Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Choice Transfer System Guide

2024

CHOICE TRANSFER SYSTEM GUIDE

2024

Rebecca Wallace
Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education and Pathway Preparation

Prepared by:

- **Rhett Nelson**, Director, Learning Options

- **Jennifer Fischer**, Learning Options Program Specialist
  choicetransfer@k12.wa.us | 360-725-6266

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The 2013 Legislature directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to create a standard form to be used by all school districts for Choice Transfers for online school enrollments. (Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.250.070) The Choice Transfer System (CTS) was developed to meet this need. It is an application within the Education Data System (EDS) that provides a resident district the ability to submit a parent/guardian request for a Choice Transfer to a nonresident district, signifying the intent to release the student upon acceptance. The law was updated in 2017 to include the required use of the CTS for all interdistrict transfers into any Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) school or program, not just for online schools. Within the CTS, the nonresident district accepts or denies the transfer request. Email notices are sent automatically from the system at milestones throughout the process to the parent/guardian and the districts. The system features include the ability to request, renew, rescind, edit, save, cancel, and resubmit appealed requests.

Per the statute, all districts must use the CTS for Choice Transfers for ALE school enrollment; however, the system is also able to process requests for non-ALE enrollments and Interdistrict Agreements.

In 2019, the electronic Choice Transfer Request Portal (CTRP) was developed as a companion system to the CTS. It gives parent/guardian users the ability to submit an electronic request to the resident district. Use of the CTRP eliminates the step of student information entry by district personnel. The use of the CTRP is optional for districts and it does not interfere with districts' Choice Coordinators from also entering Choice Transfer requests. Access the CTRP User Guide for more information.

GETTING STARTED

1. Identify Choice Coordinators at the district or school level who are authorized to submit, accept, and deny requests. Multiple individuals may be set up at each level. See your District Data Security Manager (DDSM) to set up the roles in EDS. Note: DDSM can find guidance on how to add roles in the EDS Administration Manual beginning on page 17.
    a. **School Choice Coordinators** will only see requests for their school.
    b. **District Choice Coordinators** can see requests for all schools via the drop-down menu.
    c. If there are no coordinators identified, the District Data Security Manager will receive the email notification of requests and will need to set up the Choice Coordinators for the requests to be processed.
    d. All Choice Coordinators (at the designated level) will receive the email notifications. Only the Choice Coordinator who processed the request will be listed as the contact within the email, on the request detail screen, or printer friendly version. If the request was entered by the parent/guardian through the CTRP, all resident district Choice Coordinators are listed as contacts.
    e. When there are multiple Choice Coordinators (at the designated level) for the nonresident district, the first Choice Coordinator entered will appear as the contact on the initial request email sent to the parent/guardian.
2. Download the templates.
    a. OSPI-created templates for Choice Transfer and Interdistrict Agreement requests are available to download from the Student Transfers (ospi.k12.wa.us) website
    b. Use of the template in some manner is recommended since the form contains information that is needed for EDS input screen. It is organized similar to the screen layout. Review the template as it includes important notices and acknowledgements for the parent/guardian as well as a FERPA release statement that you are advised to consider using.

CHOICE TRANSFER REQUESTS

Choice Transfer requests can be entered into the SCTS in two ways:

Option 1

Resident district enters a Choice Transfer request.

1. Log on to EDS.
2. From the Application List, select "Choice Transfer."
3. Click the **NEW** button on the CTS.
4. Enter the Choice Transfer information (Appendix A).
5. Once submitted, the request status is set to **PENDING REQUEST.** This means that the resident district intends to release the student upon acceptance by the nonresident district. It signifies that action is required by the nonresident district.
6. Parent/guardian and districts are sent an email notification that a request has been entered.
7. If the family does not have email, the resident district Choice Coordinator email address should be entered in the field to continue processing the request.
   a. The Choice Coordinator at the resident district is responsible for sending the system communications to the parent/guardian via postal mail.
   b. A notice in nine common languages is included at the bottom of the email notice that offers translation by contacting the Choice Coordinator or OSPI.
8. Student and contact information can be edited if necessary.

