



School Choice and Parent Notification Requirements

School Support/School Improvement
Office of Educational Support
Oklahoma State Department of Education

Goals

- Review School Choice General Information
C³ and Priority

- Purpose
- Key Principles
- Eligible Students
- Duration of Choices
- Timing of Notification
- Parent Notification

C³ and Priority

- Letter Sample
- Share Resources





Purpose

- Public school choice offers a student enrolled in a Title I school that is identified as a C³ or Priority an opportunity to attend a public school that has not been so identified.
- Parental choice gives schools a greater incentive to undertake reforms and make the changes that are needed to improve student learning and reach academic achievement goals.



Key Principles

- Choice is an important opportunity for parents and students.
- Choice is an important component of an LEA's educational improvement plan.
- Communication with parents concerning school choice is timely and thorough.
- Information on choices is provided to parents and students in a format that is easy to understand.



Eligible Students

C³ and Priority Schools

- School choice options are available to parents/guardians of students in Title I Priority Schools, with transportation provided, for students choosing to transfer from Priority Schools to higher-performing schools that are able to accept additional students.
 - *Districts must adhere to the 5% set a-side requirement in the Title I, Part A budget (Project 511)*

Questions/Concerns

- What if we already have an existing choice program, such as an open transfer program, can this program be modified to accommodate the school choice provisions?
 - Yes, provided that the requirements for public school choice are met.





Duration of Choice

- If an eligible student exercises the option to transfer to another public school, an LEA must permit the student to remain in that school until he or she has completed the highest grade in the school, although the student is not required to remain in the school of choice through the highest grade.



Duration of Choice

- However, an LEA is no longer obligated to provide transportation for a student if the student's school of origin is no longer identified as a Priority School.

Duration of Choice

- If a transfer student's school of origin exits Priority School status shortly before, or after, the start of the school year (because school designation determinations were not available until that time), the LEA should give parents time to come up with other transportation options rather than immediately terminate the provision of transportation.





Timing of Notification

- Parents of eligible students must be notified of the availability of school choice sufficiently in advance of, but no later than 14 calendar days before, the first day of the school year.
- School choice should be offered as early as possible so that parents may consider their choice options well in advance of the start of the school year.



Timing of Notification

- Parents of eligible students must be notified of the availability of school choice within 14 days of notification of a school's designated status.

(Oklahoma Request to Waive the 14-Day Notice Requirement for Public School Choice)

Questions/Concerns

- How should parents be notified of their school choice options?
 - LEA must provide information to parents (1) directly, through such means as regular mail or e-mail; and (2) through broader means of dissemination such as the Internet, the media, and public agencies serving the student population and their families.



Questions/Concerns

- How much time should parents be given to consider their public school choice options?
 - 14 calendar days to decide



Questions/Concerns

- What if an LEA does not have sufficient funds to provide transportation to all students who wish to transfer?
 - An LEA would give first priority in assigning spaces to the lowest-achieving low-income students.





Parent Notification Letter

- The district shall **promptly** provide to a parent or parents (in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand) the following information about a school site that is identified as a Priority School:



Parent Notification Letter

- An explanation of what the identification means;
- Reason(s) for Priority School identification;
- An explanation of the parent's option to transfer their child to another school **with transportation provided**;



Parent Notification Letter

- A list of each public school, which may include charter schools, that parents may select;
- Information on the academic achievement of the schools that parents may select;



Parent Notification Letter

- An explanation of what the school and district are doing to address the problem of low achievement; and
- An explanation of how the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified as a C³ or Priority School.

Questions/Concerns

- What if there are no schools to which students can transfer, must parents still be notified?
 - Yes!
- Which schools may be offered to students as transfer options?
 - Other public schools, which may be charter schools, within the LEA. The choices available to students may not include Title I schools identified for school improvement.



Questions/Concerns

- Which schools may be offered to students as transfer options? (continued)
 - Charter schools that fall within the boundaries of an LEA, but are not authorized by the LEA, may also be included as transfer options, with the agreement of the individual charter school. The public school options may be, but are not required to be, public schools that operate Title I programs.



Questions/Concerns

- How many choices of schools is required to be offered to students?
 - If more than one school that meets the requirements is available, an LEA must offer more than one choice to eligible students. LEAs should strive to provide a full menu of choices to students and parents, and must take into account parents' preferences among the choices offered.



Questions/Concerns

- When multiple choices of schools to which students may transfer are offered, who makes the final decision on which school a student attends?
 - Final decision on the school each student will attend is up to the LEA, and while not all parents will necessarily receive their first choice of school, LEAs must take parents' preferences into account in making these decisions.



Questions/Concerns

- May an LEA provide eligible students with an option to transfer to schools outside of the LEA?
- Yes! In fact, the law states that if all public schools within an LEA to which a student may transfer are identified for school improvement, the LEA must, to the extent practicable, establish a cooperative agreement with other LEAs in the area that are willing to accept its students as transfers.



Questions/Concerns

- What if providing the option to transfer to another school within the LEA is not possible?
 - It may also occur in LEAs whose schools are so remote from one another that changing schools is impracticable. The LEA must, to the extent practicable, enter into cooperative agreements with other LEAs in the area (or with charter and virtual schools in the State) that can accept its students as transfers.



Questions/Concerns

- What if providing the option to transfer to another school within the LEA is not possible? (continued)
 - It may also occur in LEAs whose schools are so remote from one another that changing schools is impracticable. For example, if the only other elementary school is over 100 miles away, then changing schools is likely impracticable.

(*SEA Requirement: Travel must be limited to 30 miles one way.)



Questions?



Comments

Concerns





Resources

- Public School Choice Non-Regulatory Guidance
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver
- Menu of Interventions and Supports for School Improvement
- Title I, Part A Sliding Scale Guidance



Contact Information

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