6.1 **Admissions and Attendance**

6.1.1 **Compulsory Attendance and Entrance Age** – All persons between the age of six and seventeen years of age are required by state law to attend school for the minimum number of scholastic days prescribed by the State Board of Education unless the person holds a certificate of exemption issued by the Superintendent or is otherwise exempt under state law.

[Reference: ALA, CODE §16-28-3 (1975)]

6.1.2 **Admission to Schools**

a. **Resident Students** – School age children who reside within the municipal limits of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, may be admitted to Huntsville City Schools. For purposes of this policy, the residence of the student will be the residence of the parent or legal guardian who has primary physical custody.

1. **Kindergarten Enrollment** – Pupils entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before September 1 of the year entering. Proof of age is required. Parents are requested to provide either an original or a certified copy of the student’s birth certificate. If a student has no such certificate, school personnel will provide information to parents or guardians concerning the submission of documentation.

Pupils who are five years of age after September 1 and prior to January 1 and who move to Huntsville during the school year may be accepted in kindergarten provided they are properly certified as having been enrolled in a public kindergarten in the state from which they came; such pupils, however, will not automatically be accepted in the kindergarten program. Final placement will be made on the basis of test scores, performance, and/or demonstrated ability.

2. **First Grade Enrollment** – Pupils entering the first grade must be six years old on or before December 31 of the year entering. Proof of age is required. Parents are requested to provide either an original or a certified copy of the student’s birth certificate. If a student has no such certificate, school personnel will provide information to parents or guardians concerning the submission of documentation.

Pupils who are six years old after December 31 and who have successfully completed public kindergarten in another state and who have been certified to attend first grade in that state may be accepted in first grade; such pupils, however, will not automatically be accepted in first grade. Final grade placement will be made on the basis of test scores, performance, and/or demonstrated ability.
Pupils who are six years old after December 31 and prior to January 1 and who attended a private school for the first grade may be accepted in the second grade provided the student has successfully completed first grade; such pupils, however, will not automatically be accepted in the second grade. Final grade placement will be made on the basis of test scores, performance, and/or demonstrated ability.

b. **Students Transferring from Another School or School System** – Students transferring from school systems outside the Huntsville City School System or from private or parochial schools shall not be eligible for enrollment if they are under suspension or expulsion. Upon the clearance of the suspension or expulsion and eligibility for readmission to their former school, the student shall be eligible to enroll in the Huntsville City School System if other requirements of this policy are met.

c. **Students Transferring from Another State** – Students who move to Huntsville after having attended public schools in another state may be admitted to the grade certified by the school from which they are moving. (Huntsville City Schools respects the state laws of the 50 states in regard to the certified grade level of students entering Huntsville City Schools from out of state schools.)

6.1.2 **School Admission** - School-age children who reside within the municipal limits of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, may be admitted to Huntsville City Schools.

a. **Student’s Residence** - For purposes of this policy, the residence of the student will be the residence of the parent or legal guardian who has primary physical custody.

b. **Special Enrollment Requirements for Kindergarten through Second Grade**

1. **Proof of Age Requirement** – Students seeking enrollment in Kindergarten or First Grade shall provide proof of age. Parents are requested to provide either an original or a certified copy of the student's birth certificate. If a student has no such certificate, school personnel will provide information to parents or guardians concerning the submission of documentation.

2. **Kindergarten** - Pupils entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before September 1 of the year entering. Pupils who are five years of age after September 1 and prior to January 1 and who move to Huntsville during the school year may be accepted in kindergarten provided they are properly certified as having been enrolled in a public kindergarten in the state from which they came; such pupils, however, will not automatically be accepted in the kindergarten program. Final placement will be
made on the basis of test scores, performance, and/or demonstrated ability.

3. **First Grade** – Pupils entering the first grade must be six years old on or before December 31 of the year entering. Pupils who are six years old after December 31 and who have successfully completed public kindergarten in another state and who have been certified to attend first grade in that state may be accepted in first grade; such pupils, however, will not automatically be accepted in first grade. Final grade placement will be made on the basis of test scores, performance, and/or demonstrated ability.

4. **Second Grade** – Pupils who are six years old after December 31 and prior to January 1 and who attended a private school for the first grade may be accepted in the second grade provided the student has successfully completed first grade; such pupils, however, will not automatically be accepted in the second grade. Final grade placement will be made on the basis of test scores, performance, and/or demonstrated ability.

c. **Students Transferring from Another State**

1. Students who move to Huntsville after having attended public schools in another state may be admitted to the grade certified by the school from which they are moving. (Huntsville City Schools respects the state laws of the 50 states in regard to the certified grade level of students entering Huntsville City Schools from out-of-state schools.) However, Huntsville City Schools reserves the right to make final grade placement on the basis of test scores, performance, and/or demonstrated ability.