Option 2

Parents/Guardians/Students 18 or older can submit Choice Transfer requests electronically through the Choice Transfer Request Portal (CTRP) if their school district has chosen to use it as a resident district. For information about the CTRP, please refer to the CTRP User Guide. The CTRP cannot be used for Interdistrict Agreements or renewals.

1. Log on to EDS.
2. The request status is set to **PARENT SUBMISSION**. This means that the parent/guardian has submitted the request through the CTRP, and it requires resident district action.
3. Click VIEW for the student, review the application, then click the submit button. The request is now visible to the nonresident district. The request can be processed in the same manner as if the Choice Coordinator entered the request.
4. Nonresident district processes the **PENDING REQUEST**.
   a. The CTS landing page shows a listing of requests. Click **VIEW** on a request of type CT with a status of **PENDING REQUEST** to take action.
   b. Clicking **ACCEPT** sends an email to the parent/guardian and districts that the transfer has been accepted and will become active on the begin date. The non-resident coordinator will put in the current date or a future start date. Student is reminded that they must continue to attend their resident school until the begin date. Student is instructed to contact the school at the nonresident district to complete the enrollment or the Choice Coordinator if there are questions. The begin date will be set to the acceptance date unless a future date is input or if the date of acceptance is past the begin date. Under no circumstances can the begin date be backdated.

c. Clicking **DENY** and entering a reason sends an email to the parent/guardian and districts that the transfer has been denied and includes the denial reason and appeal instructions. Denial reasons should be consistent with district policy pursuant to RCW 28A.225.225. Note that the parent/guardian/student have a right to appeal the denial.

5. Resident district may resubmit a denied request that is appealed.
    a. The resident district may view the denied request and update begin and end dates and contact information.
    b. Clicking on the **APPEAL** button resets the status of the request to **PENDING REQUEST** and sends an email to the parent/guardian and districts.
    c. The nonresident district views and processes the **PENDING REQUEST** as previously described in step 5.

RENEW APPLICATIONS

Students who have been successful as a result of the Choice Transfer or Interdistrict Agreement and wish to continue must have their requests renewed for the next school year by the resident district. Communication between the Choice Coordinators is imperative in providing a smooth transition to the next school year. Renewals can only be initiated directly in the SCTS and not through the CTRP.

1. Parent/guardian authorization needs to be attained.
2. The SCTS home page for current year shows a listing of requests. Click **VIEW** on a request with a status of "accepted" to renew. This can also be accomplished by typing in the student name and **SEARCH**.
3. Clicking the **RENEW** button copies the original request, and revisions can be made.
4. The status is set to **PENDING REQUEST** and an email notice is sent to the parent/guardian and districts that a renewal is in process.
5. Non-resident Choice Coordinator responds with **ACCEPT** or **DENY**.
6. If the Interdistrict plan is modified, see steps 2–3 in Interdistrict Agreement Requests (below).

INTERDISTRICT AGREEMENT REQUESTS

Interdistrict agreements (IA) provide a method for districts to share a student's enrollment. In contrast to a Choice Transfer, when an IA is in place, the resident district retains the responsibilities for the student's education. However, the provision of the student's basic education, special education, or Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) services are shared with another district within the state of Washington. The nonresident district that is sharing the student becomes a contractor of the resident district and has only those obligations so noted in the IA. The resident district maintains ultimate responsibility for the education being provided by the nonresident district.

Contrary to Choice Transfers, there is no law mandating Interdistrict Agreements and requiring a resident district to enter into an IA to share a student's basic education full-time equivalent (FTE) or provision of special education and TBIP services with a nonresident district. Further, there is no law that requires districts to offer an appeal right to students when districts choose not to share a student via an IA.

