school your home is zoned for and enroll" is not true everywhere in this state. In one large city the system runs on applications rather than addresses, and the window is narrow.

SHORT ANSWER

This state has two kinds of public school district: county districts and **independent districts** based on city limits. Because of that split, "I will enroll at the school my home is zoned for" is **not true in all five communities**. **In one large city the system runs on applications rather than addresses** and the district calls it a managed choice system in its own words; **for a newly arrived family an application is required** and the window for the coming school year is **November 2 to December 18, 2026**. **In the other large city enrollment is purely address based**. **In the two cities that did not merge, the city and the county run two separate school districts**, and one independent district charges a student from outside the city limits **\$500 a year** and **provides no transportation**.

First, understand the structure

- **In the two large cities the school district is county-wide and single.** Merged government **simplifies** the job here: whichever municipality your address falls into, the school belongs to the same system. **Living in a suburban city does not change the school district.**
- **In the two cities that did not merge, the city and the county run two separate districts:** separate administration, separate enrollment procedure, **separate tax rate**.
- **One suburban city has no school district of its own;** its schools belong to the county district. **Being separate as a municipality does not mean being separate as a school system.**
- In one county, secondary sources mention a small city with its own independent district; that district's own page was not read this round.
- One county also shows a **federal school system attached to a military installation; which addresses fall into it could not be confirmed.**

Two large cities, two enrollment logics

ITEM	FIRST CITY	SECOND CITY
Enrollment logic	Managed choice. The district's sentence: JCPS offers a managed choice system ... The system lets you apply to various schools based on your home address.	Address-based zoning. The district's sentence: FCPS enrolls students at the school where they are zoned based on residential address.
Is an application required	Yes for a newly arrived family. The district writes the exception to applying only for middle and high school	No; the school confirms enrollment once the documents are complete
Address lookup	The application tool returns a school list based on the address	The district's own school zone finder
Calendar	The application window for the coming school year is November 2 to December 18, 2026	Enrollment is possible during the year; families who move over the summer enroll at the new school in early August

MANAGED CHOICE: APPLYING EARLY WINS NOTHING, MISSING THE WINDOW LOSES EVERYTHING

- The district's own sentence: Applications are not processed on a first-come, first-served basis. They all are processed at the same time at the end of the period.
- **So there is no need to rush for a place in line, but do not miss December 18, 2026.**
- **Moving is itself a reason to reapply:** the district explicitly lists You are new to JCPS and You have moved among the situations that require an application.
- The district runs a separate placement unit and phone line for families who move during the year.
- *The district's text does not say outright that an application is required for elementary school; it writes the exception to applying only for middle and high school. The conclusion drawn from that is a reading, an inference.*

The city limit is worth money

This is the most measurable example of the theme that a city name on your mail is not enough. One city's independent district accepts students from outside the city, **but for a fee and in order:**

- **Annual tuition:** An annual tuition of \$500 will be charged to each nonresident student to offset the local tax assessed to residents.
- **No transportation:** BGISD does not provide transportation outside of the district boundaries for non-resident students.
- **Order follows the application date**, and the district's own priority list runs: current students, siblings of current students, in-district students changing schools, **then** newly arriving out-of-district students. Capacity cannot be exceeded.
- **A family that moves out of the city mid-year** may keep the child in the school but **begins paying prorated tuition.**

- The other independent district also has a separate application and approval process for out-of-district students, but no sentence was found on whether a fee is charged. We do not carry one district's figure over to another.

Which documents are required

The statewide rule can be read from one county district's own page, and it carries the answer to the foreign document question: Upon enrollment for the first time in any elementary or secondary school, a student or student's parent shall provide either a certified copy of the student's birth certificate **or other reliable proof of the student's identity and age** and an affidavit of the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate.

- The statute says "**a certified birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity and age**"; the document is not tied to a single country.
- **One district names the alternatives one by one:** adoption records, a **valid passport or other federal identification**, a military ID or an **immigration card**, a valid state license or instruction permit, **prior school records**, or a signed affidavit stating that you cannot produce the document and will bring it **within thirty days**.
- **Another district puts it more briefly:** Other documents as proof of age and legal name are also acceptable (such as a passport, legal documents, etc.)
- **Proof of residency:** if you are moving to a different district, enrollment at the new school requires **two proofs of residency**.

