School Choice

Section 1. **General Philosophy.** It is the general philosophy of East Allen County Schools that parents and guardians be provided as much choice as reasonably practical in deciding which of the district’s schools their children will attend. It is the general philosophy of the East Allen County Schools (EACS) that students will be better motivated to succeed academically, that parents will be more likely to support and take an active role in their children’s education, and that the EACS business community and patrons will better support the community’s public schools, if students are able to enroll in and attend the public school of their choice.

Section 2. **Who Makes School Choice Election.** For students who are under eighteen years of age or who are not emancipated (not living with their parents and supporting themselves), their parent or guardian will have the opportunity to make the election of school choice. Students who are eighteen years of age and emancipated will have the opportunity to make the election of school choice. All elections of school choice are subject to the conditions and limitations of this policy.

Section 3. **School Attendance Areas.** The Executive Director of Student Services will review school attendance areas prior to each school year and make any recommendations for change thereon to the superintendent. Each student shall attend the assigned school in his or her home attendance area, unless a transfer request has been properly filed and granted under this policy.

Section 4. **Transfer Requests.**

1. An eligible student or eligible parent may make a request for the student to attend another East Allen County School outside of his or her designated school attendance area.

2. This request must be made in writing on the designated EACS form and submitted to the Executive Director of Student Services on or before March 1st prior to the school year for which the transfer is requested.

3. The transfer request shall continue from year to year without further application.

4. The transfer request must be for a full day basis.

5. A student may only transfer one time during any school year, and thus must complete the school year at the school to which the student transferred.
6. The student may only participate in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities at the school to which the transfer request was granted, subject to all rules of the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA). To avoid ineligibility problems, it is suggested parents review the IHSAA rules prior to any transfer of a high school student or student entering high school.

7. New EACS residents who move into the EACS after March 1st may request transfer upon enrollment subject to Section 5 of this Policy.

8. Any requests for transfer received after March 1st and for good cause shown, may be considered for approval and granted at the discretion of the Executive Director of Student Services if the denial would, in the sole opinion of the Executive Director of Student Services, result in an undue burden of hardship on the parent or student. Any such requests shall be subject to the provisions of Section 5 of this Policy.

Section 5. Determination and Criteria. On or before April 1st of each year, the Executive Director of Student Services will make a determination on each transfer request and notify in writing the student, parent, or guardian of such determination. As a general rule, all transfer requests to another EACS school will be honored except when, in the discretion of the Executive Director of Student Services, the Director determines that if the request were granted:

1. that the maximum physical student capacity limits, as established by the superintendent, at the receiving school would be exceeded and that overcrowding at the receiving school would occur;

2. that the transfer would result in excessive class size in any class;

3. that the corporation targeted class size goals would be exceeded at the receiving school;

4. that there is insufficient staffing at the receiving school and that it is not reasonably practical to transfer teachers, paraprofessionals, or other staff to the receiving school as such would result in insufficient and uneconomical utilization of staff at either the receiving school or the transferring school;

5. that there would be insufficient space or classrooms at the receiving school;

6. that if all the requests to transfer to the receiving school were granted then it would result in the need to remodel or add on to the receiving school;
7. that to grant such a request might require the establishment, deletion, or modification of any new or existing educational program or service at the transferee school; or

8. that to grant such a request would likely cause the transferor school to lose staffing to the extent it is no longer economically feasible to operate that school.

Section 6. Lottery. If more than the maximum number of students as set out herein request to transfer, the Executive Director of Student Services shall conduct a lottery to determine transfer request approvals and provide written notice of the results of the lottery to all parents and students who requested a transfer. Requests to transfer to a school where the student’s sibling or other student regularly living in the student’s home goes to school, will be given priority in the lottery over all other requests, and assignment granted prior other requests, subject to Section 5 of this Policy.

Section 7. Transportation. Students who reside in their assigned school attendance area may be provided school bus transportation to and from their home and the assigned school within their attendance area, subject to the limitations and exclusions provided in administrative or board policy. Students who do not attend a school within their home attendance area will not be eligible for transportation except on a space available basis as determined by the Director of Transportation.

Section 8. Legal Settlement. Legal settlement is governed by I.C. 20-8.1-6.1 and I.C. 20-8.1-6.5. The Executive Director of Student Services shall determine all issues of legal settlement. The following shall apply:

1. With certain exceptions as permitted by statute, students must have legal settlement within the East Allen County Schools to attend any EACS school.

2. The Executive Director of Student Services shall receive any requests for cash transfer tuition payment by a student whose legal settlement is outside the EACS district. The amount of cash transfer tuition required will be the amount set by law or contract with other school corporations. Such requests shall be reviewed and a determination thereon is to be issued by the Director using the same criteria as set out in Section 5 above. The Director will notify the requesting student or parent of the determination.
3. If an EACS student has legal settlement in EACS but during the school year moves out of the EACS district or outside of his or her assigned attendance area, that student shall be entitled to remain in the EACS school for the remainder of that school year without payment of transfer tuition.

Section 9. Inter-School Corporation Transfers. In the event any student whose legal settlement is in a school district outside of EACS but within Allen County, Indiana, or any Indiana county adjacent to Allen County, who would otherwise qualify for admission into EACS as a student, applies for admission as a student, that student may be admitted into an EACS school by paying the amount of tuition as set forth in any contract between EACS and the contracting school corporation; provided that EACS is entitled to count such student on its ADM role; and further provided EACS receives full state tuition support for that student for that year, including but not limited to all additional pupil weights for special education and vocational education students. It is the expressed desire of EACS to enter into contracts, pursuant to I.C. 20-8.1-6.1-8, with any willing school corporation in Allen County or any adjacent Indiana county to permit students to transfer into EACS or out of EACS for the transfer tuition payment of One Dollar ($1.00) per year, subject to the terms of this policy.

Section 10. Appeals. In the event a request for transfer or request for cash transfer tuition payment is denied by the Executive Director of Student Services, an appeal may be made to the Deputy Superintendent and Chief Operating Officer. The Deputy Superintendent’s decision shall be final.

Section 11. Records. The Executive Director of Student Services shall maintain permanent records of all transfer requests and all cash transfer tuition requests, and the determinations issued thereon.