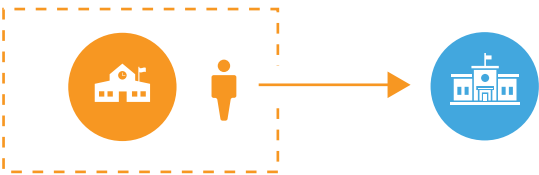


K-12 OPEN ENROLLMENT IN MISSISSIPPI

WHAT IS OPEN ENROLLMENT?

This policy lets students attend traditional public schools other than their assigned ones. There are two types of open enrollment: Cross-district lets students transfer to schools outside their assigned districts, while within-district lets students transfer to schools inside their school district.



BENEFITS



Escape bullying



Can help rural school districts sustain or grow enrollment levels¹



Improves school districts
by incentivizing them to be more responsive to the needs of families



Access to specialized academic approaches
including arts, classical education, college prep, and STEM



Access to high-performing schools

- In Florida and Arizona, most cross-district transfers enroll in A or B rated districts.²
- Poorly rated Wisconsin districts lose the most students.³

MODEL POLICY

FLORIDA



- All districts must offer open enrollment
- Districts must report available capacity by grade level on their websites
- Districts can't charge transfer tuition

84% of Americans support open enrollment.⁴

MISSISSIPPI

| Open Enrollment Score for Policymakers | | Score |
|---|--|----------|
| Statewide cross-district open enrollment (Max: 60 points) School districts must participate in cross-district enrollment so long as there are open seats, only rejecting applicants when space is no longer available. | | 30 |
| Statewide within-district open enrollment (Max: 15 points) School districts must participate in within-district enrollment so long as there are open seats, only rejecting applicants when space is no longer available. | | 0 |
| Children have free access to all public schools (Max: 10 points) School districts should not charge families transfer tuition. | | 0 |
| Public schools are open to all students (Max: 5 points) School districts shall not discriminate against transfer applicants based on their abilities or disabilities. | | 0 |
| Transparent reporting by the state education agency (Max: 4 points) The state education agency annually publishes district-level open enrollment data, including transfer students accepted, rejected applications, and why they were rejected. | | 0 |
| Transparent school district reporting (Max: 4 points) Districts must annually post seating capacity by grade level, and all open enrollment policies and procedures on their websites. | | 0 |
| Transfer applicants can appeal rejected applications (Max: 2 points) Districts must notify rejected applicants in writing why they were denied. Rejected applicants can appeal their denial to a neutral entity, whose decision shall be final. | | 0 |
| Total Score (Max: 100 pts) | | 30 |
| Grade | | F |



CONTACT

Jude Schwalbach
Senior Policy Analyst
Reason Foundation
jude.schwalbach@reason.org

Christopher T. Wilson
Government Affairs Manager
Reason Foundation
christopher.wilson@reason.org

1. Jude Schwalbach, "The important role of K-12 open enrollment policies in public schools," Reason Foundation, Commentary, July 10, 2024.
2. Ibid. 3. Ibid. 4. Yes, every kid.-YouGov, "Landmark poll: Americans believe expanding freedom strengthens education," October 18, 2023.