Important Things to Remember

1. Interdistrict Agreements require beginning and ending dates and should be limited to one school year and renewed for the following school year. Annual renewals ensure that the student has not moved to another district which would require a new IA with the new district.
2. Students must continue to attend their current school schedule until notified of the acceptance of the IA and its start day or be subject to nonattendance procedures.
3. Once an IA is completed, the nonresident district would enroll the student based on the district's enrollment processes, which could include a records request from the resident district.
4. Interdistrict Agreements must specify the maximum amount of FTE each district is allowed to claim for the student. The total FTE in Grades K–12 must not exceed 1.0 FTE. Enrollment when combined with Skill Center or Running Start classes can exceed 1.0 FTE but the high school FTE is limited to 1.0 FTE.
5. A district serving a student with an IA in place may claim up to the amount of time a student is enrolled subject to the limitation specified in the agreement.
6. When sharing the student's special education or TBIP services, an IA must specify which district will claim the student's headcount for special education or TBIP funding.
7. An IA should clearly state the conditions that would lead to a student's disenrollment from the nonresident district. It should also specify how the resident district is to be notified of a student's disenrollment from the nonresident district.
8. An IA should clearly state which district is responsible for state mandated testing.
9. Interdistrict Agreements must comply with all the requirements of the Interlocal Cooperation Act, Chapter 39.34 RCW.

INTERDISTRICT AGREEMENT PROCESSING

1. Resident district enters an IA request. Processing IA requests often result in several exchanges between districts regarding responsibilities and expectations of each district. Note that parents/guardians receive an email update with each exchange. Communication between the Choice Coordinators is imperative in providing a smooth transition.
   a. Click the **NEW** button on the SCTS home page.
   b. Enter the Interdistrict Agreement information (Appendix B).
   c. The request status is set to **PENDING REQUEST.** This means that the resident district intends to release the student upon acceptance by the nonresident district. It signifies that action is required by the nonresident district.
   d. Parent/guardian and districts are sent an email notification that a request has been entered.
      i. If the family does not have email, the resident district Choice Coordinator email address should be entered in the field to continue processing the request. The Choice Coordinator at the resident district is responsible for sending the system communications to the parent/guardian via postal mail.
      ii. A notice in nine common languages is included at the bottom of the email notice that offers translation by contacting the Choice Coordinator or OSPI.
   e. The request cannot be modified again (except for contact information) until the nonresident district has submitted a modification and the request is in "pending acceptance" status.

2. Nonresident district processes **PENDING REQUEST**
   a. The SCTS home page shows a listing of requests. Click **VIEW** on a request that is type IA with a status of **PENDING REQUEST** to take action.
   b. The nonresident district may change information and click **MODIFY** which sets the status to **PENDING ACCEPTANCE.** This means the nonresident district will accept the student if the resident district accepts the modifications. An email notice is sent to the parent/guardian and districts indicating the request is still in process.
   c. Clicking **ACCEPT** sends an email to the parent/guardian and districts that the agreement has been accepted and will become active on the begin date. Students are reminded that they must continue to attend their regular schedule until the begin date. Student is instructed to contact the Choice Coordinator at the nonresident district to complete the enrollment. The begin date will be set to the acceptance date if the date of acceptance is past the begin date.
   d. Clicking **DENY** and entering a reason sends an email to the parent/guardian and districts that the transfer has been denied and includes the denial reason. Denial reasons should be consistent with district policy for acceptance and rejection standards.

3. Resident district processes **PENDING ACCEPTANCE** request.

   a. The SCTS home page shows a listing of requests. Click **VIEW** on a request that is type IA with a status of **PENDING ACCEPTANCE** to take action on a request that has been modified by the nonresident district.

   b. The resident district may change agreement information and click **MODIFY** which sets the status to **PENDING REQUEST.** This means the resident district will release the student if the nonresident district accepts the modifications.

   c. Clicking **ACCEPT** sends an email to the parent/guardian and districts that the agreement has been accepted and will become active on the begin date. Student is instructed to contact the Choice Coordinator at the nonresident district to complete the enrollment. (If the date of acceptance is past the requested begin date, the acceptance date will be used as the begin date.)

   d. Clicking **DENY** and entering a reason sends an email to the parent/guardian and districts that the transfer has been denied and includes the denial reason. Denial reasons should be consistent with district policy for acceptance and rejection standards.

