



## **Access to City Services Without Fear for Residents With Uncertain or No Immigration Status**

### **Vancouver School Board Practice and Procedures**

*The Vancouver School District supports the City of Vancouver's **Access Without Fear** mandate. The District wishes to do everything it can to allow all students to receive a publicly funded education while recognizing constraints established within Ministry of Education funding policies.*

#### **How do students who are new to Canada register within the Vancouver School District?**

*Schools refer all students born outside Canada to register at our Newcomer Welcome Centre. See NWC registration information at: <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/site/nwc>*

#### **What happens if a student is born inside Canada but his or her parents are not born here?**

*For students who are born in Canada, when schools have a concern about documentation for registration, the school's office personnel will contact NWC to assist in the resolution of the matter. This applies to study permits, work permits and extenuating circumstances. NWC staff look at documentation to determine a child's eligibility for a publicly funded education*

#### **How is a child's eligibility for a publicly funded education determined?**

*Eligibility for a publicly funded education is based on legal guardian and school age child maintaining ordinarily residence in BC (see full MOE policy: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=AEC35F1EA3644F20B2A4C6C32FC97074> Immigration status is relevant but does not determine ordinarily residence*

#### **What about children whose parents are Temporary Foreign Workers or Refugee Claimants (asylum seekers)? Are they eligible for a funded education in BC?**

*Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) generally have a work permit that is longer than one year and their children are eligible during that time for funded education. Children of Refugee Claimants can be provided with a publicly funded education while their claim is being processed. Refugee claimants who have been denied permission to stay in Canada and people on expired work permits would need to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.*

**What about families who are not proficient in English? Is any assistance available to them?**

*NWC has Multicultural Liaison Workers (MCLW) and Settlement Workers (SWIS) to assist families who are not proficient in English. Parents of all students enrolled in our schools have access to MCLW and/or SWIS support.*

**What if a parent does not have the necessary routine documents to demonstrate ordinarily residence status?**

*Parents who do not have the necessary routine documents to demonstrate ordinarily residence are referred to the NWC District Principal. The school district has structures in place to assist families who do not have the necessary routine documents. Each case will be handled with care and sensitivity by NWC staff. Parents will be asked to provide other evidence to substantiate that they have maintained 'ordinarily residence' in BC.*

**What if a parent is concerned about their immigration status being referred to the federal immigration authorities for some reason?**

*Confidentiality of personal information is important and parents need not be afraid to come to NWC. While the school district recognizes the federal government's legal jurisdiction over immigration matters, it is not the role of the school district to share immigration status information with external agencies such as Canadian Border Services Agency, unless legally ordered to do so.*

**What if a student does not qualify for a publicly funded education?**

*Students who do not qualify for a publicly funded education are referred to the fee paying International Education Program. Our SWIS/MCLW may also inform parents about other community, religious or independent English training opportunities for their children until the parent/legal guardian can provide proof of ordinarily resident for funding purposes.*

**What if a student is already enrolled in a school and his or her parent/legal guardian's immigration status changes? Does the student have to leave school?**

*The children of parents/legal guardians who are already enrolled in schools will not be withdrawn from school while their parent/legal guardian are dealing with immigration matters, provided they submit supporting documentation that they are in a transitional period (e.g. changing status from Temporary Foreign Worker to Permanent Residence or Study permit, etc.) Other cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis.*

**What if a child is enrolled in a VSB school but cannot afford financially to participate in activities that require additional funding such as some field trips?**

*Once students are enrolled in schools they are eligible for all programs. The school district makes every effort to ensure that a family's financial constraints do not prevent their children from participating in any program activity.*