

Regulation JBCCA-R(1): Student Assignment to Schools

Status: ADOPTED

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STUDENT ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

All children residing in Paulding County are required to enroll in the school of the attendance area in which they reside, unless special authorization is given by the Superintendent or designee. Attendance areas (school zones) are designated by the Board of Education. These attendance zones are advertised prior to August 1 of every school year.

The District will not provide transportation for a student attending school outside his/her attendance zone, unless the student is assigned to another school as a part of his/her Individual Education Plan (IEP) or when a student has been approved to attend a District academy program or Paulding College and Career Academy.

Special needs students will be assigned to schools from the central office level based on which schools have the programs needed to implement the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

STUDENT REASSIGNMENT

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to place a student in the best interest of the student and the education of other students within the school district

Full-time employees of the Paulding County School District may enroll their child in an attendance zone where it is in the best interest of the student and the school district. An employee should utilize the Assignment of Student Employees Application and Guidelines. If the eligible employee resigns or is terminated from the District, the provisions of this rule will end. At that time, the student will be governed by all policies affecting students who are not children of eligible employees. Students of employees on transfer must meet the same behavior and attendance requirements as other students on transfer.

GUIDELINES

Students Impacted by attendance zone modifications

When attendance zone changes are made, students who will be in grades five, eight, and twelve at the time the zoning change takes effect may attend the school in the new attendance zone or the student and family may exercise the option to remain in the previously assigned school until the student completes that grade. This option is only available for students in the listed grades and does not extend to siblings in lower grade levels. Families that choose to remain must provide transportation for their student. These students do not automatically progress into the feeder school and must seek another transfer in order to be eligible to do so. The local school district has discretion to determine the appropriate school for enrollment.

Siblings

Siblings of students who are impacted by attendance zone changes may request the same school by utilizing the Hardship Transfer process.

House Bill 251 Public School Choice

K-12 public school students in Georgia have the option to enroll their child in any school within the local school district in which they now reside.

A. Features of House Bill 251

- A parent/guardian may elect to send a child to another public school in the same school district as long as there is classroom space available at the school after its assigned students have been enrolled;
- If a parent elects to exercise this choice option, the parent assumes all costs associated with transporting the child to and from the selected school;
- A student who transfers to another school pursuant to this law may continue to attend such school until the student completes all grades of said school;
- Students eligible for transfer under the unsafe school choice option (USCO) must get first priority for available seats at those schools in the district that are not in needs improvement;
- If a parent requests a transfer to a school that does not have the services required by the current Individualized

Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP), nothing in the law requires the school to develop those services as long as they are available within the local school district;

- Any student transferring under this law shall be subject to the eligibility requirements of the Georgia High School Association;
- The District will notify military parents annually of their student transfer options.

B. Paulding County School District General Guidelines

- Applications for Paulding County School District "School Choice" will be submitted within a 14 calendar day window each year.
- Annual notification – By July 1 of each year, the Paulding County School District will notify parents regarding which schools have available space and which of these schools parents may choose to request a transfer for their children.
- School Choice may not be available for newly opened schools - defined as a period of four years from the date a school opens.
- A student must be currently enrolled in the Paulding County School District to apply for HB251 transfer. Enrolling Kindergarten students may apply for HB251 during the open window for the year in which the student is eligible to enroll in Kindergarten.

C. Apportioning Available Seats

- In the event a particular school has available space and the number of transfer requests exceeds the remaining available capacity, the school will conduct a random lottery that provides each interested student with an equal chance to be admitted. Additional staff may not be hired to accommodate a transfer.
- A student who is granted a transfer may continue to attend that school until the student completes all grades of the receiving school. A transferring student who completes all grades available at the receiving school does not automatically receive enrollment preference to the feeder school. The local school district has discretion to determine the appropriate school for enrollment.

Defining Capacity at the School Level

The Paulding County School District defines available classroom space as permanent classroom space. In defining available classroom space, the Paulding County School District may deny a parental request for transfer based on a lack of capacity for the following reasons:

- 1) Capacity of the school building based on established health and safety provisions;
- 2) Class-size capacity by grade and subject, based on State law and rule;
- 3) In addition, the Paulding County School District may deny a transfer based on a lack of capacity in order to ensure students for whom Federal law provides a selected space (e.g., for students transferring from unsafe schools; for students with disabilities whose Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP) calls for placement at a particular school).

Hardship Transfers

Parents/guardians of students requesting a hardship transfer from one attendance zone to another within the Paulding County School District must submit a letter outlining the hardship along with any supporting documentation to the School Leadership Department. The request shall fully explain the reasons for the request. Parents/guardians and schools will be notified that the request for transfer has been approved or denied.

High school students approved for school transfer must meet the rules of the Georgia High School Association in order to participate in extracurricular activities. Coaches and/or other school personnel must not recruit for the purpose of extracurricular activities.

