



# Annual School Choice Notification

## Parent / Guardian Notification of School Choice Privilege Options

In accordance with Bulloch County Board of Education policy JBCCA: Student Assignment to Schools, a parent / legal guardian may elect to submit to the Superintendent's designee a written request that their child(ren) in grades Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> attend another public school in the Bulloch County School System for the 2023-2024 school year.

The following stipulations apply:

1. The parent requesting the transfer must be a parent or legal guardian residing in the primary household with the student.
2. <sup>1</sup>The student must be a full-time resident of Bulloch County.
3. Space must be available after the school's assigned students have been enrolled. <sup>2</sup>For the 2023-2024 school year, **the following schools are OPEN to receive school transfer requests.**

**Stilson Elementary**

**Portal Middle School**

**Portal High School**

All other schools are considered to be closed due to not having available space to serve non-zoned students. Applications for closed schools will be accepted when the request is to allow a student to attend the same school as a special needs sibling who was placed by Bulloch County Schools at a closed school due to lack of services required at the siblings home school.

4. The number of spaces available at open schools will not be pre-determined in advance of the application submission window in order to allow the district to consider the net effect of application approval at each school by grade and program.
5. Any special programs required by the student must be available at the school requested. Policy JBCCA: Student Assignment to Schools does not provide that the district allow for transfers to schools where special programs do not already exist.
6. Buses operated by Bulloch County Schools are not authorized to transport students to and from addresses that are outside of the attendance zone of the school the student is attending. Transportation of School Choice Privilege students to or from care providers within the attendance zone of the school the student has been approved to attend are subject to space availability and approval by the Department of Transportation.
7. Unless approved by the Department of Transportation to utilize bus transportation to and from a caregiver's address, the parent / guardian of any student transferring under School Choice Privilege shall assume the responsibility and cost of transportation to and from school with the student arriving and departing each day according to the school's schedule for arrival and departure. The principal may require any student accumulating twelve (12) or more tardies, unexcused absences, early pickups, or late afternoon pickups to return to the student's zoned school where bus transportation is available.
8. In the event that more requests are received than can be accommodated based on space, requests shall be prioritized in the following manner:
  1. Siblings of special education students who are required by the district to be placed at a particular non-zoned school due to lack of required services within their attendance zone.
  2. Children or step-children of current full-time employees of Bulloch County Schools requesting a placement which meets one or more of the following criteria:
    - School requested is one which is within the attendance zone of the primary work location;  
~or~
    - School requested allows the student to stay in the same feeder pattern, even if the employee's work location has changed since initial acceptance under School Choice
  3. Students for whom the request would allow continued enrollment at the school of origin or the next school within the feeder pattern, but would ordinarily require a transfer due to change of attendance zone after moving to a new residence.
  4. Students entering 6th or 9th grade who are currently in a school within the same feeder pattern.
  5. Students with siblings in the same primary household scheduled to attend the requested school due to previous approval through School Choice Privilege or other authorization.

6. If more applications are received than space available for a particular grade, program or school, and if, after prioritization by methods 1-5 above is exhausted, a final method is needed to prioritize applications, a lottery drawing shall be conducted. If lottery drawings are needed, the district shall have the authority to conduct via electronic live streaming in order to comply with social distancing recommendations and requirements.
9. Any student transferring under this law shall be subject to the eligibility requirements of the Georgia High School Association.
10. Each child in a family must submit a separate application. Approval of one child in a family does NOT guarantee approval of others in the same family.
11. Approval of students to transfer under School Choice Privilege does not guarantee that younger siblings will be able to attend the same school once they reach school age. If space is not available at a school the year a younger sibling begins Kindergarten, their application will be denied, regardless of the School Choice status of older students continuing at the same school.
12. School Choice Privilege does not apply to students applying for enrollment in a lottery funded Georgia Pre-K program. District procedure is to provide Pre-K enrollment preference to resident students and children of full-time Bulloch County Schools employees.
13. If your child was approved for transfer under School Choice Privilege in a prior year and your child will be continuing his or her enrollment at the same school, you should **NOT** re-apply.
14. If your child will be completing all grades at their current school this academic year and you wish for your child to attend school outside his attendance zone as a rising 6<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grader, you **ARE** required to submit a new application.
15. Children not currently attending a Bulloch County public school, including new Kindergarten students, must be fully registered with all required documents submitted by **Friday, May 12, 2023** in order to have a School Choice application considered.

