



**Special Needs Scholarship
Program Public School Choice
2022 – 2023 School Year**

Parental Right to Choice

Under the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (GSNS) law passed in 2007 (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2113), parent(s)/guardian(s) whose child meets the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship eligibility criteria now have the right to request a public school transfer to:

- Another public school within their district of residence; or
- Another public school system outside their district of residence; or
- To one of the three state schools for the blind or deaf (**Only students with the primary exceptionalities of visual impairment and/or individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may request a transfer to a State School**).
- A private school authorized to participate in the GSNS Program. Funds received through the GSNS Program can only be used to pay for tuition and fees at a private school authorized by the State Board of Education to participate in the program.

Note: Transportation under all school choice options are the responsibility of a parent/guardian. Funds cannot be used to pay the costs of out of district tuition, charter schools, or other options available under public school choice.

2022-23 Georgia Special Needs Student Scholarship Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program a student must meet the following requirements:

- **Student Eligibility Criteria 1-** A student must have a parent/guardian who currently lives in Georgia and has been a resident for at least one calendar year.
- **Student Eligibility Criteria 2-** A student was enrolled and completed the 2021-2022 school year in a Georgia public school in grades kindergarten through twelfth.
- **Student Eligibility Criteria 3-** A student was reported attending a Georgia public school by a school district(s) during mandatory student counts conducted in October 2021 **and** March 2022.
- **Student Eligibility Criteria 4 -** A student does not need to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the entire school year to qualify for the GSNS Program. A student must have received special education services at some point during the 2021 – 2022 school year through an IEP. A student must be reported by a school district(s) in either the October 2021 **OR** March 2022 student counts **OR** in the final student record as a student receiving special education services by the end of the 2021 – 2022 school year.

Note: If a student attended a private school through the Special Needs Scholarship Program during the 2021-22 school year, a parent/guardian is eligible for public school choice options for the 2022-2023 school year.

The authority to allow or deny transfer requests belongs to a school system. School systems can create their own forms and set deadlines for transfer requests. Parents/guardians must contact a school system directly regarding the process the school system uses for public school transfer requests available through the GSNS Program. A parent can link to any school system from the Georgia Department of Education's home page at www.gadoe.org. Only a school system has the authority to approve or deny a public school transfer request.



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TRANSFERS WITHIN A SCHOOL SYSTEM (e.g. transfer from one public school in a county to another in the same county)

A school system reviewing a transfer request must evaluate the request based on availability of space and/or the availability of a special education program at the requested public school that can meet the services outlined in a student's IEP. If there is no space available and/or if the public school requested by a parent/guardian cannot provide the special education services outlined in a student's IEP, then the school system can deny the transfer request.

TRANSFERS OUTSIDE OF A SCHOOL SYSTEM (e.g. transfer from a public school in Cobb County to a public school in Cherokee County)

A school system reviewing a transfer request to its school system from another school system can deny a request for any reason even if there is space and the availability of a special education program at a requested public school. **Note:** It is allowable for a school system to have a policy not to accept students that reside outside of the school system.

If a school system approves an out of system transfer request, it can charge a parent/guardian for the costs of educating a student; also known as out of district tuition. Funds received through the GSNS Program cannot be used to offset the costs of out-of district tuition.

IMPORTANT

If a transfer request is granted by a school system, the student must be allowed to complete all grades at a school. For example, if a student is granted a transfer request to a middle school that serves grades 6 - 8, the transfer request would apply to the student's attendance through grade 8. The parent would need to file another transfer request if the parent wished to send the student to a different high school.



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Special Needs School Choice Application

Student's Name _____

Current Grade _____ Date of birth _____ Age _____

Name of parent/guardian/other requesting transfer _____

Home Address: Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone () _____ E-Mail: _____

If applicable, name of public school system student attended during 2022 - 2023 school year:

If applicable, name of public school student attended during 2022 - 2023 school year:

If applicable, name of private school student attended during 2022 - 2023 school year:

Request for transfer:

I, _____ am requesting a transfer for
Name of Parent/Guardian/Other

_____ to attend _____
Student's Name Name of Public or State School

in the _____
Name of School System

Signature Parent/Guardian

Submit Application to: CCSD Parent Information Center 595 Prince Avenue Athens GA 30601 The application period will be open from April 1st through April 30th, 2023. Application must be received no later than April 30, 2023. Decisions will be made and Approval/Denial notifications will be sent to parents prior to the first day of school. <https://www.clarke.k12.ga.us/Page/2584>