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APRIL 1, 2019

RE: GEORGIA SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP ACT

PARENT RIGHT TO CHOICE

Under the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (GSNS) law passed in 2007 (O.C.G.A. s 20-2-2113), Parents/guardian(s) whose child meets the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship eligibility criteria now have the right to request a transfer from a student's public school to:

- ✓ Another public school within their district of residence; or
- ✓ Another public school system outside their district of residence; or
- ✓ One of the three state schools for the blind or deaf; or
- ✓ A private school authorized to participate in the GSNS program.

This form must be sent directly to the school district: **Complete the following page and send to HCBE Student Services Department P.O. Box 1850 Perry, Ga. 31069. Forms must be received by the deadline of May 10, 2019.**

Only the school district has the authority to approve or deny a public school transfer request.

Under HCBE board policy JBCD, students who transfer from one high school to another (without a bona fide move) will be considered ineligible for participation in any varsity competitive events governed by the Georgia High School Association for one calendar year from the start of entry into the receiving school.

2019-2020 Georgia Special Needs Student Scholarship Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for the GSNS Program all of the following requirements must be met:

- ✓ A student must have a parent/guardian who currently lives in Georgia and has been a resident for at least one calendar year.
- ✓ A student was enrolled and completed the 2018-2019 school year in Georgia public school in grades kindergarten through twelfth.
- ✓ A student was reported as attending a Georgia public school by a School district(s) during mandatory student counts conducted in October 2018 and March 2019.
- ✓ A student does not need to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the entire school year to qualify for the GSNS Program. A student must have received special education services at some point during the 2018-2019 school year through an IEP. A student must be reported by a school district(S) in either the October 2018 OR March 2019 student counts OR in final student record as a student receiving special education services by the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

Exceptions to the eligibility criteria: If an eligible student attended a private school through the GSNS Program during the 2018-2019 school year a parent can make a request for a public school transfer for the 2019-2020 school year.

Transfers within a School District: A school district considering a transfer request between schools in its system may deny a parent request for transfer based on lack of capacity and/or the lack of a program available at another school which is aligned with the student's IEP.

Capacity is defined in two ways:

- ✓ Capacity of the school building based on established health and safety provisions; and
- ✓ Class-size capacity by grade and subject, based on state law and rule.

Transfers out of a School District: A school district considering a request for a transfer into its school system from another school system has the authority to approve or deny a public school transfer request. 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.

***TRANSPORTATION under this public choice is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.*** Funds received through the Special Needs Scholarship cannot be used to offset the costs of out of district tuition, charter schools, or other options available under public school choice. Once a transfer request has been approved by the school district, the student will be allowed to complete all grades at the approved school. The school district will report the student for FTE purposes.



**GSNS Request for Transfer**

**Please complete this form & return to Student Services via mail, email, scan or fax.**  
**Deadline is May 10, 2019. Requests will NOT be accepted after May 10, 2019.**

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Disability: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Entering for 2019-2020 school year: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian requesting transfer: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address for 2019-2020 school year: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

List Public School(s) student attended this year (2018-2019): \_\_\_\_\_

List Public School student is zoned for next year (2019-2020): \_\_\_\_\_

List Private School(s) student attended this year (2018-2019): \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am requesting a transfer for \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent/Guardian Student's Name

to attend \_\_\_\_\_ in the Houston County School District.  
School Name

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

HOUSTON COUNTY BOARD of EDUCATION  
STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
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