

## School Choice Guidelines

Updated 03-02-2023

### Default Placement

The default placement for a student is based on residency, in accordance with state law.

- Lake Region Union Elementary-Middle School District (LRUEMSD) offers a town school for every family living in the towns of Albany, Barton, Brownington, Glover, Irasburg, and Orleans. Transportation is provided where applicable for students to their town school.
- Westmore does not operate a school, and Westmore students may choose to attend any school within the District. Transportation is provided for students living in Westmore to schools in Barton and Orleans.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) can apply to have their child(ren) attend any of the public schools in the towns of Albany, Barton, Brownington, Glover, Irasburg, and Orleans.

### Application Process

**By March 8** — Lake Region Union Elementary-Middle Schools communicate to parents the availability of school choice and where to access information if they wish to apply for school choice.

Parent(s) or guardian(s) fill out a school choice application for each child - indicate school of choice, check the appropriate category in the “priorities list”, and return the application:

- by mail – OCSU, 130 Kinsey Rd., Barton, VT 05822
- in person to the Orleans Central Supervisory Union office in Barton
- or via email to the superintendent’s administrative assistant at [lworden@ocsu.org](mailto:lworden@ocsu.org)

**April 1** — School Choice applications due. The deadline for the return of school choice applications is April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**April 25** — The LRUEMSD will mail letters to all applicants explaining the school choice placement for their child and general information for their child’s individual school.

**May 12** — Parents must notify the Orleans Central Supervisory Union offices by May 12th to confirm if they will accept the school choice placement. This placement will remain in effect unless the family chooses to begin the school choice application process again the next school year. Any other requested changes are governed by the “School Change” section below.

### Availability of school choice

- The Orleans Central Supervisory Union has a class size policy.
- School principals submit to the superintendent their class size limits and, given the student population, the number of school choice slots available as guided by the policy.
- Factors taken into consideration include the physical classroom size (fire code limits the number of children in particular classrooms), financial impact, and migration buffer

numbers (each school must allow for several slots to allow for students moving/migrating and becoming legal residents).

### **Priorities for the school choice plan**

What are "priorities?" Sometimes a school does not have room for every student whose parent/guardian lists it as a choice. When this happens, the student is granted a choice based on priorities. Please see below for details.

#### **1. Continued Enrollment**

Children currently enrolled in a school, regardless of their town of residence, will be given priority. No child who is attending a school in the current school year will be displaced by school choice. If a family moves from one of the District towns to another of the District towns during the school year, the student may stay in their original school for the remainder of that school year.

#### **2. Siblings**

- If one sibling is attending a school outside of their town of residence, the other sibling(s) will be given priority to attend that school as well.
  - Siblings are defined as biological or stepchildren living in the same household.

#### **3. Staff**

Children of current employees of Orleans Central Supervisory Union and its member districts, Lake Region Union Elementary-Middle School and Lake Region High School who live in the OCSU towns of Albany, Barton, Brownington, Glover, Irasburg, Orleans, Westmore.

#### **4. Geography**

Children whose home is closer to a school in a neighboring town may attend school in that town after the above priorities have been fulfilled. Transportation will be provided if they live on an existing bus route for the neighboring town.

### **Waitlists**

If parents do not get their first choice, their child will be placed on a waitlist for one or more of their other choices. Rules for waitlists are:

- LRUEMSD will create waitlists for all schools where there are more applicants than available seats for a particular grade.
- A student's place on the waitlist is based on the date of choice applications received prior to April 1 for the next year. The application must include names of siblings and schools, and school choices selected on the application.
- On August 15 any unfilled migration buffer slots can be filled with students who are on the waitlist.
- The wait list will be deleted at the end of each school year, and a new one will be started for the next school year. Families who were on a waitlist must re-apply for the following school year.

### **Coming off a waitlist**

- When seats become available, students will be assigned (prior to the first day of school), from waitlists based on priority. Students of equal priority will be assigned in the order applications were received.
- From mid-April through mid-August, as seats become available, children are automatically moved off the waitlist. Parents will be notified of the space in their chosen school.
- Families receive notification about their new school assignment by letter sent via mail and will have two weeks to accept the school choice option.
- Families interested in school choice who submit an application after April 1st will be placed at the end of the waitlist.

### **School Changes**

Families may apply to change schools during the current school year. This is not recommended if it is not in the best interest of the child or the family. As a rule, most school changes will be considered for the following school year. However, in extenuating circumstances, school changes mid-year will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Parents must complete a school choice application; exercising school choice will be determined based on [Class Size Guidelines](#).

### **Length of Placement**

Once a student is placed, they shall remain at the choice school until Grade 9. Requests to return to the school in the town of the student's residence will be considered as a part of the next year's district school choice program and an application would need to be sent during School Choice timeline. Once school choice is elected the school in the student's town of residence becomes a choice school and the school of placement becomes the student's home school.

*This plan will be reviewed and may be modified yearly and any changes to the guidelines will be posted.*