

Processes for Out of District Requests

The following are the processes used to handle out of district requests. Please note that what is listed here is official process. In actuality, the process also includes many phone calls and personal attention to the families involved.

Neighborhood School to Another Neighborhood School

(used when the custodial parent or legal guardian lives in Portland)

A parent or legal guardian may make a written request to the Assistant Superintendent for their child to attend a school other than in the district to which their home address is assigned. The letter should include the parent's contact information; the name, grade, and home address of the student; the name of the school to which the child is assigned; and the reason for the request.

If the reason for the request is that the family has taken issue with their current school, the assistant superintendent will try to bring the parties together to resolve any issues in an attempt to prevent disruption to the child's program.

If the reason for the request is one other than unhappiness with the school (such as child care needs) or if the above resolution process has been unsuccessful, the Assistant Superintendent's office will contact the out of district school to determine if there is space available and if the school can accommodate the child's program. Other factors that may be considered include the child's record of attendance, behavior and academic achievement. Frequently, at this point in the process, the principals of the schools involved will have a conversation about the child's educational needs and current level of performance.

If the out of district principal accepts the new student, a letter of acceptance is sent which specifies to parents that the accepted student must maintain good attendance, behavior, and achievement; that the parent must provide transportation, and that the permission to attend is granted for the current school year only and must be renewed annually with another letter of request. If the principal denies the out of district request, the Assistant Superintendent receives documentation of the reasons and can agree with or overrule the principal's decision. The parent whose student is denied receives a letter of denial.

During the school year such requests can typically be handled within a period of 1-2 weeks. However, decisions about requests to enter an out of district school in the next school year may be delayed until mid- to late August, when the school principal has an accurate picture of whether space is available. The majority of decisions delayed until late August are on behalf of incoming kindergartners or students moving in from out of town. If a decision is delayed, the parent receives a letter stating such and is asked to register the child at their district school in the meantime. If the principal can confidently accept students before late August, the decision will be made sooner. This happens most often with students who have already been attending a school out of district and are requesting to renew permission to attend for another year or for students entering Grade 6, because the middle schools get fairly solid information from the elementary schools about what to expect from neighborhood enrollments each spring.

Other Administrative Unit (hometown) to Portland Schools
(used when the custodial parent with whom the child resides more than 50% of the time
or legal guardian lives out of Portland)

The Parent or Guardian makes a request in writing to the Superintendent of both the hometown school and Portland Public Schools, stating the reason for the request. The Portland Superintendent determines if the reasons for the request are compelling and acceptance is in the best interest of the child.

The Portland Superintendent and appropriate Portland Principal determine the feasibility of the student's attendance, based on such factors as enrollment, ability to provide appropriate programming and the student's record of attendance, behavior and achievement. A student will be accepted only if there is space available within existing staffing and classrooms. When pertinent, the Director of Student Support Services is consulted. If it is not feasible to accept this student, a letter of denial is sent. If it is feasible, the Superintendent then awaits a letter from the sending district's Superintendent agreeing to or denying the transfer of state subsidy funds for that student.

If the sending Superintendent has agreed to transfer subsidy, an acceptance letter is sent to the family, stating that permission is granted for that school year only on the condition that the family provide transportation and that the student maintains good attendance, behavior and academic achievement. A Transfer Form must be completed by the family of a new student.

