



COUNTYWIDE AND CONTIGUOUS SCHOOLS OF CHOICE

St. Clair County policies, guidelines and highlights

A close-up look at Schools of Choice

In an effort to continue providing a quality education for all students, a countywide schools of choice option is available. This countywide Schools of Choice Program allows parents and students to choose which St. Clair County public school they would like to attend regardless of where they live.

This brochure is designed to help parents learn about the Schools of Choice Program as well as the policies and procedures that have been developed to ensure student success.

Information regarding graduation requirements, application policies, application timelines, athletics, and transportation are included. Please call the St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency at (810) 364-8990 for further information and to receive a Schools of Choice application.

What parents need to know about the countywide application process

The application process for the St. Clair County Schools of Choice Program has been designed to guarantee all applicants a fair and equitable opportunity. Parents should be aware of the application timelines, sibling transfers, and graduation requirements. Listed below are the guidelines regarding the application process.

1. All transfers under the countywide Schools of Choice Program take place at the beginning of each semester.
2. The number of transfers allowed under the countywide Schools of Choice Program are determined by the space available in each participating district and the space available at each building.

3. Requests for transfer by students who had been residents of the district the previous semester have priority over the student requests for transfer through the countywide Schools of Choice Program.
4. All participants in the countywide Schools of Choice Program are required to attend their school of choice for the entire semester. Students requesting transfers back to their home school during the school year will be reviewed on an individual basis.
5. Students must be in good standing in their resident district to apply for Schools of Choice. For example, a student who has been suspended during the past two years or is not attending another school due to expulsion or dropout may be denied admission under the Schools of Choice Program.
6. Students approved for transfer to a choice district are allowed to remain in the district until graduation. The student does not need to reapply for admission to the district each year, once approved for transfer under the countywide Schools of Choice Program. Should overcrowding or redistricting occur, the Schools of Choice participant will be guaranteed a spot within the choice district.
7. Students participating in the Schools of Choice Program who wish to return to their home school for the following semester, should notify their home school district of their intent to return by the end of the Schools of Choice enrollment period.
8. Applications for the countywide Schools of Choice Program are available from the participating school districts and the St. Clair County RESA. Applicants will be notified in writing as to whether they have been accepted into the program and if their choice school is available. Parent(s) will have an opportunity to accept or reject acceptance into the program.
9. Parents and students desiring to participate in the countywide Schools of Choice Program are encouraged to meet with a building administrator to discuss school rules, curriculum, parent involvement, graduation requirements, and other school-related issues.
10. An application form must be completed for each student wishing to participate in the countywide Schools of Choice Program. Schools of Choice applications allow students to list a first and alternate choice. There is no guarantee that space in the school selected will be available.
11. Students requesting a transfer are allowed to request which district and building he/she would like to attend, but requests for specific teachers will not be allowed. All transfers approved under the countywide Schools of Choice Program will be based on space availability.
12. High school seniors participating in the countywide Schools of Choice Program who request a transfer back to their home district to complete their high school education may have preference over other applicants.
13. Siblings of students already attending the choice district who live in the same household will receive preference over other applicants. There are no guarantees of any siblings receiving admission into the countywide Schools of Choice Program.

14. If there are more requests for admission than space available, a lottery will be held by the district to determine which applicants will be accepted for transfer. The school will make a waiting list in each case.
15. If a student and his/her parents do not accept the decision regarding their application for transfer under the countywide Schools of Choice guidelines, they have a right to an appeal. An appeal must be requested, in writing, during the approval period. The parents must explain, in writing, why they are appealing and a meeting involving the parents and an appeals committee will be scheduled. The appeals committee will consist of one representative from the sending district, one representative from the receiving district and one representative from the St. Clair County RESA. Decisions of the appeals board are final.
16. Since most high school and middle school class schedules are developed prior to completion of the Schools of Choice application process, students requesting transfers to another school district should be aware that not all class requests may be granted. Prior to submitting a countywide Schools of Choice application, it is suggested that the student and his/her parents meet with a counselor or school administrator at the school of choice to determine class availability.
17. Applications for the countywide Schools of Choice Program should be returned to the St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency which is located at 499 Range Road, P.O. Box 1500, Marysville, MI 48040.
18. Any applications that contain fraudulent information will be denied.

