

SENATE BILL 272

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2021

INTRODUCED BY

Harold Pope, Jr.

This document may incorporate amendments proposed by a committee, but not yet adopted, as well as amendments that have been adopted during the current legislative session. The document is a tool to show amendments in context and cannot be used for the purpose of adding amendments to legislation.

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; REQUIRING SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS TO ALLOW MILITARY FAMILIES TO ENROLL SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN PRIOR TO THEIR PHYSICAL PRESENCE IN THE STATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 22-1-4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1975, Chapter 338, Section 1, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-1-4. FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS--EXCEPTIONS--WITHDRAWING AND

.218980.1AIC February 19, 2021 (10:15am)

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ENROLLING--OPEN ENROLLMENT.--

A. Except as provided by Section 24-5-2 NMSA 1978, and except as provided in Subsection H of this section, a free public school education shall be available to any school-age person who is a resident of this state and has not received a high school diploma or its equivalent.

B. A free public school education in those courses already offered to persons pursuant to the provisions of Subsection A of this section shall be available to any person who is a resident of this state and has received a high school diploma or its equivalent if there is available space in such courses.

C. [~~Any~~] A person entitled to a free public school education pursuant to the provisions of this section may enroll or re-enroll in a public school at any time and, unless required to attend school pursuant to the [~~Compulsory School Attendance Law~~] Attendance for Success Act, may withdraw from a public school at any time.

D. In adopting and promulgating rules concerning the enrollment of students transferring from a home school or private school to the public schools, the local school board shall provide that the grade level at which the transferring student is placed is appropriate to the age of the student or to the student's score on a student achievement test administered according to the statewide assessment and

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accountability system.

E. A local school board shall adopt and promulgate rules governing enrollment and re-enrollment at public schools other than charter schools within the school district. These rules shall include:

(1) definition of the school district boundary and the boundaries of attendance areas for each public school;

(2) for each public school, definition of the boundaries of areas outside the school district boundary or within the school district but outside the public school's attendance area and within a distance of the public school that would not be served by a school bus route as determined pursuant to Section 22-16-4 NMSA 1978 if enrolled, which areas shall be designated as "walk zones";

(3) priorities for enrollment of students as follows:

(a) first, students residing within the school district, or who will be residing within the school district if the student is a child in a military family who will be attending public school in the school district during the upcoming school year as provided in Subsection H of this section, and within the attendance area of a public school and students who had resided in the attendance area prior to a parent who is an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States or member of the national guard being deployed

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and whose deployment has required the student to relocate outside the attendance area for custodial care;

(b) second, students [~~enrolled in a school rated as "F" for two of the prior four years pursuant to the A-B-C-D-F Schools Rating Act;~~

~~(c) third students]~~ who previously attended the public school; and

~~[(d) fourth]~~ (c) third, all other applicants;

(4) establishment of maximum allowable class size if smaller than that permitted by law; and

(5) rules pertaining to grounds for denial of enrollment or re-enrollment at schools within the school district and the school district's hearing and appeals process for such a denial. Grounds for denial of enrollment or re-enrollment shall be limited to:

(a) a student's expulsion from any school district or private school in this state or any other state during the preceding twelve months; or

(b) a student's behavior in another school district or private school in this state or any other state during the preceding twelve months that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or school employees.

F. In adopting and promulgating rules governing enrollment and re-enrollment at public schools other than

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charter schools within the school district, a local school board may establish additional enrollment preferences for rules admitting students in accordance with the second and third [~~and fourth~~] priorities of enrollment set forth in Subparagraphs (b) and (c) [~~and (d)~~] of Paragraph (3) of Subsection E of this section. The additional enrollment preferences may include:

- (1) after-school child care for students;
- (2) child care for siblings of students attending the public school;
- (3) children of employees employed at the public school;
- (4) extreme hardship;
- (5) location of a student's previous school;
- (6) siblings of students already attending the public school; and
- (7) student safety.

G. As long as the maximum allowable class size established by law or by rule of a local school board, whichever is lower, is not met or exceeded in a public school by enrollment of first- and second-priority persons, the public school shall enroll other persons applying in the priorities stated in the school district rules adopted pursuant to Subsections E and F of this section. If the maximum would be exceeded by enrollment of an applicant in the second [~~through fourth priority~~] and third priorities, the public school shall

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establish a waiting list. As classroom space becomes available, persons highest on the waiting list within the highest priority on the list shall be notified and given the opportunity to enroll.

H. Every school district and charter school shall allow military families that will be relocating to a military installation in New Mexico pursuant to an official military order to enroll their children in public school prior to their actual physical presence in the school district. A parent may submit the student's name for any lottery-selected charter school, magnet school or other public school program for which the student qualifies. The school district or charter school shall accept electronic applications for enrollment, including enrollment in a specific school or program with the school district or charter school. The school district or charter school shall provide the applicant with materials regarding academic courses, electives, sports and other relevant information regarding the public school in which the student wants to be enrolled. The public school shall preregister the student in anticipation of the student's enrollment. A student's parent:

(1) shall provide proof of residence in the school district within SEC → ten ← SEC SEC → forty-five ← SEC days after the published arrival date provided on official military documentation; and

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(2) may use any of the following addresses related to the family's military move:

(a) a temporary on-base billeting facility;

(b) off-base military housing; or

(c) a purchased or leased residence."

SECTION 2. APPLICABILITY.--The provisions of this act apply to the 2021-2022 and subsequent school years.

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