

HB 2445 -- PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTAL CHOICE ACT

SPONSOR: Cookson

This bill establishes the Public School Parental Choice Act. The Act requires every school district to participate in a public school parental choice program. The bill specifies that a student may attend school in a nonresident district. The nonresident district is not required to add teachers, staff, or classrooms to accommodate transfer applicants and the school may establish standards for transfer applications. This bill specifies that the standards for acceptance or rejection of a transfer may include program, class, grade, or school building capacity, but may not include academic achievement, athletic ability, or english proficiency. The bill requires that a nonresident school must give priority to an applicant who has a sibling enrolled in the nonresident district, as specified (Section 167.1020, RSMo).

This bill requires any parental choice transfer students, or their parents, to be responsible for transportation to the nonresident district of enrollment and the transfer student shall be counted as a resident pupil of the district in which he or she is enrolled for purposes of state aid. The resident district shall pay tuition to the nonresident school of enrollment as described in the bill (Section 167.1030).

If more students are transferring out of a district than into it, the deficit is capped at 5% of the district's average daily attendance in the previous year. A student who cannot transfer because the cap has been reached shall be given priority in the next school year (Section 167.1050).

The bill establishes an appeals process for any student whose application for a parental choice transfer was rejected by the nonresident district (Section 167.1060).

This bill is similar to HB 820 (2017).