Graduation requirements and curriculum issues

Each school district in St. Clair County has developed a curriculum that is based on the State of Michigan curriculum standards and benchmarks. In addition, each district has its own locally approved grading system and graduation requirements. While there are some similarities of requirements among districts, parents should be aware of the following conditions of the countywide Schools of Choice Program:

1. Participants are required to graduate with the number of credits determined by the district they are attending at the time of graduation. However, any twelfth grade county resident who transfers only for his/her senior year, will be required to meet his/her home school graduation requirements and will receive a diploma from his/her home school.
2. Before a student transfer actually takes place, the parent(s) and student should meet with a counselor/administrator in the new school district to review all rules, regulations, grading system and graduation requirements.
3. All districts will supply, at the request of parents, a current listing of graduation requirements for the high school they wish to have their child attend. To receive a copy of graduation requirements, parents should contact the high school principal of the school of choice.
4. Upon acceptance into the program, a current listing of graduation requirements will be supplied to participants who are of high school age.

5. At the request of the sending or receiving school district, St. Clair County RESA will provide technical assistance in matching graduation requirements from one district to another.
6. Schools of Choice students may not be eligible to participate in programs that begin prior to the start of the student's first semester in the choice district. Contact the choice district for eligibility requirements.

Transportation guidelines

Transportation is a key issue in the countywide Schools of Choice Program. It is the sole responsibility of parents to transport their children to and from the choice school. The following is a list of the transportation guidelines for the countywide Schools of Choice Program. Parents will be responsible for transporting students to and from school in the countywide Schools of Choice Program.

1. Parents may have the option to drive their child to a pre-approved bus stop in the school district of choice if space is available on that bus. Once the child is transported from school to the bus stop it is the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation home for the child. Parents should also be aware that on those rare occasions when school closes early due to weather, etc., it is also their responsibility to provide transportation home for the child.
2. If transportation can be coordinated between the district and the family, parents will assume the responsibility for the safety of the child at the bus stop.
3. Students participating in the countywide Schools of Choice Program, who are eligible to ride a school bus, are required to follow the rules, regulations, and bus discipline policy of the choice district.
4. Countywide Schools of Choice participants will be expected to arrive at school on time every day.
5. Participants will follow the choice district's attendance and tardy policy, and will be disciplined according to those policies.

Athletic policy

The focus of the St. Clair County Schools of Choice Program is based on academics not athletics.

Student athletes participating in the St. Clair County Schools of Choice Program must follow the athletic rules of the choice district and the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

Contiguous Intermediate School District Schools of Choice

Section 105c of the State School Aid Act offers nonresident students residing in a district located in a contiguous intermediate school district the opportunity to transfer into a school district in a neighboring county as a Schools of Choice student. All school districts located within St. Clair County decide annually whether or not to accept students from neighboring intermediate school districts based on space availability.

The Contiguous Intermediate District Schools of Choice Program is not part of the St. Clair County Schools of Choice Program. However, the application timelines and many of the St. Clair County Schools of Choice guidelines apply to the Contiguous Intermediate School District Schools of Choice Program. Below are some specific guidelines that apply to this program:

1. Transfers are subject to the requirement of Section 105c of the Michigan School Aid Act, which requires a written agreement with the contiguous district for the provision of any special education services and programs. ***The 105c agreement must be completed before a student's application for contiguous ISD Schools of Choice is approved. In the event the home district and choice district are unable to come to agreement, the student shall remain in the resident district.***
2. Siblings of students already attending the choice district who live in the same household will receive preference over other applicants.
3. An applicant may be denied enrollment if he/she has been suspended from another school within the preceding two years or has ever been expelled from another school.
4. Eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletic contests is subject to the policies and eligibility rules of the enrolling school district and the Michigan High School Athletic Association regulations
5. Applications for enrollment from a contiguous ISD must be on an application form as provided by St. Clair County RESA, or the enrolling district.
6. Any application which contains fraudulent information will be denied.

These guidelines will be applied in accordance with Section 105c of the School State Aid Act (MCL 388.1705c).

St. Clair County School Districts of Choice coordinators

- **Algonac Community Schools**
Al Latosz, (810) 794-9364, ext. 1003
- **Capac Community Schools**
Britt Urh-Moore, (810) 395-3705
- **East China School District**
Lisa Volkman, (810) 676-1031
- **Marysville Public Schools**
Michelle Nesbitt, (810) 455-6007
- **Memphis Community Schools**
Laura Heilig, (810) 535-8227
- **Port Huron Area School District**
Donna Winingar, (810) 984-3101, ext. 4063
- **Yale Public Schools**
Nancy Maplethorpe, (810) 387-3231, ext. 7263
- **St. Clair County RESA**
Sarah Neal, (810) 455-4001

Contiguous Intermediate School Districts

- Lapeer Intermediate School District
- Macomb Intermediate School District
- Sanilac Intermediate School District

Non-discrimination Policy

The St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, height, weight, or marital status in its programs and activities. In addition, arrangements can be made to ensure that the lack of English language proficiency is not a barrier to admission or participation.

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