



Frequently-Asked Questions: 2011-2012 District of Columbia Student Enrollment Audit and Non-Resident Student Tuition Payments

Background: The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) conducts an annual Student Enrollment Audit at Local Education Agencies (LEAs), evaluating student rosters at all the D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools for accuracy and verification of District of Columbia residency. The District of Columbia Student Enrollment Audit for the 2011-2012 School Year has been completed. As part of this process, the District is confirming that all non-resident students have paid tuition or are completing payments with a non-resident tuition payment plan.

Q: Aren't Public Schools in the District of Columbia already free?

A: Yes, for D.C Residents Only. Funding for DCPS and public charter schools in the District of Columbia is regulated under the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF), which comes from local tax dollars to be used exclusively on behalf of funding students who are D.C. residents. Non-resident students may, when space is available, be deemed eligible to attend a District of Columbia public school. However, non-resident students must then pay tuition, which is based on UPSFF.

Q: How many Non-Resident Students were enrolled in D.C. Public Schools this year?

A: Less than 1 %. Our audit reported that .35% out of the 78,469 students currently enrolled in D.C. public schools were identified as non-residents.

Q: Why is OSSE so concerned about less than 1% of enrolled students?

A: With limited funding, erroneous spending is a disservice to D.C. Students and Taxpayers. Public education in the District has experienced many budget reductions in the past few years, making the need to maximize UPSFF spending more critical than ever. It is our obligation to do what is in the best interest of D.C. taxpayers and stakeholders alike.



Q: What happens when a student is identified as a non-resident?

A: There are two LEA payment collection options available for Parents/Guardians of Non-Resident Students

Option 1: The Non-Resident Parent/Guardian must agree to a non-resident tuition payment plan.

If this option is chosen, the parent/guardian has until June 18 2012 to agree in writing to a non-resident tuition payment plan with the LEA.

Option 2: The Non-Resident Parent/Guardian must make a pro-rated tuition payment and immediately withdraw their child from school.

If this option is chosen, the parent/guardian must make arrangements to pay the pro-rated tuition owed to the LEA for the time a student(s) were enrolled.

Q: What if a Parent/Guardian moves during the school year?

A: Non-Resident tuition is pro-rated. Non-resident tuition owed to LEAs is based upon the UPSFF, according to the documented number of days a non-resident student attended the school.

Q: Where does the money go?

A: Funds collected will be submitted to the D.C. Treasury. While point-of-entry collections from Non-Resident Families will be handled by the individual LEA, funds will then be submitted to OSSE for final deposit into the District of Columbia Treasury.

Q: What if a Parent/Guardian cannot pay?

A: Multiple steps are in place for LEAs and Non-Resident Parents/Guardians. OSSE has worked with LEAs to ensure non-resident students are given adequate opportunities to develop a tuition payment plan.

Every reasonable effort is made to avoid disruptions to a student's educational experience; in fairness to District of Columbia taxpayers, non-resident students are expected to complete appropriate tuition payments in order to remain enrolled in a D.C. public school.

If all avenues for recovering appropriate tuition payments are exhausted, OSSE will consider and make referrals for collection to the Office of the Inspector General and Office of the Attorney General as appropriate.