School Choice (HB 251 and SB10) Frequently Asked Questions

- What is the timeframe for applying for School Choice?
  
  o Henry County Schools will post the School Choice options, for Henry County residents, under SB10 and HB251 on March 1, 2017. A list of available schools for transfer and the appropriate form to utilize will be available on our website for public review and choice at that time. Applications for School Choice will be accepted at the Henry County Central Office, Student Services Department/Trailer B (33 N. Zack Hinton Parkway, McDonough GA 30253) from March 1, 2017 to April 28, 2017.

- Will my request be approved on a first-come, first-served basis?
  
  o School choice is not processed on a first-come, first-serve basis. State law requires that we conduct a lottery if the number of applications for a certain school surpasses the available spots. Notification to parents of whether their school choice application has been approved or denied will occur in the first weeks of May 2017.

- If approved, how long does the approval last? Do I have to reapply each school year?
  
  o If approved, the student may remain at the approved school through his/her tenure at that school. For example, a student approved when entering Kindergarten may attend though the completion of his/her 5th grade year, provided the student and enrolling parent/guardian remain residents of Henry County. Once approved, there is no need to reapply each year, unless the parent desires a different school of choice. Should the student withdraw from the school of choice, the previous approval would be void.

- Does my child have automatic permission or approval to attend the feeder middle or high schools?
  
  o No, a student rising from grade 5 to grade 6 or from grade 8 to grade 9 will be enrolled into the zoned school for 6th or 9th grade, unless a new School Choice approval for the appropriate level is obtained during the appropriate application window.

- What if the feeder middle or high school for my child is not on the current School Choice list?
  
  o Schools not appearing on the current School Choice list have not been identified as having “space available” and therefore are not options for transfer. You may choose one of the available schools on the current School Choice list or you may enroll your child in the school of residency that you are zoned for based on your address.

- Can I apply for School Choice if I do not reside within the boundaries of Henry County?
  
  o No, to enroll in Henry County Schools, you must be a resident of this county and be able to prove this as stated in Board Policy JBCA.

- My older child was previously approved for School Choice and now I have a younger child starting school. Will the younger sibling automatically be approved for School Choice?
  
  o School Choice is based on space and the list of available schools changes each school year. There is no guarantee that a school that appeared on a previous list will be an option for the future. Each student and application are reviewed individually and sibling status is not a factor in School Choice decisions.

- What other factors, including “available space” determine eligibility for School Choice?
  
  o At this time, due to a change in the state law, a proposal exists which would factor attendance and discipline into eligibility for School Choice. If approved, attendance and discipline records dating back one calendar year from the date of application would be reviewed. Excessive unexcused attendance transactions and/or behavior referrals may result in a denial of the School Choice request.

We hope this brief FAQ will help you during the upcoming School Choice process.

- Student Services Department, Henry County Schools