

Bristol Tennessee City Schools

Descriptor Term: Attendance of Non-Resident Students	Descriptor Code: 6.204	Issued Date: 08/18/25
	Rescinds: 6.204	Issued: 09/18/23

1 Students residing outside the boundaries of the school system may attend **Bristol Tennessee City**
2 **Schools as a non-resident student** ~~schools within the school system~~ under the following conditions:

3 **1. APPLICATION**

4 Applications must be approved by the director of schools or designee annually.¹

5 Applications should be submitted for approval to the principal of the school the student attends
6 or is applying to attend at least two (2) weeks prior to the first day of school. The board may
7 choose to establish an earlier application deadline.¹

8 **Non-resident student** Tuition applications **may will** be accepted throughout the school year for
9 new students as well as from students currently attending Bristol Tennessee City Schools in
10 kindergarten-twelfth grades.³ Applications **must** ~~may be submitted to the~~ be approved by the
11 principal's office, or the office of student services. **principal prior to district approval allowing**
12 **initiation of tuition payment.**

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14 2. ~~Any pupil seeking admission as a tuition student must, if enrolled at a school during the~~
15 ~~previous year, be eligible to re-enroll at that school without restriction should they meet the~~
16 ~~criteria for admission. The criteria for admission to the Bristol Tennessee City Schools are: (a)~~
17 ~~space must be available, (b) appropriate programs must be available, (c) the student must have~~
18 ~~good attendance and discipline records, (d) the student must have a satisfactory academic~~
19 ~~record, and (e) the student must be in good financial standing regarding payment of any owed~~
20 ~~fees. With the exception of Tennessee Online Public School (TOPS), students suspended or~~
21 ~~expelled from other school systems will not be admitted to Bristol Tennessee City Schools.~~
22 ~~Attendance data (including excessive absences, tardies, and early withdrawals) as well as~~
23 ~~discipline incidents, will be reviewed quarterly and may result in probation or denial of~~
24 ~~admission for the following school year.~~

25 **ADMISSION CRITERIA**

26 Admission to Bristol Tennessee City Schools is based on the following criteria:

- 27 • Space must be available
- 28 • Appropriate academic or support programs are available

- 1 • The student has acceptable attendance and discipline records
- 2 • The student has a satisfactory academic record
- 3 • The student is in good financial standing regarding any owed fees

4 With the exception of Tennessee Online Public School, students who are suspended or expelled
5 from another school system will not be admitted to Bristol Tennessee City Schools.

6 All non-resident students seeking enrollment or re-enrollment in Bristol Tennessee City
7 Schools must complete an application each year, regardless of whether the student is currently
8 or previously enrolled as a non-resident student. For each school year, Bristol Tennessee City
9 Schools will evaluate a non-resident applicant's eligibility consistent with this policy.

10 Attendance data, including excessive absences, tardies, and early withdrawals, as well as
11 discipline records, will be reviewed quarterly and may result in probation or denial of
12 admission for the following school year.

13 Middle school or high students who fail one or more subjects during the last school year may
14 be either placed on probation the next school year following such failures or may be asked not
15 to re-enter Bristol Tennessee City Schools the following year. The decision shall be derived
16 through a conference between the principal and the parents. The conference may include other
17 faculty members or school officials who have knowledge relevant to the case.

18 Non-resident students, or parents of non-resident students, who cause undue hardship to
19 teachers, other students, or administrators may result in the student being dropped from
20 enrollment. The principal shall notify the director of schools, and parents will be notified of the
21 date of termination.

22 If a parent of a student teaches outside the school system of the parent's residency, the student
23 may attend such school system, provided the appropriate non-resident requirements are met.⁴

24
25 Requests from students from adjoining states to attend Bristol Tennessee City Schools shall be
26 considered on a case-by-case basis.⁵

27 3. ADMISSIONS PRIORITY

28
29 Parents or legal guardians must apply annually for their child's non-resident student status, and
30 non-resident student students shall be assigned to schools on an annual basis.

