



"No Child Left Behind makes history in American education  
and builds futures for America's students."

Rod Paige, U.S. Secretary of Education

## PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

*No Child Left Behind* offers parents new options to prevent their children from being trapped in schools in need of improvement or in dangerous schools. Under the law, parents are equipped with new choices that allow them to transfer their children into schools with track records of success and safety.

### **What is "public school choice?"**

If a school is identified for school improvement, corrective action or restructuring, in accordance with requirements under the law a district must provide all students in the school the option to transfer to another public school or public charter school no later than the first day of the school year following identification. Your school district is required to inform you if your child is eligible to attend another public school. The school district also must identify the public schools, including public charter schools, that you can select for transfer. Public school choice must be provided unless state law prohibits it.

### **How do I know if my child is eligible?**

If your child attends a school identified for school improvement, corrective action or restructuring, your child is eligible to transfer.

### **Do the public school choice options include only schools in the same district?**

Not necessarily. Options may include a neighboring school district. If all schools served by the district are in school improvement, corrective action or restructuring, the district must try to establish a cooperative agreement with other districts to provide students the option to transfer to another public school. In addition, nothing in *No Child Left Behind* prohibits districts from establishing cooperative agreements, regardless of whether or not all schools in a particular district are in need of improvement.

### **Will transportation be offered to pupils exercising public school choice options?**

Districts must provide transportation, in general, for students exercising public school choice under school improvement, corrective action or restructuring. If the funds are insufficient to provide transportation to each student who requests a transfer, the district must give priority to the lowest-achieving students from low-income families.

### **What is the "unsafe school choice option" in *No Child Left Behind*?**

States receiving any funds under *No Child Left Behind* must establish and implement a statewide policy requiring that a student be allowed to attend a safe public elementary or secondary school within the local school district, including a public charter school, if he or she:

- Attends a persistently dangerous public elementary or secondary school, as determined by the state, or
- Becomes a victim of a violent crime, as determined by state law, while in or on the grounds of the public elementary or secondary school that the student attends.

### **What if my child's school is listed as being in need of improvement but my district hasn't informed me of my options?**

You should contact your local and state school officials. The Department of Education's Web site provides a list of contacts for your state. Visit [www.NoChildLeftBehind.gov](http://www.NoChildLeftBehind.gov) or call toll-free 1-800-USA-LEARN.

*Additional information for community, parent or faith-based groups about No Child Left Behind is available by contacting the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs, Educational Partnerships and Family Involvement Unit. E-mail [partner@ed.gov](mailto:partner@ed.gov), or call (202) 401-0056.*