



For immediate release  
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## ELC ASKS THE PA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO INVESTIGATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS' ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Contact: Saba Bireda  
(215) 238-6970 ex.306  
[sbireda@elc-pa.org](mailto:sbireda@elc-pa.org)

Maura McInerney  
(215) 238-6970 ex. 316  
[mmcinerney@elc-pa.org](mailto:mmcinerney@elc-pa.org)

The Education Law Center (ELC) has submitted a formal request to the Pennsylvania Department of Education asking it to investigate whether school districts across the state are violating state rules on when a student can enroll in school.

To enroll in school, Pennsylvania law requires only that a student provide a school district with proof of age, that the student lives in the school district, and that the student has been immunized. Once that information has been provided, the student has a right to be in class within 5 school days.

However, according to the Request, ELC staff have received hundreds of calls about students whose school enrollment has been delayed because the school district demanded documents that are not legally required such as social security cards, photo ID, physical exams and visas. In addition, some school districts require multiple documents to prove residency or will accept only one form of proof (such as a birth certificate to prove age). Still others illegally require that the child's caretaker have legal custody in order to enroll the child in school.

The Request also includes the results of ELC's review of enrollment policies and practices from the official websites of 278 Pennsylvania school districts.

ELC has asked the Department to take a first step of immediately sending a written communication to all 501 school districts reminding them of what can, and cannot, be required before a student can start school. ELC has also asked the Department to collect all school districts' enrollment policies to ensure that they are following state law.

A copy of the Request can be obtained from [www.elc-pa.org](http://www.elc-pa.org).