

QUINCY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

2021/22

SCHOOL OF CHOICE PROGRAM

In an effort to provide a quality education for all students in the region, Quincy Community Schools offers this *School of Choice Program*. The *School of Choice Program* allows parents and students a choice to attend any public school district within Branch Intermediate School District, regardless of where they live within the BISD boundary. Only legal residents of Bronson, Coldwater, or Quincy Community School Districts will be considered for this plan.

This brochure is designed to help parents learn about the program and the policies and procedures that have been developed to ensure student success.

Information regarding graduation requirements, application policies, athletics and transportation are included. Please call the superintendent's office of any of the participating schools for further information. An application is included with this brochure for your use.

Application deadline is August 27 for first semester *

January 7 for second semester *

(* 2021/22 school year)

District Administrators

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What you need to know about the 2021/22 School of Choice Program for Quincy Schools

The application process for the *School of Choice Program* has been designed to guarantee all applicants a fair and equitable opportunity. Parents or guardians should be aware of the application timelines, length of transfers, and graduation requirements. Listed below are the guidelines regarding the application process.

The Boards of Education which are constituent to the Branch Intermediate School District and which have adopted an identical and reciprocal policy, shall permit the enrollment of students from any participating District in accordance with this Policy and the Administrative Guidelines established to implement this policy. This policy does not apply to Preschool, Alternative or Adult Education students, Continuing Education for Young Women (CEYW) students, a continuing senior (one who has been enrolled since his/her freshman year), or hardship cases, each of whom will be considered on an individual case by case basis, or existing tuition or choice students enrolled as of the effective date of the agreement.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Non-Resident Student** - is a full time pupil who is not a legal resident or otherwise legally entitled to attend school in the district and who seeks admission to the *ISD Choice Program*.
- B. **School of Choice**- is any and all of the three constituent districts of the Branch Intermediate School District that have adopted a policy which is identical and reciprocal to this policy.
- C. **Program Size** - means enrollment or size restrictions in a specific program, course, grade level, class or building. The enrolling District reserves the exclusive right to establish program size and to limit enrollment.
- D. **Resident School District** - means that school district where the student maintains legal residence and is entitled to enroll in school on a non-tuition basis.
- E. **Resident Student** - is a pupil who is a legal resident of an individual School District and is consequently entitled to attend school in that District, on a non-tuition basis, pursuant to the Revised School Code.
- F. **Parent** - the natural or adoptive parents or the party designated by the courts as the legal guardian or custodian of a student. Both parents will be considered to have equal rights unless a court of law decrees otherwise.

ENROLLMENT OF NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS IN A *SCHOOL OF CHOICE*

1. Each *School of Choice* will permit **enrollment of non-resident students** from participating districts at a level of **up to two percent (2%)** of this district's K-12 enrollment, as delineated in the K-12 pupil enrollment of the May State Aid status report. All nonresident students currently enrolled are considered district students and do not need to apply. Each *School of Choice* shall **not be required to release more than** a maximum of **two percent (2%)** of its K-12 students. Enrollment figures for determining the 2% cap shall be as delineated in the K-12 pupil enrollment of the May State Aid status report. Each board of education may exceed the maximum for either acceptance or release of students.
2. **Applications** for enrollment must be submitted by the **Fall Semester deadline of August 28**. The receiving district will notify the parent/guardian by no later than September 4, 2020 of approval or disapproval. For **Winter Semester the application deadline is January 8** with notification to the parent/guardian by no later than January 15, 2021. If both districts mutually agree, the application deadlines may be waived.
3. **If vacancies are available after** the fall or winter **deadlines**, they will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis until there are no vacancies. Vacancies should be filled prior to state count dates. After this point, local district policy prevails regarding the process.

