

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · LOUISVILLE

School Enrollment in Louisville: An Application Is Required, 2026 Guide

The usual story in this series does not hold here. The district calls its system managed choice, and a newly arrived family has to apply.

SHORT ANSWER

The usual story in this series does not hold here, and we say so up front: **"go to the school your home is zoned for and enroll" is wrong for Louisville.** The county's single district, **Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)**, describes the system on its own page: **"JCPS offers a managed choice system that meets the unique needs of our community. The system lets you apply to various schools based on your home address."** So **your home address decides which schools you may apply to, not which school you will attend.** The **2027-28 application window runs November 2, 2026 to December 18, 2026**, and the district adds: **"Applications are not processed on a first-come, first-served basis."** On immigration, the district's sentence is plain: **"JCPS does not ask about or disclose immigration status."**

The good news the merger brought to schools

There are **more than 80 separate municipalities** inside the county, and that is a real tangle for taxes, garbage and policing. **On the school side the tangle disappears:** in Jefferson County the school district is **countywide and single**, and it is JCPS. Living in a suburban city does not change your school district. **So a municipal boundary changes your tax bill, your garbage and your police force, but not your school.**

One exception should be stated: inside the county there is a separate district called **Anchorage Independent School District** (through middle school). **This item was read only from secondary sources and not confirmed on the district's own page.** If you are moving there, ask separately.

Who has to apply: the district's own list

YOU MUST APPLY IF	YOU DO NOT NEED TO APPLY IF
Your child is starting kindergarten	Your child is continuing at last year's school and you have not moved
"You are new to JCPS"	Your child is moving up to middle or high school and you want the school assigned to your home address (the district's term is "resides school")
You have moved - even a move within the city counts	

YOU MUST APPLY IF

You are interested in an optional program, magnet program, magnet school or an Academies of Louisville school

YOU DO NOT NEED TO APPLY IF

For a family newly arrived from Turkey the result is clear: you are in the first column. The line "You are new to JCPS" describes you directly. One detail, labeled: the district's "you do not need to apply" exception is written **only for middle and high school**; the text does not expressly say that elementary requires an application, so that is a conclusion drawn from reading. Our practical advice does not change: **apply**.

The calendar

WHAT	WHEN
2027-28 application period (elementary, middle, high)	November 2, 2026 to December 18, 2026
How applications are handled	Not first come, first served. Applications are processed together at the end of the period
Families moving mid-year	The district's Relocation Services unit and the Office of School Choice - (502) 485-6250

A concrete step: if you are moving to Kentucky in October, write **November 2** into your calendar in the middle of the moving rush. Applying early earns you no priority, **but you must apply before the window closes**. Miss it and your child will not be left without a school, but your range of choices narrows and you go through mid-year placement.

Immigration status: the district's own sentences

We carry these over as written, because it matters that they come from the district itself:

- **"All students are guaranteed the right to attend school. Every child has the right to an education, regardless of immigration status, as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and upheld by the Supreme Court."**
- **"Jefferson County Public Schools protects student privacy. JCPS does not ask about or disclose immigration status."** The district adds that the federal education records privacy law bars schools from sharing student records.
- **"JCPS will not take any action that might discourage students from enrolling and participating in school, or that might lead to the exclusion of students, based on immigration status."**
- **"Jefferson County Public Schools is a Safe Haven School District."** The district states that the board of education made that declaration by **a resolution in 2017**.

The case law behind that right is **Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982)**; another large Kentucky district cites the decision directly on its own immigration resources page.

A FACT WE STATE IN FULL

Another large Kentucky district writes on its own page that the federal homeland security agency **rescinded its earlier guidance treating schools as "protected areas" on January 21, 2025**, and that this means immigration enforcement activity on or near school grounds is **no longer categorically prohibited**. The same district says it has instructed staff to route any request for access to students or student information **to its legal department before taking any action**. **JCPS's own separate statement on this was not read in this research** and we do not carry another district's policy over to JCPS; but **the change in federal guidance is the same fact for every district**.

The same page recommends preparing a "Family Safety Plan": keeping emergency contact details current, naming a trusted adult for care, and keeping documents such as the **birth certificate, passport, identification and medication list** together. It takes an afternoon.

