WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PLACEMENT

1.0 Introduction

Students who complete the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) at the Junior High School level and meet the relevant requirements are able to enter public Senior High Schools or Technical and Vocational and Training Schools under the Ghana Education Service and Technical/Vocational and Training Service GES/TVET respectively. This is done through a school placement system called the Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS), administered by the GES.

2.0 Steps Leading to Placement

2.1. Selection of School by Candidates

BECE candidates choose their preferred schools in consultation with their parents/guardians and their school authorities, using the school register provided for that year by GES.

Each student is required to make five (5) choices. Students must indicate their preferred schools in descending order (i.e. from the most preferred to the least preferred); their preferred programme of study (General Science, General Arts, Business, etc) and their preferred residential status (Day or Boarding), for each of their first five choices (choice 1 to 5).

Additionally, candidates are to select school with compulsory Day Status and it must be a school from category D. The school chosen must also be within the candidate's catchment area, so that the student can conveniently commute to the School as **DAY STUDENT.** The 6th choice school may also be the same as any of the candidate's first five schools chosen. For instance, a candidate is allowed to choose School A as their first choice with a boarding status, and then choose the same school as their 6th compulsory **DAY OPTION**. **OR** Candidates **May** choose BOARDING from **_120 community based boarding schools_** in their **6th choice.**

The school selection form must be signed off by a parent/guardian and submitted to the candidate JHS head. Parent/Guardian must keep a copy.

After the selection is done, the District Exam Officers upload the data unto the database of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) platform.

2.2 School Choice Verification

Subsequently, GES will release a telephone short code (SMS) that can be dialed to obtain the list of schools, programmes of study and residential status the candidate has chosen, per the official records. This verification process is to enable any incorrect inputs that may have been forwarded to WAEC to be remedied with the correct information.

3.0 PLACEMENT

Following release of the BECE results by WAEC, the placement process begins. Using the candidate's aggregate from their four core subjects (English, Mathematics, Integrated Science and Social Studies), and two of their best grades from their elective subjects.

The vacancies declared earlier by each school are then fed into the CSSPS. There are three modes by which placement is done under the CSSPS:

A. Automatic Placement

B. Self-Placement

C. Manual Placement

3.1 Automatic Placement

i. This is the process by which the CSSPS places the students, by merit, into one of their chosen schools in a descending order. This is done automatically without any manual intervention.

ii. If the candidate's aggregate falls within the merit of the programme chosen for their first choice, the CSSPS then checks the student's preferred residential status, and then places them accordingly based on the available 'space' If the desired residential status is full, the CSSPS moves the candidate to their second choice, and then repeats the process until placement is done.

iii. For instance, if a student with aggregate 8 would otherwise get placement in school A, but had chosen a Boarding option (which tends to be more competitive), and there happens to be no available space because other candidates with better aggregates have secured placement into the boarding

house, the system will NOT place that student on Day Status in that school because the Day Option was not the candidate's residential choice for that school. The system will rather move them to their Second Choice School to attempt to get both their preferred programme as well as their choice of residential status. If unsuccessful, the system will proceed to their third choice, and the process is repeated until the student is placed.

Where a school is oversubscribed for a particular programme by students with similar aggregates, a Tie-Breaking System is employed to determine the placement, using the following parameters:

a. The number of Grade Ones

For example, if 400 students with Aggregate 6 are competing for Science in School A and there are only 180 available slots for Science, the ranking will be done such that those with Nine Ones, will gain admission, followed by those with Eight Ones, and so on.

b. Raw Score

If there is a further need to break a tie, this will be done in descending order with respect to the raw scores obtained in the best six subject.

c. Subject performance

A further tie-breaking, where necessary, will then follow taking into consideration the best grades obtained in the Core Subjects, in a manner as follows:

- English, then

- Mathematics, then

- Integrated Science, then

- Social Studies.

The Placement results are then released by GES in an announcement via a Press Communication. After the official release, candidates can check their school placement via:

- Text message to check their placement information, or

- An Online portal i.e. http://www.cssps.gov.gh

In checking their placements, candidates will be able to access the following information:

i. Placed school (name and location).

ii. Residential status (whether Day or Boarding)

iii. Programme of study

iv. School calendar start date.

