

Schools encouraging parents to register students before school starts

With the first day of school just a week away, local school principals and Alachua County Public Schools district staff are urging parents to register their children as soon as possible rather than waiting until school has already started. The first day of school is Monday, August 14.

The advice is aimed at the families of students who will be entering an Alachua County public school for the first time and those who have moved or will be moving to a new school zone within the district. Those students can be registered at local schools this week, but district officials say the sooner the better.



“The wait to register tends to get longer the closer we get to the start of school, and sometimes parents find they don’t have all the documents they need,” said the district’s director of communications Jackie Johnson. “The sooner they register, the more time they’ll have to make sure everything’s in order and that their child can start on time.”

District and school staff are hoping fewer parents will wait until the first day of school or even later to register their children. Late-arriving students make planning for the upcoming school year more difficult. Without accurate information on the number of students who will be attending a school, what grades they’re in and what courses and services they’ll need, scheduling and hiring are much more complicated. Late arrivals can also force changes in class schedules and bus routes that affect even those students who registered early.

Other disadvantages of late registration include delays in starting class and fewer course options, particularly in middle and high schools.

If a child will be entering an Alachua County Public School for the first time, parents should go to their zoned school with documents including the child’s birth certificate, Social Security card, proof of a recent physical, proof of immunizations and two proofs of primary residence. Records from previous schools are useful, but not required. For those who’ve moved to a different school zone within the county, they’ll need to take just the two proofs of residence to the new school.

Parents who aren’t sure which school their child is zoned for or who need more information can contact the district’s zoning office at (352) 955-7700.

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