

### SANCTUARY SCHOOLS: RESIDENTS WITH UNCERTAIN OR NO IMMIGRATION STATUS

#### Background

The Vancouver School District supports the City of Vancouver's Access Without Fear mandate and is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all students who are ordinarily resident in Vancouver, including those with precarious immigration status or no immigration status, within funding guidelines outlined by the Ministry of Education. This includes refugee claimants and/or the children of refugee claimants as well as the children of parents/guardians dealing with immigration matters.

#### Definitions

Ordinarily Resident:

A student is considered a resident in BC if the student is ordinarily a resident in BC; that is, they have established a home where they customarily reside and maintain an ongoing physical presence.

#### Procedures

- 1.0 Eligibility for a publicly funded education is based on the legal guardian and the school-aged child being ordinarily resident in British Columbia as per the School Act.
- 2.0 Registration
  - 2.1 Students born outside of Canada register through the Newcomer Welcome Centre (NWC) online registration website.
  - 2.2 Students (grade 1-12) who do not speak English as a home language register through the NWC online registration website.
  - 2.3 Students born in Canada, who speak English as a home language, register at their catchment school.
- 3.0 Documentation Challenges
  - 2.1 Parents who do not have the necessary routine documents (see Administrative Procedure 300 *Admission to School and School Choice*) to demonstrate that they are ordinarily resident are referred to the NWC District Principal for support.
    - 2.1.1 Each case will be handled with care and sensitivity by school and the multilingual NWC staff, including settlement workers and multicultural liaison workers.
    - 2.1.2 Parents will be asked to provide other documentation to verify that they have maintained ordinarily resident status in BC.

2.1 Students who do not qualify for a publicly funded education, because they are do not have 'ordinarily resident' status in BC, will be referred to the International Education Program.

#### 4.0 Language Assistance

NWC Multicultural Liaison Workers and Settlement Workers will provide support for families whose home language is not English, and any families who have challenges with online registration.

#### 5.0 Protection of Privacy

5.1 All student registration records, including those related to immigration status, are accessed according to provisions in the School Act and FOIPPA legislation.

5.2 While the school district recognizes the federal government's legal jurisdiction over immigration matters, the school district does not share immigration status information with external agencies such as Canadian Border Services Agency, unless legally required to do so.

#### 6.0 Communication

6.1 Information on Access without Fear and registration for residents with uncertain or no immigration status is published on the District website.

6.2 The District Principal, Newcomer Welcome Centre, will ensure the information outlined in this procedure is shared with community organizations who support newcomers and immigrant communities.

6.2 Annually, NWC staff will conduct a formal review of the process for registering students with uncertain or no immigration status. AP 304 will be updated accordingly.

#### 7.0 Dispute Resolution

Parents/Guardians who have a complaint regarding an enrolment decision made by staff are advised to follow the parental complaints process (see Administrative Procedure 152 *Parental Complaints*).

Reference: Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 20, 22, 23, 65, 74.1, 75, 75.1, 82, 85 School Act  
Federal Government Protocol  
Administrative Procedure 300, Administrative Procedure 152

Effective: December 1, 2021