The placement results should then be printed out with other relevant documents and taken to the school in which the candidate has been placed, in order to enrol, obtain a school prospectus and prepare for school.

3.2 SELF-PLACEMENT

In some instances, a student may not be successful in securing placement in any of their choices. Self-placement is a process that gives such candidates an opportunity to go into the CSSPS portal and select from schools with available vacancies.

3.2.1 Features of Self-Placement

i. Only Schools with available vacancies will be displayed on the portal.
ii. Schools with vacancies will be displayed for candidates to choose based on their aggregate.
iii. Schools shown will have their location and residential options available.
iv. A candidate can change schools as many times as possible depending on available spaces. The changes **CEASE** immediately a candidate enrols in a school.

3.2.2 The Self-Placement Process

 A candidate will log into the system using their index number.

 The candidate will choose their residential preference i.e **Day or Boarding**.

a. If a candidate selects Boarding, all schools with boarding vacancies will be displayed.

b. If a candidate selects Day, then there will be a drop down menu for the candidate to select:

i. Day within catchment area; OR

ii. Day outside catchment area

c. The 'Day within catchment area' option displays only schools with Day vacancies within 16km of the JHS the candidate attended.

d. Day outside catchment area displays all schools with day vacancies.

Before the 'Day outside catchment area' option is effected, the candidate must confirm again if candidate intend to attend school outside their catchment area as a Day Student.

3.3 Manual Placement

The Manual/Special Placement is a means by which certain categories of candidates are placed due to their peculiar situations. The following categories of candidates are placed manually:

    i. Special Needs and Gifted candidates (visually/hearing impaired, etc.)

    ii. Seminarians

    iii. Protocol Allocation

3.3.1 Manual Placement – Special and Gifted Students

There are specific schools which accept special and gifted candidates.

The manual placement system provides the following capabilities for such candidates:

    i. Allows re-entry for special students only

    ii. There is a separate interface for manual processing for special students.

    iii. Provides separate allocation of vacancies for special students in selected schools.

3.3.2 Manual Placement – Seminarians

Seminary schools are establishments that train a section of their students for future Priesthood.

These institutions conduct their own interviews and examination exercises to select specific candidates who are best suited for the purposes of the Seminary.

A list of candidates from each Seminary Institution is submitted to GES headquarters for processing.

3.3.3 Protocol Allocation

A fraction of the declared vacancies is reserved for protocol allocation for schools. This allocation is mainly used to serve stakeholders of the schools

Table 1: A sample of 2020 schools' subscription numbers compared to available vacancies

No	REGION	SCHOOL NAME	TOTAL SELECTION	VACANCY	%
1	Ashanti	Kumasi Senior High/Tech	31,267	1,058	3.4%
2	Central	Ghana National College	32,193	956	3%
3	Ashanti	Anglican Senior High, Kumasi	27,262	1,906	7%
4	Ashanti	KNUST Senior High	40,393	1,225	3%
5	Central	Aggrey Mem. A.M.E. Zion Snr. High	23,018	752	3.3%
6	Ashanti	Armed Forces Senior High/Tech,	24,344	827	3.4%
7	G. Accra	Forces Senior High/Tech,	20,093	682	3.4%
8	Northern	Tamale Senior High	15,448	1,450	9.4%
9	G. Accra	Achimota Senior High	16,617	700	4.2%
10	Bono	Sunyani Senior High	15,867	1,800	11.3%
11	Ashanti	T. I. Ahmadiyya Senior High, Kumasi.	14,775	1,200	8.1%
12	Central	Wesley Girls Senior High, Cape Coast	4,743	800	16.9%
13	G. Accra	Presby Boys Senior High, Legon	6,854	1,600	23.3%
14	Eastern	Aburi Girls Senior High	5,837	950	16.3%
15	Volta	Mawuli School, Ho	12,860	900	7%

4.0 DOs AND DON'Ts OF SCHOOL PLACEMENT

4.1 Dos

- Ensure you pay close attention to ALL of your school choices

- Ensure that the schools are in order of preference from your first priority to the least priority.

- Ensure that your compulsory Day option is within your catchment area where you can conveniently commute.

