

Enrollment of a Non-Resident Student under School Choice

If a non-resident student desires to attend school in the Marion School District, the student's parent shall submit a school choice application on a form approved by the Arkansas Department of Education to the Marion School District Central Office which must be postmarked or hand delivered on or before May 1 preceding the fall semester the applicant would begin school in the district. The district shall date and time stamp all applications as they are received in the district's central office. Applications postmarked or hand delivered on or after May 2 will not be accepted. They shall review and make a determination on each application in the order in which the application was received by the district. By July 1, the superintendent shall notify the parent and the student's resident district, in writing, as to whether the student's application has been accepted or rejected. If the application is rejected, the superintendent shall state in the notification letter the reason(s) for the rejection.

If the application is accepted, the superintendent shall state in the notification letter a reasonable timeline by which the student shall enroll in the district by taking the steps detailed in the letter, including submission of all required documents. If the student fails to enroll within the stated timeline, or if all necessary steps to complete the enrollment are not taken, or examination of the documentation indicates the applicant does not meet the district's stated capacity standards, the acceptance shall be null and void. Students whose applications have been accepted and who have enrolled in the district are eligible to continue their enrollment until completing their secondary education. Students whose applications have been accepted and who have enrolled in the district shall not be discriminated against on the basis of gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, or disability. Any student who accepts a public school choice transfer may return to his/her resident district during the school year. Any student who chooses to return to his/her resident district, or enrolls in another school or homeschooling, voids the transfer and must reapply if, in the future, the student seeks another school choice transfer. A subsequent transfer application will be subject to the capacity standards applicable to the year in which the application is considered by the district. The transfer student or the transfer student's parent is responsible for the transportation of the transfer student to and from the school in the Marion School District where the transfer student is enrolled. Marion School District will accept all credits toward graduation that were awarded and/or honored by the resident district and shall award a diploma to the non-resident student who meets Marion School District's graduation requirements. A student's application may be denied for any of the following reasons:

- Lack of capacity in a program, class, grade level, or school building, defined as 90% or more of the maximum authorized student population in a program, class, grade level, or school building;

- A conflict between the provisions of a desegregation plan or court order and the provisions of the Public School Choice Act of 2015. (Act 560 of 2015)
- The resident school district has reached the maximum number of student transfers that may occur in a school year, which is capped at 3% of the enrollment that exists in the resident district as of October 15 of the immediately preceding school year.

For the purpose of determining this percentage, siblings who are counted in the numerator as transfer students shall count as one (1) student; the district is not required to accept any application that would cause it to add teachers, staff, or classrooms, or in any way exceed the requirements and standards established by law. An application may be rejected or revoked if:

- 1) false information is submitted that impacts the placement decision;
- 2) misleading information is submitted that impacts the placement decision; and,
- 3) important information is omitted that impacts the placement decision.

Reasons for rejection shall not include academic achievement, athletic or other extracurricular ability, English proficiency level, or previous disciplinary proceedings, except that an expulsion from another district may be included under Arkansas Code 6-18-510.

Priority will be given to an applicant who has a sibling or step siblings who resides in the same household and is already enrolled in the district by school choice. However, the capacity in a program, class, grade level or school building, could cause future siblings' applications to be denied. For the purpose of this policy, "sibling" means each of two (2) or more children having a parent in common by blood, adoption, marriage, or foster care. Statutorily, preference is required to be given to siblings (as defined in this policy) of students who are already enrolled in the district. Therefore, siblings whose applications fit the capacity standards may be approved ahead of an otherwise qualified non-sibling applicant who submitted an earlier application as identified by the application's date and time stamp.

Legal Reference: Act 560 of 2015 Approved by School Board 5/18/15