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4. The **Superintendent of each school district shall annually determine the number of available enrollment opportunities** (if any) for non-resident students under the *Choice Program*.
5. **If the number of applications** for admission from non-resident students **exceeds** the number of available enrollment **opportunities**, non-resident pupils shall be selected for admission **using a random selection process**. However, enrollment **priority shall be given to the sibling of a non-resident pupil** from a participating district already enrolled under the *ISD Choice Program*.
6. A student requesting a transfer is allowed to request which district s/he would like to attend, but **requests for specific building(s) and/or teacher(s) will not be allowed, and only specific buildings may have vacancies**.
7. Non-resident students admitted to a *School of Choice* **shall not be entitled** to **transportation** services from the enrolling or resident District for the purposes of arriving at and departing from regularly scheduled classes, except as may otherwise be provided in an applicable IEP.
8. Non-resident students seeking admission are **subject to the academic and program size standards** of the *School of Choice* in terms of grade and program size of course placement.
9. Non-resident students accepted for enrollment in a *School of Choice* are subject to the determinations of the *School of Choice* as respects the **awarding of transfer academic credit, academic assignment or placement** based upon completion of courses or grades in districts or schools where the non-resident student has previously attended.
10. Non-resident students accepted for enrollment in a *School of Choice* are **subject to facility, grade and course assignments** within the *School of Choice* according to the same policies and procedures applied to intra-district enrollment of resident students. Non-resident students must meet all student enrollment rules per district, state and federal requirements.
11. The parents/guardians (or the applicant non-resident student, if legally emancipated) are required to furnish a **written statement to the resident district authorizing release of all records of the pupil from the resident participating district** (or other educational institution) where s/he is currently enrolled. (This is required on the *ISD Choice Program* application.)
12. **Prior to submitting an application**, parents, guardians, and students desiring to participate in the *ISD Choice Program* are **required to meet with a building administrator or district representative of the School of Choice** to discuss school rules, curriculum, parent involvement, graduation requirements, grade placement, and other school-related issues. Since most high school and middle school class schedules are developed prior to completion of the *School of Choice* application process, students requesting transfers to another school district should be aware that not all class requests may be granted prior to submitting a *School of Choice* application. It is required that the students and his/her parents or guardians meet with a counselor or school administrator at the school of choice to determine class availability.
13. Applications for participating district **students under a special education IEP shall not be considered if the district is not currently providing the services** called for in the IEP.
14. The *School of Choice* **may choose not to accept for enrollment** under this policy any non-resident student who for disciplinary reasons has been **suspended, expelled or otherwise released or excluded** from his/her resident school district during the preceding two (2) years. The *School of Choice* reserves the right to refuse enrollment to a student who has demonstrated disciplinary behavior or attendance problems in his/her most recently attended school.
15. All non-resident students admitted pursuant to this policy may be **subject to tuition charges** which shall be established in an amount determined annually by the *ISD Choice Program*, subject to the maximum tuition charges permitted by law.

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16. The **Superintendent** of the *School of Choice* shall be **responsible for notifying the parents/guardians** of applicant non-resident students (or the applicant, if legally emancipated) of the applicable tuition charges and to secure, in writing, a contract for each admitted non-resident student obligating the parent/legal guardian (or the non-resident student, if legally emancipated) to remit tuition on a specified schedule. A contractual statement is part of the application and is required to be signed for consideration.
17. A resident student released to a *School of Choice* **shall not be readmitted to the resident district until the beginning of the academic year next** following the year of his/her admission to and enrollment in the non-resident *School of Choice*.
18. A resident **student released** to a *School of Choice* and enrolled there **need not make re-application** for release to attend the *School of Choice* in subsequent school years.
19. If a resident student so released wishes **to return** to his/her resident school district in a subsequent school year, his/her parent or legal guardian (or the student, if legally emancipated) shall **give written notice to the resident school district** as soon as possible but **not later than March 1** immediately preceding the date of re-enrollment.

