



Arkansas Department of Education

Model Policy: Student Transfer Policy under the Public School Choice Act

Definitions

“Resident District” means the school district in which the student resides.

“Nonresident District” means a public school district other than the one in which the student resides.

“Intra-District Transfer” means a transfer to another public school within the student’s resident district.

“Capacity” means the availability of seats in a particular school, grade level, or program as determined under this policy.

General Provisions

The district shall participate in the public school choice program and shall not deny a student’s request to transfer unless there is a verified lack of capacity.

The district shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disability, English proficiency, residential address, academic achievement, athletic ability, or prior disciplinary status (except for expulsion per A.C.A. § 6-18-510).

This policy applies to both intra-district and inter-district choice transfers.

Capacity Determinations

Lack of capacity may be claimed only if:

- The school or program has reached 95% or more of the maximum student population in the relevant grade level, class, or program; or
- The student-to-teacher ratio exceeds limits set by federal or state law, or state accreditation rules.

Capacity determinations shall be reviewed and adopted annually by the local school board.

Application Procedures

Applications for the following school year shall be accepted from January 1 through June 1. Applications may be submitted via mail, email, or hand delivery. In-person submission is not required. The parent/legal guardian (or student if 18 or older) must submit the Arkansas Department of Education-approved application form:

- For intra-district transfers: Submit to the district.
- For inter-district transfers: Submit to both the resident and receiving districts.

The superintendent shall notify the applicant in writing of acceptance or rejection within 15 calendar days of receipt of the application. If accepted, the notification will include a reasonable deadline for enrollment. Transfers become effective immediately upon written acceptance by the district.

Priority and Standards

Siblings of enrolled transfer students shall receive priority if capacity allows. Standards for acceptance or rejection shall be adopted by resolution and published annually. The district will document and report the number of transfer applications, approvals, denials, and reasons for denials to the Department of Education each year.

Student and Parent Responsibilities

Students must remain in attendance for the full school year (unless excused) and follow the student code of conduct. Parents/Guardians must comply with district parental involvement policies. Failure to comply may result in the revocation of the transfer.

The parent or guardian is responsible for providing transportation unless a separate agreement is made with the district.

Graduation and Credits

The receiving school (intra- or inter-district) must accept credits earned at the student's prior public school and grant a diploma if the student meets all graduation requirements.



Athletic Eligibility

Students transferring under this policy must complete an Arkansas Activities Association Changing Schools/Athletic Participation Form, signed by required parties, and are subject to AAA rules regarding participation. Recruitment for athletic purposes is prohibited. If grades 7-10, participation must be approved by June 1 (Act 475) or student will not be allowed to participate in competition for 365 days.

Appeal Rights

An applicant whose transfer is denied may request a hearing before the State Board of Education within 10 days of receiving the rejection notice. Late applications are not eligible for appeal.

Notification Requirements

The superintendent shall ensure public announcements are made annually through broadcast media and either print or online media to inform families in the district and surrounding areas of:

- The availability of the public school choice program;
- The application deadline (January 1 through June 1);
- The application process for intra- and inter-district transfers.

All applications received shall be date- and time-stamped upon receipt to ensure proper order of review. Within 15 calendar days of receiving a school choice application and no later than July 1, the receiving district superintendent shall notify the parent or legal guardian in writing of the decision to accept or reject the application. Acceptance letters will include a deadline for enrollment. Rejection letters shall state the reason(s) for denial.

Annual Reporting to the Department of Education

The district shall annually report to the Arkansas Department of Education the number of school choice transfer applications received, accepted, denied, and the reasons for each denial.

Cross Reference: [Insert Citations]

Legal Reference: [Insert Citations]

A.C.A. § 6-18-1901 et seq. as amended by Act 732 of 2025

Date Adopted: [Insert Date]

Date Revised: [Insert Date]

