



MEMORANDUM

To: Salem School Committee
From: Dr. Steve Zrike, Superintendent
Date: May 16, 2022
Re: Participation in MA's Inter-District School Choice Program for 2022-23

Under the school choice law, G.L. c.76, § 12B, , all school districts in Massachusetts are presumed to participate in and to admit non-resident students through school choice. ([See G.L. c. 76, § 12B\(d\)](#)). A few key aspects of the law:

- A receiving district can withdraw from school choice only if a School Committee holds a public hearing on this issue and then votes to withdraw from the school choice program prior to June 1st. 2 G.L. c. 76, § 12B(d).
- A School Committee that intends to continue participating in school choice is not required to hold a hearing or to vote because G.L. c. 76, § 12B contains a presumption that all school districts will participate in school choice.
- As you know, last year, the Salem School Committee decided to open school choice to all grades (not just high school).

For next year, the recommendation is to continue Salem's participation in the Inter-District School Choice program with some minor adjustments (see revisions in red).

Incoming Grades 9-12, Salem High School

- Allow up to 15 students to enter at each grade level (up to 15 at the 9th grade, 15 at the 10th grade, 15 at 11th grade, and 15 at 12th grade). *Note: This does not include Salem Prep High School unless a student who chooses in to another high school is placed there based on their IEP.*

Incoming Grades 9-12, New Liberty Innovation School

- Allow up to 15 students to enter at any grade level

Incoming Grades Kindergarten-8

- Allow up to 10 students to enter at each grade level (up to 10 at the K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades).

Conditions for Participation:

1. A school choice application is required for each student applying and must be received by the deadline in order to be considered in the priority round lottery. **Applications must be received by June 15, 2022 in order to qualify for the priority round lottery.** Notification of acceptance, rejection or waitlist status will be sent to priority round lottery applicants by July 1, 2022. Those applying after the priority round deadline will be considered on a first



come, first serve basis, based on availability, or placed accordingly at the end of that grade's waitlist. Applications for school choice will close for the school year on November 1, 2022. School choice applications received after November 1, 2022 will not be considered for the 2022/2023 school year school choice program.

2. The number of available spaces per grade level does not guarantee placement within a specific school. Once accepted in a specific grade level, the criteria of the district's student assignment policy will be used to assign students to specific schools.
3. Resident students shall be given priority for all placements based on the district's choice-based student assignment policy.
4. Applications from siblings of non-resident choice students already enrolled in Salem Public Schools (via the Inter-District school choice program) and who will remain in the school choice program during that school year will, by law, receive priority in placement. Such students will be accepted first **IF** space is available in the grade they are seeking.
5. Should the number of applications exceed the number of vacancies after the placement of siblings, the remaining vacancies will be filled by a random drawing. All applicants not accepted through the random drawing will be randomly selected and placed, in the order of their selection, on a waitlist.
6. Students currently receiving special education services will be required to provide a current proposed and last-accepted IEP prior to the enrollment process for IEP planning and implementation purposes. However, an applicant is not required to provide an IEP or disclose disability status to Salem Schools during the application process. Salem Schools do not consider whether students have a disability or the nature of their disabilities in determining whether to admit them under school choice, and similarly do not rescind any offers of admission on the basis of a student's disability or disability-related needs.
7. The District may not deny an application for School Choice based on a record of a serious discipline problem within the non-resident district (see [April 2019 DESE Advisory](#)). If an application indicates the student has been suspended or expelled, the District may proceed with its own disciplinary process once the student begins attending the Salem Public Schools.
8. Transportation is not available for School Choice students through the Salem Public Schools. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide daily roundtrip transportation and to ensure students arrive at school every day on time and are promptly picked up after school. In special circumstances, the district may opt to provide transportation in cases where student attendance is a serious concern.
9. School Choice students may fully participate in all school activities including after-school programming and are subject to the same rules, and guidelines as resident students.
10. Former residents of the Salem Public Schools who move out of the District but wish to have their children remain as students in Salem schools do not have a unique claim to the seats their children vacated and must apply for School Choice. If the move occurs after November 1st, the student can remain enrolled in the Salem Public Schools until the conclusion of the school year at which time, they can apply for school choice for the ensuing school year.



School Choice Data (21-22):

School	Gr. 1	Gr. 2	Gr. 3	Gr. 4	Gr. 5	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 9	Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr. 12
Bates	1	1	1									
Bentley		1	1		1							
Carlton		1										
ECC												
HLMS		1		1								
Salts		2			1							
WHES	2			1								
Collins						4	2					
SHS									4	4	1	3
NLIS											4	1
Salem Prep												
	3	6	2	2	3	4	2	1	4	4	5	4

Total = 40 New Students

- We have a total of 60 school choice students who are registered in the Salem Public Schools
- For context:
 - During the 20-21 school year we accepted 21 choice students (high school only).
 - During the 19-20 school year we accepted 21 choice students (high school only).
 - During the 18-19 school year we accepted 14 choice students (high school only).