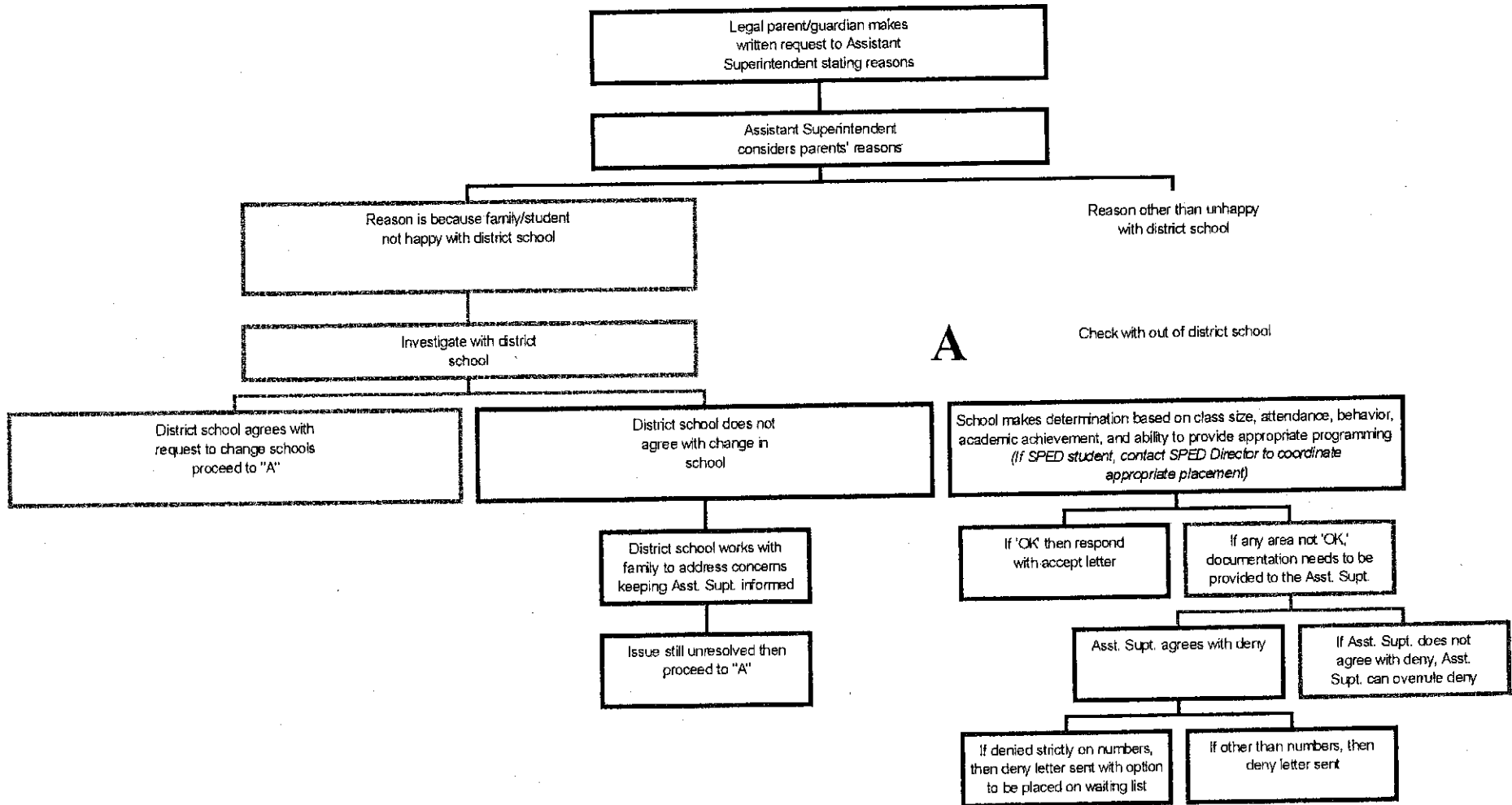
If the sending Superintendent will not transfer subsidy, a letter of denial is sent which includes a statement of the options of paying full tuition (set by the state) or appealing the decision to the Commissioner of Education.

Occasional variations of the above processes:

- If an out of town student is residing with a Portland family for hardship reasons (such as a child staying with a relative during a parent's illness), the Superintendent may accept the child.
- If the school determines that a child in attendance does not live in the neighborhood or in the city, then every attempt is made to get the parent to follow the appropriate process detailed above. If an out-of-town family does not comply with that process, a letter may be sent notifying the parent of the date (usually giving about 2 weeks notice) that the child may no longer attend Portland Schools.
- If a student moves very late in the school year, that student is usually permitted to finish the year without any process of formal acceptance.
- If the child's situation meets the legal definition of homelessness, then the laws governing homeless students supercede the processes listed above.

