

Public School Choice

Coweta County only has one school, Newnan High School, identified as needs improvement -year one. Our district has selected Differentiated Accountability and is offering Supplemental Education Services (free tutoring) for this year to all eligible students. Therefore we will not be offering School Choice for the FY 11-12 school year.

What is Public School Choice?

When schools do not meet State targets for improving the achievement of all students, parents need to have better options, including the option to send their child to another school.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) responds to that need by giving parents of children enrolled in schools that receive Title I funding and that are identified for "school improvement" the opportunity to transfer their children to a school that has not been so identified. These provisions of the statute, along with other elements that focus new attention and resources on turning around the schools identified for improvement, are critical mechanisms for achieving the vision embodied in NCLB, a high-quality education for all children.

The No Child Left Behind Act amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) in a number of areas to strengthen parent involvement and choice in education. The most critical amendments, and the subject of this guidance, require LEAs to provide the opportunity to transfer to another school to students enrolled in schools that administer Title I programs and that have been identified for (1) school improvement, (2) corrective action, or (3) restructuring (both in the planning year for restructuring and in any implementation years).

Frequently Asked Questions Public School Choice

When are children eligible for Public School Choice?

Children are eligible for Public School Choice when the Title I school they attend has not made adequate yearly progress in improving student achievement---as defined by the state--for two consecutive years or longer and is therefore identified as needing improvement, corrective action or restructuring. Any child attending such a school must be offered the option of transferring to a public school in the district--including a public charter school--not identified for school improvement, unless such an option is prohibited by state law. *No Child Left Behind* requires that priority in providing Public School Choice be given to the lowest achieving children from low-income families. As of the 2002-03 school year, Public School Choice is available to students enrolled in schools that have been identified as needing improvement under the *ESEA* as the statute existed prior to the enactment of *No Child Left Behind*.

In addition, children are eligible for Public School Choice when they attend any "persistently dangerous school," as defined by the individual state. Any child who has

been the victim of a violent crime on the grounds of his or her school is also eligible for Public School Choice.

How do parents know if their child is eligible for Public School Choice?

Under *No Child Left Behind*, school districts are required to notify parents if their child is eligible for Public School Choice because his or her school has been identified as needing improvement, corrective action or restructuring. They must notify parents no later than the first day of the school year following the year for which their school has been identified for improvement.

States are required to ensure that Public School Choice is offered as an option to parents in the event their child is attending a school that is "persistently dangerous" or has been the victim of a violent crime while on school grounds.

What action can parents take if their school or district does not offer Public School Choice to their child who is eligible?

Schools and districts receiving Title I funds must provide choice for eligible students as described above. If they do not, parents are encouraged to contact their state department of education.

Do public school options include only schools in the same district?

There may be situations where children in Title I schools have school options outside their own district. For instance, a school district may choose to enter into a cooperative agreement with another district that would allow their students to transfer into the other district's schools. In fact, the law requires that a district try "to the extent practicable" to establish such an agreement in the event that all of its schools have been identified as needing improvement, corrective action or restructuring.

Is transportation available for children who exercise their right to attend another school?

Subject to a funding cap established in the statute, districts must provide transportation for all students who exercise their Public School Choice option under Title I. They must give priority to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families.

- In 2007-2008 there were 801 students in Coweta Schools eligible for Public School Choice and 64 students participated in the Public School Choice program.
- In 2008-2009 there were 819 students in Coweta Schools eligible for Public School Choice and 73 students participated in the Public School Choice program.
- In 2009-2010 there were 729 students in Coweta Schools eligible for Public School Choice and 78 students participated in the Public School Choice program.
- In 2010-2011 there were 2302 students in Coweta Schools eligible for Public School Choice and 84 students participated in the Public School Choice program.
- In 2011-2012 using Differentiated Accountability 2362 students were mailed applications, and currently 140 are participating in Supplemental Educational Services (FREE TUTORING).

For additional information contact:

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To learn more about Public School Choice visit the [Georgia Department of Education's Website.](#)