31
32 The application and assignment of a student who has previously attended a school in Bristol
33 Tennessee City Schools shall be considered before new non-resident applications and
34 assignments to a particular school or grade. Applications must be received in accordance with
35 the schedule published by the director of schools. Applications for tuition status during an
36 academic year may be approved on the condition that the applicant substantiates extenuating
37 circumstances (such as a change of residence).
38

The board of education shall grant priority status to out-of-zone and non-resident out-of-district applications for children of Bristol Tennessee City Schools employees.⁵

After placement of system employees' children, the priority order in which out-of-zone (i.e. students who reside in the school district but want an inter-district transfer to another school) and non-resident students who are out-of-district will be admitted are as follows⁵:

Priority One: Out-of-zone (transfer) students enrolled the previous year

Priority Two: Siblings of currently enrolled out-of-zone transfer students

Priority Three: New out-of-zone transfer students

Priority Four: Non-resident students enrolled the previous year

Priority Five: Siblings of currently enrolled non-resident students

Priority Six: New non-resident taxpayer students

Priority Seven: New non-resident students

4. TUITION RATES

Tennessee Non-Resident Students

If the student resides in the state of Tennessee, the parent/guardian must pay a non-resident tuition fee established by the board. Yearly tuition per student may not exceed an amount equal to the amount of funds actually used for school purposes by the school system per student during the preceding school year, minus any funds received from the state or from the student's resident system. The board may authorize to discount tuition for children of school system employees residing in Tennessee.

Out-of-State Non-Resident Students

Tuition for out-of-state students shall be charged at the same rate as the average cost per student in the system attended.² ~~The board may authorize to discount tuition for children of school system employees residing in Tennessee.~~

Sullivan County Tennessee Non-Resident Taxpayer Students

1. Tuition Waiver Eligibility

Tuition fees may be waived for a student who qualifies under non-resident taxpayer status. For purposes of this policy, a non-resident taxpayer is an individual who resides in Sullivan County and owns taxable residential property within Bristol City limits. To qualify, the legal guardian of the student must be the non-resident taxpayer and must own a livable residential dwelling, including a single family or multi-family home, located within the Bristol City limits.

2. Verification

The non-resident taxpayer is responsible for submitting proof of property ownership and legal guardianship each year to the Bristol Tennessee City Schools Student Services Office by a deadline established by the district. This documentation may include, but is not limited to: valid property deed, current mortgage documents, or property tax receipts. Tuition

1 payment is required until documentation verifying non-resident taxpayer status is submitted
2 and approved.

3. Administration

4 The student services supervisor shall review documentation and determine eligibility for a
5 tuition waiver in accordance with this policy.

7 Tennessee Online Public Schools (TOPS)

8
9 A student participating in Tennessee Online Public School (TOPS) who resides in the state of
10 Tennessee is not required to pay tuition but shall pay an application fee contingent upon TOPS
11 procedures and principal discretion. At the discretion of the principal, Tennessee Online Public
12 School (TOPS) may offer individual courses to students who are not enrolled full-time with the
13 district for a fee as determined by the administration and/or as part of Tennessee's Course
14 Access Program Act.

- 15 5. Tuition applications will be accepted throughout the school year for new students as well as
16 from students currently attending Bristol Tennessee City Schools in kindergarten through
17 grades.³ Applications may be submitted to the principal's office, or the office of student
18 services.

20 6. PAYMENT

21 Tuition shall be paid to Bristol Tennessee City Schools and may be made in two (2) parts. The
22 first part payment shall be paid by a date established by the director of schools, which will be
23 prior to the first day of school. The second part payment shall be paid prior to the end of the
24 first semester no later than a date established by the director of schools. If the student fails to
25 make payment in the required time, the principal shall notify the director of schools or
26 designee, and the student will be subject to being dropped from enrollment.

27 Students whose parents/guardians become residents of the school system will be refunded any
28 unused portion of the tuition on a prorated basis.

