

**2017-2018**  
**Walker County Schools**  
**School Choice Framework**  
**House Bill 251**

Parents/guardians of students in grades K-12 in Georgia have the option to request their child be enrolled in any school within the local school district in which they now reside.

The law requires, among other things, that by July 1<sup>st</sup> each school district implement a universal, streamlined process to manage such transfers.

**Requirements**

- A parent/guardian can 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/guardian elects to exercise this choice option, the parent/guardian assumes all costs associated with transporting the child to and from the selected school; and
- A student who transfers to another school pursuant to this law may, at his or her election, continue to attend such school until the student completes all grades of the school.

**Procedures**

- Students eligible for transfer under the Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO) and students in Needs Improvement (NI) schools that must offer public choice under No Child Left Behind must get first priority for available seats at those schools in the district that are not in Needs Improvement.
- Seats will be awarded in the order requests are received.
- Should a parent request 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 this framework 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.

**LEA Responsibilities**

- Walker County Board of Education has established and adopted a universal, streamlined framework available to all students to implement the new transfer requirements.
  - The deadlines set forth pursuant to this local process gives parents/guardians fifteen (15) school days to apply for a school choice transfer. Application period for Walker County School District is August 3, 2017 through August 23, 2017 with the deadline being the close of business on August 23, 2017. All approved transfers will be enacted upon by August 23, 2017.
- Annual notification- By July 1 of each year, parents/guardians will be notified regarding which schools have available classroom space and which of these schools parents/guardians may choose to request a transfer for their child(ren)/ward. Notification will be provided via the Schoolcast Instant Notification System and the district website [www.walkerschools.org](http://www.walkerschools.org).
- This process does not apply to certain categories of schools:
  - Does not apply to newly opened schools for a period of four years from the date a school opens.

### **Defining Capacity at the School Level**

- “Available classroom space” in Walker County Schools is defined as permanent classroom space available after four seats per classroom are reserved for students living in the school’s enrollment zone. Available space will be designated after enrollment zoned students have been assigned according to capacity as defined by classroom, grade, and subject based on state law and rule. Capacity of the school building is also based on established health and safety provisions.
- In addition, Walker County Schools 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 needs improvement school or unsafe schools; for students with disabilities whose Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP) calls for placement at a particular school)
- Nothing contained in this framework requires a school to create space by locating additional portable classrooms on the school’s property.

### **Apportioning Available Seats**

- In the event a particular school has available space and the number of transfer requests exceeds the remaining available capacity a random lottery will be utilized that provides each interested student with an equal chance to be selected.
- The law allows a student to continue to attend that school transferred to until the student completes all grade levels 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 Walker County School District has discretion to determine the appropriate school for enrollment.