4. Steps 2 and 3 are repeated until a district accepts or denies the Interdistrict Agreement request.

5. Resident district may **REVISE** an accepted Interdistrict Agreement if the circumstances change, such as adding another course.

   a. Parent/guardian authorization needs to be attained.

   b. The SCTS home page shows a listing of requests. Click **VIEW** on a request that is type IA with a status of **ACCEPTED**.

   c. Clicking the **REVISE** button copies the original request, and revisions can be made.

   d. The status is set to **PENDING RELEASE** and an email notice is sent to the parent/guardian and districts that a revision is in process. Steps 8 thru 10 are followed.

   e. Upon acceptance, the original agreement must be rescinded if the agreement has not yet expired.

CHOICE TRANSFERS AND INTERDISTRICT AGREEMENTS: COMMON ACTIONS

1. **Rescind** - Nonresident district may rescind a Choice Transfer or Interdistrict Agreement.
   a. The SCTS home page shows a listing of requests. Click **VIEW** on a request with a status of **ACCEPTED** to rescind.
   b. Clicking on the **RESCIND** button will prompt for a reason.
      i. For Choice Transfers, the rescindment reason should be consistent with district policy.
      ii. For Interdistrict Agreements, the rescindment reason should be consistent with conditions stated in the agreement for disenrollment.
   c. An email will be sent to the parent/guardian and districts that the transfer or agreement has been rescinded and provides the reason and effective date (the date the rescindment was processed in the system).

2. **Renew**—Resident district may renew an expiring Choice Transfer or Interdistrict Agreement request.
   a. Parent/guardian authorization needs to be attained.
   b. The SCTS home page shows a listing of requests. Click **VIEW** on a request with a status of **ACCEPTED** to renew.
   c. Clicking the **RENEW** button copies the original request, and revisions can be made.
   d. The status is set to **PENDING REQUEST.** An email notice is sent to the parent/guardian and districts that a renewal is in process. Step 2 (for a Choice Transfer) or steps 2 thru 3 (for an Interdistrict Agreement) are followed.

3. **Print**—Resident and nonresident districts may print a copy of the transfer or agreement.
   a. On the SCTS home page, a print icon is visible by the VIEW button for the student. You may print the student's Choice Transfer request without first clicking on the VIEW button.
   b. A **PRINT FRIENDLY** button is also available once the student's request has been opened. It is located on the upper right side of the screen.

4. **Truancy**—When a "Yes" response is marked for Behavior question # 5, "Is this student under a court order to attend school or is a truancy petition in the process of being filed?," a checked box "T" appears next to the student's VIEW button on the SCTS homepage. This provides districts with a quick way to communicate that the student has a petition that needs monitoring if the transfer is approved.

5. **Cancel**—Resident and nonresident districts may cancel Choice Transfer and IA requests.
   a. CANCEL is used by the resident district when the parents/guardians change their minds and no longer want the Choice Transfer or IA, for a duplicate request, or other reason when the request is no longer needed.

b. CANCEL is visible to the resident district until the request is submitted. CANCEL is visible to the nonresident district once they accept the student.

c. Prior to cancelling a transfer request, obtain parent/guardian authorization, unless the request was a duplicate submission. Enter the reason for the cancellation before clicking on UPDATE.

d. After the request has been accepted by the nonresident district, the nonresident district can cancel the request as long as it is before the student's start date. If the student's start date has passed, the request should be a rescindment.

6. **Export**—Resident and nonresident districts may export Choice Transfer or Interdistrict Agreement information to Excel.

a. On the SCTS home page, click on **"Export to Excel"** in the upper right of the request listing. The requests from the current or selected school year will be exported to a worksheet.

b. This is how you can provide information requested by the State Auditor's Office.

7. **Sort**—Resident and nonresident districts may sort the requests on the SCTS home page. Click on the table headings to sort the requests in ascending or descending order.