29 Should the custodial parent or guardian with whom the tuition student resides die during the
30 academic year, the tuition rate will remain consistent for the remainder of that academic year.
31 The tuition rate will be recalculated for the upcoming academic year, if necessary, based on the
32 student's current place of residence at that time. If the student was not a tuition student at the
33 time of the custodial parent or guardian's death or change of guardianship or if guardianship
34 changes due to a Department of Children Services (DCS) DCS-recommendation, foster care
35 placement, or a temporary order of protection, during the school year, the student will be
36 considered a non-tuition student for the remainder of that academic year. A student who is enrolled as a non-
37 resident tuition student will retain their existing status for the remainder of the academic year.
38 The tuition rate will be calculated for the upcoming academic year, if necessary, based on the
39 student's current place of residence at that time.

- 1 7. For the purpose of this policy, "residing outside the corporate limits of the city of Bristol" refers
2 to the legal residence of a pupil, as defined elsewhere in the policy. A pupil can have only one
3 legal residence. The legal residence of a pupil cannot be changed to a location other than that of
4 the pupil's custodial parent(s), legal custodian, or legal guardian without a court order from a
5 court of competent jurisdiction changing the custody or guardianship of that pupil.
6 Students whose parents/guardians become residents of the school system will be refunded any
7 unused portion of the tuition on a prorated basis.
8
- 9 8. Middle school or senior high students who fail one or more subjects during the last school year
10 may be either placed on probation the next school year following such failures or may be asked
11 not to re-enter Bristol Tennessee City Schools the following year. The decision shall be derived
12 through a conference between the principal and the parents. The conference may include other
13 faculty members or school officials who have knowledge relevant to the case.
14
- 15 9. Tuition students, or parents of tuition students, who cause undue hardship to teachers, other
16 students, or administrators may result in the student being dropped from enrollment. The
17 principal shall notify the director of schools, and parents will be notified of the date of
18 termination.
19
- 20 10. If a parent of a student teaches outside the school system of the parent's residency, the student
21 may attend such school system, provided the appropriate tuition requirements are met.⁴
22
- 23 11. Requests from students from adjoining states to attend Bristol Tennessee City Schools shall be
24 considered on a case by case basis.⁵
25
- 26 12. At the discretion of the principal, Tennessee Online Public School (TOPS) may offer individual
27 courses to students who are not enrolled full-time with the district for a fee as determined by
28 the administration and/or as part of Tennessee's Course Access Program Act.
29

30 **ADMISSIONS PRIORITY**

31
32 Parents or legal guardians must apply annually for their child's tuition status, and tuition students shall
33 be assigned to schools on an annual basis.

34 The application and assignment of a student who has previously attended a school in Bristol Tennessee
35 City Schools shall be considered before new tuition applications and assignment to a particular school
36 or grade. Applications must be received in accordance with the schedule published by the director of
37 schools. Applications for tuition status during an academic year may be approved on the condition that
38 the applicant substantiates extenuating circumstances (such as a change of residence).

39 The Board of Education shall grant first priority status to out-of-zone and tuition applications for
40 children of Bristol Tennessee City Schools employees.⁵

41 After placement of system employees' children, the priority order in which transfer (out of school-
42 zone) and tuition (out of district) will be admitted are as follows:

- 1 a. ~~Priority One: Out of zone students who were enrolled the previous year~~
 2 ~~Priority Two: Siblings of currently enrolled out of zone students~~
 3 ~~Priority Three: New out of zone students~~
 4 ~~Priority Four: Tuition (out of district) students who were enrolled the previous year~~
 5 ~~Priority Five: Siblings of currently enrolled tuition (out of district) students~~
 6 ~~Priority Six: New tuition students who reside outside the district~~
 7

8 TRANSPORTATION

9 Bristol Tennessee City Schools does not provide transportation to students who **attend as an** reside out-
 10 of-zone or ~~outside the district.~~ **non-resident student.**
 11