Graduation/Promotion Requirements & Curriculum Issues

Each school district within the Branch Intermediate School District has developed a curriculum that is based on the State of Michigan Model Core Curriculum. In addition, each district has its own locally approved grading system and graduation requirements. While there may be some similarities among the districts all students, parents and guardians should be aware of the following conditions of the *ISD Choice Program*:

1. Prior to submitting an application (**for each semester before August 27 or January 7 respectively**), parents, guardians, and students desiring to participate in the *ISD Choice Program* are required to meet with a building administrator or district representative of the choice district(s) to discuss school rules, curriculum, parent involvement, graduation requirements, grade placement, and other school-related issues.
2. *ISD Choice Program* participants are required to graduate with the number of credits and required courses as determined by the district they are attending at the time of graduation.
3. Since most high school and middle school class schedules are developed prior to completion of the *School of Choice* application process, students requesting transfers to another school district should be aware that not all class requests may be granted prior to submitting a *School of Choice* application. It is required that the students and his/her parents or guardians meet with a counselor or school administrator at the *School of Choice* to determine class availability.

Transportation Guidelines

Transportation is a key issue in the Branch *ISD Choice Program*. It is the sole responsibility of parents or guardians to transport their children to and from the *School of Choice*. The following is a list of the transportation guidelines for the *ISD Choice Program*.

1. Non-resident pupils who are admitted to attend school in a *School of Choice* shall not be entitled to transportation services from the enrolling or resident District *School of Choice* for the purposes of arriving at and departing from regularly scheduled classes, except as may otherwise be provided in an applicable IEP.
2. Parents/guardians may have the option to drive their child to a pre-approved bus stop in the *School of Choice* and ride if space is available on the bus. Once the child is transported from school to the bus stop, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide transportation home for the child.
3. Parents/guardians should also be aware that on those rare occasions when school closes early due to weather, conferences, etc., it is also their responsibility to provide transportation for the child.
4. Parents/guardians will assume the responsibility for the safety of the child at the bus stop.
5. Students participating in the *ISD Choice Program*, who are eligible to ride a school bus, are required to follow rules, regulations, and bus discipline policy of the *School of Choice*.
6. A transportation fee may be assessed by the *School of Choice*.

Athletic Policy

The primary focus of the Branch *ISD Choice Program* is based on academics and not athletics. Therefore, students and parents or guardians should be aware that students will follow the policies and procedures of the *School of Choice* for participation in the school's athletic programs and activities.

Each *School of Choice* complies with pertinent regulations of the Michigan High School Athletic Association and specific relevant league standards regarding eligibility of transfer students for participation in interscholastic athletics.

Specifically, a student enrolled in grades 9 through 12 who transfers from one high school or junior high/middle school to another high school is ineligible to participate in an interscholastic athletic contest for one (1) full semester in the school to which the student transfers, unless s/he qualifies under one or more of the exceptions as defined by the M.H.S.A.A.

Compliance with Law & Non-discrimination Policy

Each School of Choice Board of Education certifies that it complies with all federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the United States Department of Education and the Michigan State Department of Education.

It is also the policy of each School of Choice Board of Education that no person on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, limited English, or handicap shall be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program, employment practice, or activity for which it is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the United States Department of Education or the Michigan State Department of Education.

“Things to Do Checklist”

- Pick up an application from the Superintendent’s office of your local school district or the Branch Intermediate School District at 370 Morse Street, Coldwater. (Next to the Branch Area Careers Center)

- Meet with an administrator or school counselor from the *School of Choice* prior to completing and returning the *ISD Choice Program* application.

- Be sure to get a signature of the *School of Choice* administrator or counselor on the application.

- Complete and return the application to the Superintendent’s office of your *School of Choice* no later than 4:00 PM, August 27 for the first semester or January 7 for the second semester.

School of Choice Important Dates & Deadlines

March 20, 2021	<i>School of Choice</i> application forms available from each superintendent’s office
August 27, 2021	Application deadline for first semester
September 4, 2021	Notification of Acceptance or Rejection sent to Parent/Guardian
January 7, 2022	Application deadline for second semester
January 14, 2022	Notification of Acceptance or Rejection sent to Parent/Guardian
<i>After</i> August 27 and January 7, 2022	Vacancies Filled on First-Come, First-Served Basis and/or according to local district policies and procedures. Vacancies should be filled prior to state count dates.