2. Students transferring from school systems outside the Huntsville City School System or from private or parochial schools shall not be eligible for enrollment if they are under suspension or expulsion. Upon the clearance of the suspension or expulsion and eligibility for readmission to their former school, the student shall be eligible to enroll in the Huntsville City School System if other requirements of this policy are met.

d. **Students Residing Outside the City Limits:**

1. The policies in Section 6.1.2 only apply to students who live in the municipal limits of Huntsville. Students who live outside the municipal limits of Huntsville may not attend a school operated by Huntsville City Schools except as noted in 6.1.2.d.2. Any student who lives outside the municipal limits of Huntsville who is found to be attending a school operated by Huntsville City Schools will be required to transfer immediately to the school and school system serving his or her address. Any provision contained in Section
6.1.2 that allows a student to complete the school year at a school for which they are not eligible is not applicable to students who live outside the municipal limits of Huntsville.

2. Students whose parents are employed by Huntsville City Schools and who live outside of the city limits may attend the Huntsville City Schools provided a transfer is approved in the same school cluster their parents are employed. Tuition is set for these students by the Board of Education. Enrollment will be based on space availability.

de. **Immunizations** - Up to date immunizations are required by state law for all students entering the Huntsville City Schools.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-3-3 to 4]

f. **Social Security Number and Card** - Each pupil enrolled in an Alabama public school is requested to present a social security card at the time of registration, however, this disclosure is voluntary. For each person who is otherwise entitled to admittance but does not have a social security number, the local Superintendent shall assign a temporary number in accordance with the directions as specified by the State Department of Education. This number is used to generate the unique identifier which enables school officials to track student information such as transcripts, grades and free/reduced lunch status.

1. A student who does not have a social security number or who has not completed an application may not be denied registration. Every effort should be made to obtain each student's social security number.

2. A copy of the social security card is not required. It is sufficient to verify the card, copy the number onto a registration form, and place it in the permanent record.

3. A temporary number should be assigned to a student whose parent and/or guardian objects to releasing such information. This number is valid for ten years or until the student exits the local system. A new number should be assigned upon entering the new system or the tenth year.

g. **Immigrant, English Language Learners (ELL), Migrant, Homeless Students or Children in Foster Care**. The Huntsville City Schools seeks to provide students with immediate access to public education regardless of their immigrant, ELL, migrant, homeless or foster care status as well as their inability to immediately produce required documents. School personnel will provide the proper assistance in obtaining documents. The Superintendent may accept alternate forms of evidence or modify otherwise applicable requirements as necessary and appropriate to accommodate immigrant, ELL, migrant,
homeless students or children in foster care.

The enrollment of immigrant, ELL, migrant, homeless, and children in foster care, shall not be denied or delayed due to any of the following barriers:
1. Lack of birth certificate.
2. Lack of social security number.
3. Lack of school records or transcripts.
4. Lack of immunization or health records.
5. Lack of proof of residency.
7. Guardianship or custody requirements.
8. Language Barriers.

h. **Homeless Students and Students in Foster Care**

1. **Enrollment** - Homeless students and students in foster care will be permitted to enroll without regard to residency status and will not be denied services offered to other students in the school system. Students will continue in their school of origin for the duration of their homelessness or while in foster care, or for the remainder of the academic year if the student becomes permanently housed. If it is not in the student’s best interest to stay in his or her school of origin, the student will be immediately enrolled in the new school even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. The new enrolling school will immediately contact the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records.

2. **Dispute Resolution** - When a dispute arises regarding school placement, the system will immediately enroll the student in the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, pending resolution of the dispute. The school will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the decision, a statement of the right to appeal, and the procedure for appealing the placement decision. The principal or the school’s homeless liaison/foster care point of contact will notify the district’s Homeless Liaison of the dispute immediately.

3. **The District’s Homeless Liaison/Foster Care Point of Contact** will expeditiously carry out the system’s dispute resolution procedures as detailed in the district’s homeless student plan.
i. **Building** – If a new residence is under construction, provisional enrollment for students who will be living in that home may be granted if the parent or legal guardian who has primary physical custody can demonstrate that the move to the new residence will occur within the school year. This may be done by providing a copy of the signed construction contract and an affidavit signed by the builder or lending agency stating that the house will be available for occupancy within the school year. Failure to occupy the new residence within the school year will result in the student being reassigned to the school serving the residence of the parent or legal guardian.

j. **Moving** –

1. If a student’s parent or legal guardian who has primary physical custody moves to a new residence during the school year, the student may complete the school year at his or her currently enrolled school prior to transferring to the school serving the address to which the student is moving.

2. In order for a student to begin attending the school that will serve the student’s new address, the parent or legal guardian must register the student at the school serving the new address. A student will be registered if the parent or guardian provides the school serving the new residence the following information:
   
   a. Authentic copies of the sales contract or lease agreement for the new residence and
   
   b. Evidence of an actual move to the new residence, such as documents demonstrating the payment of utility bills or moving expenses.

3. If the term of the lease for the new residence ends during the academic calendar (traditionally between August and May), the student may continue at the school serving the new residence until the end of the year.

k. **Annual Address Verification** – Annually, Huntsville City Schools may request residency verification for all HCS students. This process will require parents/guardians to present documents establishing the residence of their students, such as documents demonstrating payment of utility bills. Students found to be attending a school outside of their home zoned school during this process will be allowed to remain at the school currently enrolled, but will be required to move to the school serving their residence for the next school year.

l. **Foreign Exchange Students** – Foreign exchange students attend the school for which their host family’s residence is zoned.