1. In addition to the conditions discussed in Item 4, below, acceptable behavior, attendance and a co-operative/productive relationship between home and school must be maintained in order for transfers to remain valid. Students of employees on transfer must meet the same behavior and attendance requirements as other students on transfer.
2. Transfer requests may be approved for hardships. For the purposes of student transfers, a "hardship" is defined as a significant and/or substantial circumstance at the student's zoned school that warrants a transfer, as determined by the Hardship Transfer Committee.

3. Transfer requests may be denied or revoked based on one or more of the following reasons:
 - a. Lack of available permanent classroom space in the school to which the student requested a transfer;
 - b. Excessive absences, tardies, early sign-outs or late pick-ups of the student;
 - c. Behavior;
 - d. Insufficient reasons to warrant the move (disagreement with school administration or staff is not sufficient reason for a transfer to be granted);
 - e. Falsification of records;
 - f. Other just cause.
4. Transportation for students on transfer, including children of employees, must be provided by the parent/guardian.
5. A student may receive only one hardship transfer during a school year. Hardship transfers are considered for an individual students, not family groups. An application will be required for each student.

Parent/Guardian Changing Addresses During the School Year

Should the parent/guardian of a student move to a different attendance zone within Paulding County, the student may remain at their present school for the remainder of the school year provided:

- The parent/guardian requests that the child remain
- The district will not provide transportation for a student attending school outside his/her attendance zone , and
- The student has no excessive absences, tardies, late pick-ups and/or early sign-outs or excessive discipline issues.

Should the parent/guardian of a student classified as a senior move out of the Paulding County School District during the senior year, the student will be allowed to remain at their regular school for the remainder of the school year, provided

- The parent/guardian requests that the child remain and
- The district will not provide transportation for a student attending school outside his/her attendance zone .

Public School Choice to another School District

With the approval of both the sending and the receiving local boards of education, a student may be reassigned to a school in another school district if all of the following conditions are met:

- A school in another district is closer to the student's place of residence than the school to which the student has been assigned.
- The actual transportation time or distance on a bus one way to the school where the student has been assigned is determined to be excessive in terms of travel time or distance as defined by State Board Rule 160-5-4-.09.
- The school to which the student is requesting reassignment is offering an instructional program comparable to that offered in the school where the student was originally assigned.
- The school in the other school system to which the student is requesting reassignment has available permanent classroom space.
- The parent/guardian assumes responsibility for providing transportation for the student.

Unsafe School Choice Option

The Paulding County School District shall within ten school days of notification by the Georgia Department of Education notify the parents/guardians of student in a school that has been classified as a persistently dangerous school. The notification and transfer of students shall follow the requirements of State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16.

Student transfers to safe schools within the school system shall be completed within thirty school days of the request.

Any student who is victim of a violent criminal offense that occurs on the property of a public school in which the student is enrolled, while attending a school-sponsored event that occurs on the property of a public school, or while

attending an event under the jurisdiction of a public school shall be permitted to attend a safe public school, including a charter school.

The parent/guardian assumes responsibility for providing transportation for the student.

The Superintendent or designee reserves the right to waive this requirement when it is in the best interest of the student and/or the system.

Special Needs Scholarship Transfers (SB 10)

- In order to request such a transfer, parents/guardians must complete and submit an application to the Student Services Department;
- All requests must be received by the District within announced application period; additionally, only one special needs transfer per student will be considered during the school year;
- If approved, the student shall be allowed to attend the requested school until he/she completes all grades of the school, graduates, or reaches the age of 21, whichever occurs first, in accordance with federal and state requirements for students with disabilities;
- SB 10 transfers are for individuals not family groups;
- SB 10 transfer students do not automatically progress into the feeder school and must seek another transfer in order to be eligible to do so;
- The parent/guardian is responsible for transportation to the school.

Alternative School

Students in grades six through twelve may be referred to the alternative school through one or more of the following methods:

- A student who has committed a disciplinary infraction(s) serious enough to warrant the convening of a disciplinary tribunal is a candidate for admission to the alternative school. In the event the disciplinary tribunal upholds the schools' recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion, the student may be referred to the alternative school.
 - Such student and his or her parents or guardians may apply for assignment to the alternative school by contacting the alternative school director for an interview. No student will be accepted without the active involvement of his or her parents or guardians.
 - Availability of space will also be a factor in making an assignment to the alternative school.
 - Once a student has been assigned to the alternative school through this process, he or she will be expected to remain at the alternative school for the duration of the long-term suspension or expulsion, unless the student is removed for inappropriate behavior, evidence of drug abuse, or non-attendance.
 - Students entering the Paulding County School District during the time that they are assigned to an alternative school in the district they previously attended.
 - Students entering or re-entering the Paulding County School District from an out-of-home detention, a Youth Development Center (YDC), or a State facility.
 - Students may be referred to the alternative school by the Board of Education or the Superintendent or a designee.
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