

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · TUSCALOOSA

School Enrollment in Tuscaloosa: Two Districts, Documents and 2026 Guide

The city has its own school district, separate from the county's. The hard part is not a number, it is two bills in the parent's name.

SHORT ANSWER

First, let us separate what gets confused: this city has **two separate school districts** and they are different institutions. **The city's own school district** runs the addresses inside the city, and **the county's school district** runs the addresses outside it; **a house one step beyond the city limit falls into a different district**. The city district's own **school zoning map** tells you which school an address is zoned to. The hardest item in the enrollment documents is not a number, it is **proof of residence: a lease or deed in the parent's name, plus two current utility bills in the parent's name, and a post office box is not accepted**.

Which district is yours

This is the item most easily misread here, because the two institutions have similar names but mean **separate administrations, separate enrollment procedures and separate policies**.

WHERE YOUR ADDRESS IS	WHICH DISTRICT
Inside the city limits	The city's own school district. It has its own zoning map
In the city's police jurisdiction or in the unincorporated part of the county	The county's school district. A separate institution with a separate enrollment procedure

There is one thing to do while you are looking at housing: put the address into one of two tools. The city district's own **zoning map** tells you **which school you are zoned to**; the [Census Bureau address lookup](#) tells you **which school district you fall in**, along with the county and the municipality. **A rental listing does not carry this information** and a leasing agent's spoken answer is not a source.

Required documents, from the district's own list

DOCUMENT	DETAIL
Proof of birth	A birth certificate or another document showing the birth
Report card	The current or most recent report card , if there is one
Proof of residence, two pieces	A copy of the lease or deed in the parent's name, plus two current utility bills in the parent's name

DOCUMENT	DETAIL
Immunization record	The state's current immunization form. It can be obtained from the county health department , a family physician or some clinics
Form requirement	The district's own sentence: all documents must show the physical residence address and the name of the parent or guardian; a post office box is not accepted
Kindergarten age	The student must have turned five on or before September 1

Note one word: the district's own page calls these documents **requested**, not **required**. That is not a promise of a right, but it is worth knowing when you are at the enrollment desk.

THE REAL DIFFICULTY IN THIS CITY: TWO BILLS IN THE PARENT'S NAME

- The district asks for **two current utility bills in the parent's name**. But in this city **water, sewer and garbage sit on a single account** and arrive as **one bill**. So the second bill has to come from **the power account**, and that account also has to be **in the parent's name**.
- **That turns into an order:** in the week you move, **open both the water account and the power account in the parent's name**. Opening both is the only way to have two separate bills in hand on enrollment day.
- **This is an inference we draw from two agency texts**, not the district's own sentence; but it correctly shows the order needed to satisfy the rule.
- **And we state a gap plainly:** for a family with no lease, or whose bills are in someone else's name, **no published affidavit or alternative procedure was found in this research. We do not say there is none**; call the district, describe your situation and ask for the alternative by name.

Numbers and immigration status

- **A Social Security number does not appear on the document list the district publishes. We do not write that it is not asked for;** we say we did not find it on the list.
- **No wording indicating that immigration status is asked was found either.**
- The district's enrollment page carries **a separate resource section for international families**; look there before your first phone call.
- The district runs an **English as a second language** program under its federal programs unit.

The four steps that apply statewide

Because a reader may find the statutory text online and be frightened by it, we give the sequence in order:

- 1 The text is in the code.** A provision requiring schools to ask about a student's immigration status at enrollment is published **in full and with no warning note** on the state's own legislative server.
- 2 A federal court permanently enjoined that provision.** The citation is Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama v. Bentley, Northern District of Alabama, **Doc. 180**, stamped **November 25, 2013**.

- 3 **The act's own general rule already exempts schools.** A separate provision of the same act lists the services for which **verification of lawful presence is not required**, and **the first item on that list is elementary and secondary education**.
- 4 **There is a constitutional basis as well**, and it applies in this state too for access to public elementary and secondary education.

THE DATE YOU WILL SEE ONLINE IS WRONG

- **The commonly repeated date of October 2013 is wrong**; that is the date of the parties' joint report, not of the order. The correct citation is **Doc. 180, stamped November 25, 2013**.
- **The act did not freeze in 2013**. Other parts of the same act **were amended twice in 2025**, and widely read legal sites give a **December 30, 2024 snapshot** of this act and miss both amendments.
- **One more warning**: that order names **the superintendents of particular school systems as defendants**. But the force of the ruling comes from **the provision being held unconstitutional**, and that operates statewide. **The defendant list is about who was sued, not about where the ruling applies**.
- The full text of the order is in the court's stamped file: courtlistener.com.

Language: two languages in practice, and a right to request

- The district's enrollment system publishes **exactly two language versions** of each form: **English and Spanish**. Both the new student and the returning student enrollment forms come in those two.
- **No Turkish enrollment form was found**, and **no published list of the languages the district actually translates into was found either**. So the correct sentence to write is not **Turkish service is available: there is a right to request, and this is the door**.
- Make your request **in writing**, and note who you gave it to and on what date.
- The state health agency **publishes its language assistance notice in Turkish**, and that is the same agency that issues the immunization record. **No such text was found on the school side**, but that does not mean Turkish support cannot be requested from the district.

Five questions to ask the district

QUESTION	WHY IT MATTERS
☐ Which district does my address fall in, and which school is my child zoned to?	The city district and the county district are separate institutions
☐ How can I meet the two-bills-in-the-parent's-name rule; do the water and power bills count together?	In this city water, sewer and garbage arrive on one bill
☐ The lease is not in my name; is there an affidavit or an alternative procedure for that?	No published affidavit procedure was found for this city

QUESTION	WHY IT MATTERS
☐ Do you ask for a Social Security number; if you do, is the request a condition of enrollment?	Another district in Alabama states in its own policy that such a request is voluntary and not a condition of enrollment. That was not verified for this district
☐ Can I request a Turkish interpreter during enrollment, and who should I address the request to?	The languages actually published are English and Spanish ; make the request in writing

A two-sentence summary: find out which district you are in first, then **plan proof of residence from the start**. The second job is harder than the first, and **leaving it until enrollment day is leaving it too late**.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN TUSCALOOSA

Have a question about your immigration status?

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