12 TUITION-FREE DESIGNATED **SCHOOLS** ~~ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS~~

13 The board may authorize a "tuition-free" program for ~~designated elementary schools for~~ **any school**
 14 **servicing students** residing in Tennessee. The board will evaluate the parameters and effectiveness of the
 15 "tuition-free" program annually to determine its continuation.
 16

17 Students accepted into a "tuition-free" program who meet the criteria of attendance, behavior, and
 18 academic progress will be allowed to attend the designated tuition-free school, ~~in kindergarten through~~
 19 ~~fifth grade~~ regardless of the continuation of accepting new students into the "tuition-free" program
 20 after the yearly school board review. **The student will remain tuition free until the student transitions**
 21 **out of the designated school in accordance with the district grade band structure.**
 22

23 ~~Families who attend a "tuition free" elementary school through fifth grade will be required to pay the~~
 24 ~~appropriate tuition rates upon their student entering Tennessee Middle School in sixth grade.~~
 25

26 **Families whose students attend a tuition free school will be required to pay the appropriate tuition rates**
 27 **if their student later enrolls in a school that is not part of the tuition free program.**
 28

29 Applications of students exiting a "tuition-free" program and then applying to attend a "non-tuition
 30 free school" in the district or returning to the school district will be considered the same as an initial
 31 application.
 32

33 Admittance to ~~elementary~~ schools designated as a part of the "tuition-free" program for Bristol
 34 Tennessee City Schools will be based on space and program availability in each grade per year, and all
 35 other parameters of this policy will apply, except those pertaining to tuition payment.

36 RESIDENCY VERIFICATION

- 37 1. **For the purpose of this policy, "residing outside the corporate limits of the city of Bristol" refers**
 38 **to the legal residence of a pupil. A pupil can have only one legal residence. The legal residence**

of a pupil cannot be changed to a location other than that of the pupil's custodial parent(s), legal custodian, or legal guardian without a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction changing the custody or guardianship of that pupil.

2. ~~For the purpose of this policy, "residence"~~ **"Residence"** shall be **defined as** the place at which the pupil's parent(s), legal custodian (court-appointed or approved), or legal guardian (court-appointed or approved) remains when not called elsewhere for work, recreation, travel, or other temporary purpose. A pupil's residency may be shown by factors such as where the pupil keeps his or her personal belongings, receives mail, spends his or her time, eats meals, sleeps most nights, returns to most days, etc. In essence, a pupil's residence is the place he or she considers "home" in the commonly understood sense of the term.
3. ~~Residence cannot be established merely by owning or renting a house or apartment, by furnishing a house or an apartment to make it suitable for living, or by merely paying property taxes to the district.~~
4. If Bristol Tennessee City Schools has reasonable cause to believe that a pupil resides outside of the boundaries of the Bristol Tennessee City School System, the director of schools, or designee may investigate to determine a student's residence under this policy, including, but not limited to, conducting home visits and requiring updated documentation to verify the pupil's residence. This documentation may include, but is not limited to, utility bills, voter registration, vehicle registration, credit card statements, phone bills, pay stubs, rental/mortgage agreement, and Deed of Sale.

5. Fraudulent Enrollment and False Residency

- a. **Providing false or misleading information regarding a student's residence or eligibility for enrollment is prohibited.**
- b. **Any parent, guardian, or other individual who falsifies residency information or fraudulently enrolls a student may be subject to withdrawal of the student, repayment of tuition or per-pupil costs to the school system, and referral for legal action as permitted by Tennessee law.**

Legal References

1. [TCA 49-6-3104](#)
2. [TCA 49-6-3003](#); [TCA 49-6-403\(f\)](#)
3. [TCA 49-6-3105](#)
4. [TCA 49-6-3113](#); [TCA 49-6-3103](#)
5. [TCA 49-6-3108](#); [TCA 49-6-403\(f\)](#)

Cross References

- Revenues 2.400
Students from Military Families 6.506