

#### 4.1.2 — School Choice Policy

The superintendent shall cause public announcements to be made over the broadcast media in either the print media or on the Internet at such times and in such a manner as to inform parents or guardians of students in adjoining districts of the availability of the program, the application deadline, and the requirements and procedure for nonresident students to participate in the program.

Applications will be considered in the order that they are received.

A student's application will be accepted if the following conditions are met:

1. The application is received or postmarked no earlier than January 1 and no later than May 1 preceding the fall semester the applicant would begin school in the Van Buren School District;
2. The addition of the applicant does not require the Van Buren School District to add teachers, staff, or classrooms or in any way to exceed the requirements and standards established by existing law;
3. Acceptance of the application does not cause the Van Buren School District to be unable to properly service its resident pupils or would endanger the certifications of the Van Buren School District;
4. If the applicant is currently under expulsion from another district, then the applicant may be rejected by the Van Buren School District after a hearing before the School Board.

The superintendent shall notify the parent or guardian and the applicant's resident district, in writing, of the decision to accept or reject the application by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Students admitted under this policy shall be entitled to continued enrollment until they graduate or are no longer eligible for enrollment in the District's schools.

The Van Buren School District shall not be responsible for the transportation of students admitted under this policy. Transportation is the responsibility of the applicant's parents or guardians. However, the Van Buren School District may, in its discretion, enter into a written agreement with the applicant's resident district regarding transportation, provided that the costs of the transportation are borne by the applicant or the applicant's resident district.

The Van Buren School District shall accept all credits toward graduation of an applicant that were awarded by another district and shall award a diploma if the applicant meets the Van Buren School District's graduation requirements.

Any student admitted to the Van Buren School District under the provisions of this policy who chooses to return to his/her resident district during the school year voids the transfer and must reapply for school choice admission if desiring to return to the Van Buren School District.

### **Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice**

"Uniformed service member" means an active or reserve component member of the:

- United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, United States Space Force, or United States Coast Guard;
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps; or
- United States Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service.

"Uniformed service veteran" means a former uniformed service member who has been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

A student shall be eligible for school choice under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice if the student is a dependent of a:

- Uniformed service member in full-time active-duty status;
- Surviving spouse of a uniformed service member;
- Reserve component uniformed service member during the period six (6) months before until six (6) months after a Title 10, Title 32, or state active duty mobilization and service; or
- Uniformed service veteran who is returning to civilian status at the conclusion of the uniformed service veteran's active duty status.

A student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student shall submit a school choice application by mail, e-mail, or in person to the student's nonresident district and resident district. The application shall be accompanied by:

- a. A copy of the identification card of the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis that qualifies the student under this section; and
- b. A copy of the official orders, assignment notification, or notice of mobilization of the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis.

The application deadline required under Standard School Choice and Opportunity School Choice shall not apply to uniformed service member dependents.

The superintendent of the nonresident district shall notify the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis of the student in writing whether the student's application has been accepted or rejected within fifteen (15) days of the nonresident district's receipt of the application. A student's transfer under the Uniformed Services Member Dependent School Choice is effective immediately upon the nonresident district's written notification of an acceptance.

A student shall be permitted only one (1) school transfer per academic year.

The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis to a student shall be responsible for transportation of the student.

The superintendent shall report to the Arkansas Division of Elementary & Secondary Education on an annual basis the race, gender, and other pertinent information needed to properly monitor compliance with the provisions of this section.

Approved by Board of Education 07/14/09

Amended by Board of Education 04/14/15

Amended by Board of Education 07/11/23