8. **Navigation**—Resident and nonresident districts may select which records to display.

a. School year—The default display is the current school year. Previous years or the next school year may be selected to view history or requests for the next school year.

b. Student—Search for a specific student's request by entering first and last name search values and clicking **SEARCH**. The system will display all requests in the system that it is able to match. Clicking **RESET** will restore the original display of the requests for the selected year.

c. Requests per page—The default number of requests displayed on the page is 20. Coordinators have the option of changing the display to 50 or 100.

APPENDIX A: CHOICE TRANSFER INFORMATION

Data Element	Note
1. Request Type	Select Choice Transfer or Interdistrict Agreement
2. School Year	Select current school year or next school year.
3. Begin Date	When current school year is selected, begin date must be within the current date and 8/31 of the school year. When next school year is selected, begin date must be within 8/1 and 8/31 of the school year. The begin date represents when the nonresident district is able to claim funding for the student, not necessarily when the student starts at the school. The nonresident district notifies the student when to begin attending school during the enrollment process.
4. End Date	End date must be less than 9/1 of the school year selected. Transfer requests are typically approved for one school year and end on 8/31. An end date before 8/31 represents a midterm transfer for only part of the year (such as first semester only). Resident school districts do not need to align the dates with nonresident district school year dates.
5. Nonresident School District	Select from dropdown list
6. Requested School	Select from dropdown list
7. Requested Program	If a program within the school is identified by a specific name, enter it here. Use of this field for purposes other than a recognized program name is not advised. (optional)
8. Student's legal name or preferred name	May use the search feature which will prepopulate the date of birth, grade level, SSID, and current or last school field. Information can also be manually entered.
9. Date of birth	Prepopulated if use search or manually enter
10. Grade level (of transfer year)	Please see CEDARS Appendix E—Grade Level Codes for grade level codes used by the choice transfer application. The application will only accept the grade level codes listed in Appendix E.
11. SSID	State Student ID assigned by OSPI. The value must be 10 digits in length. (optional)
12. Parent/Legal Guardian	Required if student is younger than 18 at the time of the request.
13. Email and phone	Required with format edits. (If a parent/guardian does not have email, enter the Choice Coordinator email address. The coordinator is responsible for sending the parent/guardian the system notices via postal mail.)

Data Element	Note
14. Residence/Mailing Addresses	May click the box to copy the residence address to the mailing address if they are the same.
15. Current or last school attended	Prepopulated when the Search is used or manually enter
16. Reason for transfer	For district data collection purposes, the reasons listed are those that are most commonly cited by parents/guardians as their reason for the transfer request. Most, but not all, are aligned with RCW 28A.225.220.
17. Behavior: Discipline and attendance questions	Indicate yes or no for each question and enter pertinent information in the Comment area.

APPENDIX B: INTERDISTRICT AGREEMENT INFORMATION

Data Element	Note
Includes 1–17 of Choice Transfer data elements	As listed in Appendix A.
18. FTE: Grades K-12	Resident and nonresident enrollment in Grades K–12 may not exceed 1.0
19. FTE: Skill Center	Resident and nonresident enrollment in Skill Center may not exceed 1.0
20. FTE: Running Start	Resident and nonresident enrollment in Running Start may not exceed 1.0
21. FTE: High School + Skill Center limit	Resident and nonresident enrollment in high school and skill center may not exceed 1.6
22. FTE: High School + Running Start limit	Resident and nonresident enrollment in high school and Running Start may not exceed 1.2
23. FTE: High School + Skill Center + Running Start limit	If resident and nonresident enrollment in high school and skill center is more than 1.0 FTE, then Running Start must not exceed 0.2.
24. Special Education Services	If a student does not qualify for Special Education services, the other 4 questions are not displayed.
25. Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP)	If a student does not qualify for TBIP, the other 3 questions are not displayed.
26. Exited TBIP	If a student does not qualify for TBIP, the other 2 questions are not displayed.
27. Educational Services (Resident)	All educational services should be listed along with other pertinent services such as state assessment practices, etc.
28. Educational Services (Nonresident)	All educational services should be listed as well as conditions that would lead to a student's disenrollment and rescindment of the agreement.

LEGAL NOTICE

ESTD 1889

All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.