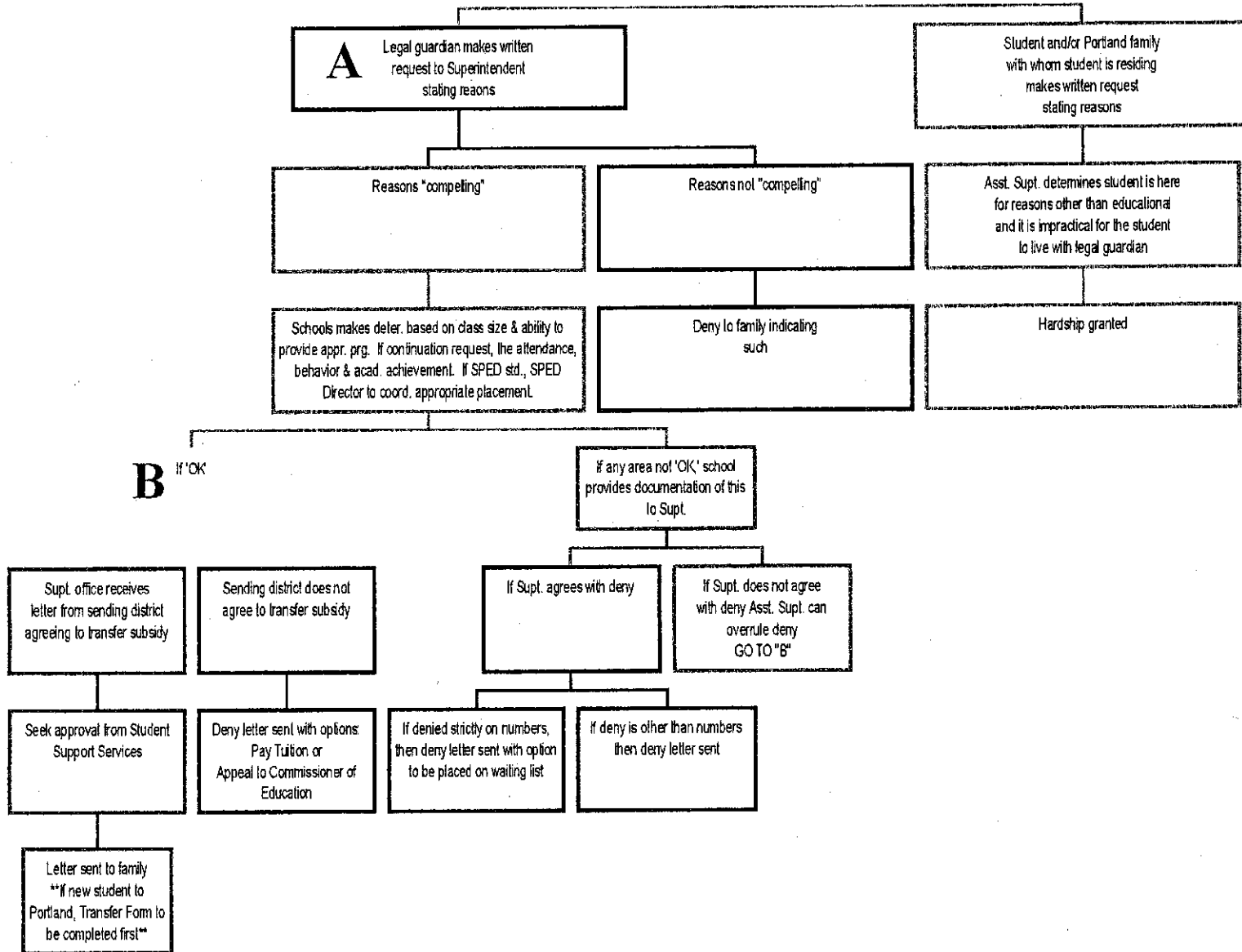
Out of Neighborhood District School to School

(Legal Guardian lives in Portland)



Out of Administrative Unit - Town to Town Superintendent Waiver/Tuition

(Legal Guardian does not live in Portland)



Out of District

(Discovered after school year starts)