#### **Transfer Request Process**

**Step 1:** Carefully review Bulloch County Schools JBCCA Student Assignment to Schools policy, located at [www.bullochschoools.org](http://www.bullochschoools.org), by navigating to the About tab > Board of Education > Board Policies.. A copy may also be obtained at the Bulloch County Schools Central Office at 150 Williams Road, Statesboro.

**Step 2:** Complete a School Transfer Request Form via electronic survey. The link to the survey will be made available at [www.bullochschoools.org](http://www.bullochschoools.org) beginning at 7:30 AM on Monday, May 1, 2023. Parents who do not have internet access, or otherwise need assistance with completion of the school transfer request form should call 912-212-8562 prior to 4:30 PM on Wednesday, May 17, 2023.

**Step 3:** Completed application must be submitted by electronic survey by 4:30 PM on Friday, May 19, 2023.

**Step 4:** You will be notified of the acceptance or rejection of your application via e-mail, if you have an e-mail address on file. If you do not have an e-mail address on file, you will be notified via U.S. mail. Please allow up to three (3) weeks for processing and mail delivery. Please contact the Bulloch County Board of Education if you do not receive your decision letter by Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Additional Options Relating to the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship**

Bulloch County Board of Education Policy JBCCA: Student Assignment to Schools allows for any students in grades Kindergarten through 12th, including those students with disabilities, to request a transfer to another school within their school district of residence with available space, provided the stipulations of the policy are met. If your child has an active IEP and you wish to be considered for a transfer to another Bulloch County school, you will follow the same transfer request process explained in this notification as students not served under an IEP. The Georgia Special Needs Scholarship does, however, include additional options for transferring your special needs child to a state school, participating Georgia private school, or participating Georgia public school district. In order for any of these options to be exercised, the participating school must offer the programs required by the child's active Individual Education Plan (IEP). Students enrolled at a school operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice are not eligible for the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship.

**State Schools Option:** You may request a transfer to one of the state schools for the deaf and/or blind operated by the Georgia State Board of Education. Acceptance into the state school will be contingent on the appropriateness of the setting for your student. If you choose this option, you will be responsible for transportation to the state school. Please contact the Georgia State Department of Education, 2034 Twin Towers East, Atlanta, GA 30334 (800-311-3627) for more information about transferring to a state school.

**Private School Option:** If you are interested in transferring your student to a private school in Georgia, you may be able to take advantage of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. These state scholarships provide funding that can be used to help pay for tuition costs at participating private schools in the State of Georgia. For additional information on the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship and the parent application process, please call the Georgia Department of Education at (404) 656-2800 or visit the Special Needs Scholarship website at <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx>.

**Transfer to Another Georgia School District Option:** A school district considering a request for a transfer into its school system has the authority to approve or deny a public school transfer request for any reason. A school district considering a transfer can deny a request even if there is capacity and a program available that is aligned to the student's IEP within its system. If a request is approved, a school district can charge parent(s) / guardian(s) for the costs of educating a student from outside its school district. The Bulloch County Board of Education does ***NOT*** approve applications submitted for students who reside outside of Bulloch County pursuant to the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. If you are a Bulloch County resident, however, and are interested in transferring your child to another Georgia public school district, it is your responsibility to contact that school district to inquire about their acceptance of non-resident students pursuant to the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship.

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<sup>1</sup>Children residing in the primary household of a regular, full-time Bulloch County Schools employee shall be authorized to attend school in Bulloch County, even if the primary address is outside of Bulloch County.

<sup>2</sup>All schools shall be considered "open" for children of regular, full-time employees of Bulloch County schools, provided the request is made in accordance with stipulation 8-2 above.