- **As a parent/guardian, you must take active interest in your child/ward's school's selection**

- Ensure that you consult your child/ward's teacher to obtain a realistic prospect of the child's chances of gaining admission to a particular school.

4.2   DON'Ts

- Do not outsource school selection to someone without your express involvement.

- Do not leave school selection to an internet cafe attendant in the case of self-placement.

- Do not assume that you can choose a school as a Day Student and switch to Boarding upon admission.

- Do not assume that you can choose a 'less competitive' Programme at a school and switch to a 'more competitive' one upon admission.

- Do not choose schools based on where your friends are going or what programme they want to read.

5.0 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These twelve (12) frequently asked questions and answers are provided here to help teachers, parents/guardians and students to appraicate the placement system,

1. I missed out on all my six choices. What do I do?

Candidates who miss out on all their choices after the automatic placement system is done, still have the opportunity to select schools with vacancies available through the **Self-placement process described earlier.**

2. Can a candidate with good grades miss out on their first, second or all of their choices?

YES. All spaces in the schools are competitively filled taking into consideration the available spaces in the school (i.e. Preferred residential status and programme of choice). Hence, qualified candidates are ranked from the highest score to the lowest

and the total vacancies declared for that programme determines the number to be placed.

The rest of the candidates are moved to their next choice.

3. Is it possible for someone with aggregate 7 not get access into a particular school but someone with aggregate 10 can get into same school?

YES. Programmes selected and residential status may differ from one candidate to the other. Therefore, the competition for slots may differ. For instance, in most cases, the Science programme of study is highly competitive over other programmes, and so is a Boarding accommodation status over a Day Status.

4. A candidate with Aggregate 10 got placed on a particular Programme and residential status and yet another with Aggregate 8 did not, even though they chose the same programme and residential statuses. How is this possible?

There is a protocol system of placement that allocates 5% of a school's declared vacancies to the school for allocation to its stakeholders. It is therefore possible for the ward of an alumni or a staff member of the school to get admission ahead of another child seeking admission at the same school. Other stakeholders include the Missions and the Traditional Seats of the relevant school. Talented candidates such as those good in Sports may also be considered by a school for some of its protocol slots. Similarly, 30% of spaces in the country's top 71 schools have been reserved for candidates from public Junior High Schools. As such, candidates from Public Basic Schools across the country compete for the 30% of space. Hence, the competition for the 60% is different from the competition for the 30%. Additionally

5. Is it possible for someone who did not choose a particular school to be placed into that school?

NO. It is not possible during the automatic placement process. However, a candidate can get placement into a school through 'protocol' placement procedures.

6. Can a person change school after enrolment?

No. The Placement process ends once a candidate begins the admission process by going to the school to complete the rele

vant form(s). Any movement from one school to another after enrolment is considered a transfer. A student can only transfer after one academic year.

7. Can a student change residential status or programme of study after placement?

NO. A candidate usually gets placed into a particular school based on their preferred programme and the residential status they chose. A candidate competes for a slot in a particular school based on the preferences provided. Therefore, neither the residential status nor the programme of study can be changed.

8. Can I change a school I selected through self-placement?

YES. A candidate who got placed in a school through self-placement, can change the school on the portal so long as that candidate has not enrolled in a school.

9. I selected and was placed in a school that was on my list of school choices. Can I change to another school?

NO. You cannot change to another school, if the school was one of the six schools you chose.

10. Can I be enrolled into a school when I or a representative of mine is not present?

NO. For enrolment to be successful, the school will need the student's unique ID, address and details of their parents or guardian, and phone number. Once a candidate or parent/guardian submits their forms to the school placed, the school uses the information provided on the forms to enrol the candidate. Therefore, it is not possible for a school to get all such personal information of a candidate without the candidate or a representative being present in the school.

11. I was enrolled in a school but my name can no longer be found on their system. What can be done?

If indeed a candidate was enrolled in a particular school but the details can no longer be found on the school's system, the Head of the school will formally report to the appropriate office for redress. The candidate should not be sent away from the school.

12. The head of the school I want my child/ward to attend says there is space in the school. Can the child be placed there on this basis?

NO. Schools have established ways of communicating to authorities. Placement is done on the basis of the vacancies declared by the schools. Once those vacancies have been filled by the CSSPS in that school, we are unable to do any further placements in the school.