TRANSLATION AND APOSTILLES: NO DISTRICT SAYS ANYTHING

- **No district states whether a translation or an apostille is required for a Turkish birth certificate.**
- **We do not say there is no requirement;** the institutions simply do not address it.
- **Call the school's enrollment officer before your appointment and ask for the answer in writing.**
- **The contrast is useful:** in the same state the [licensing agency](#) requires a **notarized translation** for a foreign license, a birth certificate and a marriage certificate, and on marriage licenses the attorney general's guide accepts foreign documents outright. **On the school side there is silence.**

Health documents: four items and their deadlines

DOCUMENT	WHEN
State immunization certificate	On file within two weeks of enrollment
Preventive health examination	Performed within one year before first entry and before entering sixth grade
Vision examination	At first entry between ages three and six, by January 1
Dental screening or examination	At ages five to six, by January 1

- **You can register, but the child cannot attend:** one district puts it sharply: You may register without these two documents, but your child may not attend school until the immunization certificate is on file.
- **The procedure for an out-of-state record is written down:** the record can be taken to the **county health department and transferred onto the state form**, or the same work can be done by a **local physician**.

Another county adds that an out-of-state record must be **that state's own certificate**, not a simple administration printout.

- *The same logic would be expected to apply to an immunization card from abroad, Türkiye included. But no institution uses the phrase "foreign country immunization card"; that is an inference.*
- **On exemptions, the only item measured is the religious affidavit;** the state publishes that form in English and Spanish. **The official wording and form for a medical exemption were not found**, and no institutional statement was found on a philosophical or personal belief exemption either. **We do not say there is none.**
- **Military families get extra time:** one district writes that they are allowed **thirty days instead of two weeks** for the immunization certificate.

A Social Security number is not a condition of enrollment

Two districts say so in their own words. One marks the card optional on its document list and explains why: the number is needed only for a **state scholarship program at the high school level**, and the record is kept confidential. The other writes the same thing. **So no rule was measured under which a child cannot be enrolled for lack of a number.**

IMMIGRATION STATUS: TWO DISTRICTS HAVE A SENTENCE, FOUR DO NOT

- Jefferson County Public Schools protects student privacy. **JCPS does not ask about or disclose immigration status.** The same page notes the district declared itself a Safe Haven School District by a 2017 board resolution and said it will not take any action that might discourage students from enrolling.
- Does FCPS ask for or disclose information about my child's or my family's immigration status? **No. FCPS does not collect documentation on students' or families' immigration status as part of the enrollment process.** The same page gives the basis: *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982).
- **No such sentence was found for the other four districts.** One district has a nondiscrimination notice that does not mention immigration status. **We do not carry one district's sentence over to another, and we do not say there is none.** Ask your own district directly.
- **One district also writes this:** On Jan. 21, 2025, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security rescinded its previous guidelines that designated schools as 'protected areas.' The same district publishes its staff instruction: requests for access to a student or student information go **directly to the district office and legal counsel**, and the district states it will distinguish between **a judicially signed document and an administrative one.**
- **A concrete right a parent can use:** the same district writes that a parent may **block** the sharing of **directory information** such as a child's name, address and telephone number by written notice. **That is done by checking a box at enrollment;** ask the registrar.

The right to an interpreter

One district's sentence is clear and states that it is free: Do I have to pay for an interpreter? **No, it is your right to request an interpreter, free of charge.** The same district adds: Federal law requires the school district to provide interpreters and written documentation in the families' home language. It also lists the formats: in person, by phone and online; simultaneous and consecutive. **One practical convenience:** you

can state your need for an interpreter **in a written note in your own language**; the district says it will translate the note.

No such sentence was found at the other districts. One large district has a multilingual learners unit and a welcome center; a fifth of its students are multilingual and students speak **154 languages**. **But no sentence of its own saying interpreters are free was found. Turkish is not on any district's top ten language list.** The practical consequence: a Turkish interpreter is not routine and must be **requested in advance**.

- 1 Find out which district you belong to.** In this state the city limit sets the district and, in some places, **hundreds of dollars a year**.
- 2 Do not miss the calendar:** in the managed choice system the window is **November 2 to December 18, 2026**.
- 3 Build your document file from the start:** a birth certificate or passport, two proofs of residency, the immunization certificate and the preventive health examination.
- 4 Ask the translation and apostille question by phone** and get the answer in writing; no district addresses it.
- 5 Turn in the immunization certificate within two weeks;** a child can be registered but cannot attend until it is on file.
- 6 Request your interpreter at the enrollment appointment** and ask about the directory information box.
- 7 Ask your own district the immigration status question directly;** only two districts have it in writing.
- 8 For your district's name, fees and calendar, see our** [Louisville](#), [Lexington](#), [Jeffersontown](#), [Bowling Green](#) and [Elizabethtown](#) guides.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN KENTUCKY

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