Documents: state law is not closed to foreign records

First a limit: the JCPS enrollment document list could not be read in this research, and we do not carry another district's list over to JCPS. **Ask the district for the document list before you book an enrollment appointment**.

But the statewide framework was read, and it is good news for a Turkish family: the law asks a student enrolling for the first time to present **a certified copy of a birth certificate or other reliable proof of the student's identity and age**; if a birth certificate cannot be produced, an affidavit is attached. Another large Kentucky district names the alternatives one by one: adoption records; a **valid passport** or other federal government identification; a military identification or an **immigration card**; a valid Kentucky driver license or permit; **previous school records**; or a written statement that the document will be produced **within 30 days**.

Labeled inference: a Turkish-born child's **passport** or **school records from Turkey** fall into that list; "my birth certificate is in Turkish" is not by itself a barrier. **But no district writes the sentence "a Turkish birth certificate is accepted"**, and **no district states whether a translation or an apostille is required**. Ask that question plainly when you book.

Health documents: four items, all required in the file

DOCUMENT	WHEN
Kentucky Certificate of Immunization	On file within two weeks of enrollment
Preventive Health Care Exam	Performed within one year before first entry to school and before entry to grade 6
Vision examination	At first entry between ages 3 and 6, by January 1
Dental screening or examination	At ages 5 to 6, by January 1

There is a procedure for an out-of-state immunization record: a Kentucky district writes that an out-of-state record can be taken to the **county health department** and **transferred onto the Kentucky form**, and that a **local Kentucky physician** can do the same. **Labeled inference**: the same logic should apply to an

immunization card brought from Turkey, **but no agency uses the phrase "foreign immunization card."** Before leaving Turkey, get an **English copy** of your child's immunization card.

Immunization exemption: the state's official exemption form takes the shape of a **religious declaration** and is published in English and Spanish. **The official wording and form for a medical exemption were not found in this research** - we do not say there is none; the research did not find one. **Exception for military families:** 30 days instead of two weeks for the immunization record.

Language support

JCPS has an **Office of Multilingual Learners**, and its own figures run like this: **20 percent of all JCPS students are multilingual learners**, students' birthplaces cover **147 countries**, and students speak **154 languages**. The office runs a **Welcome Center - the lower level of Hazelwood Elementary, 1325 Bluegrass Avenue, Louisville** - offering identification, enrollment help, language services and instructional support.

But we state a gap plainly: no JCPS sentence of its own saying **"interpreters are free"** or **"it is your right to request an interpreter"** was **found** in this research. Another large Kentucky district does have such a sentence, but **we do not carry it over to JCPS. Turkish does not appear in the top ten language lists published by Kentucky districts**, so an interpreter is not waiting on standby; one has to be arranged on request. Put your request **in writing**.

Checklist before enrollment

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Write November 2, 2026 in your calendar	The 2027-28 window closes December 18, 2026
☐ Do not rush, but do not miss it	The district's words: "not processed on a first-come, first-served basis"
☐ Call if you arrive mid-year	Office of School Choice - (502) 485-6250
☐ Bring the passport and previous school records	State law allows alternatives to a birth certificate
☐ Ask about translation and apostille	No district writes this down; ask plainly when you book
☐ Get an English copy of the immunization card	The transfer onto the Kentucky form is done by the county health department or a physician
☐ Put the four health documents on the calendar	Immunization record within two weeks ; vision and dental by January 1
☐ Put your interpreter request in writing	Welcome Center - lower level of Hazelwood Elementary, 1325 Bluegrass Avenue
☐ Prepare a family safety plan	Emergency contacts, a trusted adult, documents kept together



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN LOUISVILLE

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients across Louisville, in Turkish and English. Free evaluation:
clinchlaw.com/free-evaluation · +1 866-491-7669

Office: 321 N Central Expy, Ste 206, McKinney, TX 75070

Attorney responsible for this guide: Asim Clinch, Esq., Clinch Law Firm P.C. Attorney Asim Clinch is a member of the Missouri Bar (No. 76084) and practices U.S. federal immigration law.

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