

The Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice Plan

Adopted by the Kent County Superintendents' Association

For the 2024-2025 School Year

The Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice Plan

A Statement of Purpose

The Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice plan provides the families living within the ISD service area a range of choices to obtain a quality education for their children.

Kent ISD Superintendents believe public schools offer the best educational opportunities for all students. This plan is designed to provide the best possible education for the vast majority of Kent ISD families who choose their home district, while accommodating the desires of those who would like to transfer to another school.

Goals

Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice is designed to:

- Meet the needs of parents, students, schools and communities within Kent ISD.
- Provide opportunities for families to seek the best options available for their children.
- Strengthen collaboration and cooperation within and among schools.
- Better utilize and share resources among schools.

Background and History

Kent ISD and its 20 constituent districts have a long and proud history of working collaboratively to serve the educational needs of our students, parents and communities. We are committed to the academic achievement of our children and to responsible action regarding educational decisions. Thus, in coming to agreement on a Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice plan, our Boards of Education have supported a cooperative program which incorporates and enhances many of the features of state legislation (Section 105), yet includes guidelines and procedures that best meet local concerns for quality, equity and consistency.

Criteria

The following criteria were agreed upon by members of the Kent County Superintendents' Association and their individual school boards in adopting the Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice Plan.

- Provide families and students with public school options
- Maintain quality programming and desired class sizes in all participating districts
- Respect local taxpayers' and districts' need to plan for growth while maintaining quality programs for students already living within district boundaries

Choice Opportunities

Kent ISD's Schools of Choice Plan is designed to meet the needs of families seeking to enroll their children in another school district through:

1. **Open Schools of Choice plan**, limited only by the seats available in receiving districts and the time constraints of the open enrollment period, which is from **April 8 through May 10, 2024**.
2. Districts that have spaces remaining after the initial choice period will make those openings available until the first day of the next school year. Superintendents agree that if a district-wide waiver to start school prior to Labor Day is in place, the first day of school will be considered the Monday two weeks prior to Labor Day. For the 2024-2025 school year districts can accept students until **Monday, August 19th**.

Limits on the Kent ISD Plan

The only limit on movement between school districts for most students in the Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice Plan is the space available in the desired district or the Choice students' suspension or expulsion record. Schools participating in the Kent ISD plan are allowed to limit the space available, or to opt out of Choice altogether, if the district's growth is so great that accepting Choice students would threaten the quality of programming for existing students.

Eligibility

All families and all students are eligible for the Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice Plan, regardless of grade level, ethnic background or student ability. Openings are limited only by the space available in participating districts. Families wishing to participate should request an application from their resident district, or their district of choice, and apply to the district of their choice during the application period, which will be April 8 through May 10, 2024.

Member districts may elect to publish openings for "siblings only", or a member district may elect to publish openings for "siblings OR students enrolled in the immediately prior school year." Either of these posting elections allow the member district to enroll any applicants who apply during the window who meet the criteria but prohibit the district from enrolling any students who do not meet the published criteria. Alternatively, a district could post XX openings, X of which are reserved for siblings or students enrolled in the immediately prior school year. Lastly, a district can continue past practice and simply publish XX slots in total. In no case could a district fill more slots than the total number of slots listed in the initial publication.

How to Apply

Parents can apply by:

1. Requesting a Schools of Choice application form from their resident district, or their district of choice, during the application period.
2. Completing and returning the application to the district of choice by the **May 10** deadline. Parents should indicate alternate school choices on their application form, as a random-draw lottery will be held if the district of choice has more applications than openings. (Note: Only **one** application should be submitted per student.) The applications of those students who were not selected in the lottery will be automatically forwarded to the alternate choices identified by parents.

3. Parents will receive notification of acceptance no later than May 24 and will have until May 31 to confirm their desire to enroll their child in the choice district. Once a child is enrolled as a Schools of Choice student, his or her siblings may be accepted by the district of choice. Once a child is enrolled as a Schools of Choice student, that child can remain in the district of choice for the remainder of his or her school career, or until they move out of Kent ISD.
4. Waiting lists will be created at choice districts and parents will be notified if spaces become available.

Special Considerations for Parents & Students Considering Choice

1. Transportation is **not** provided for Schools of Choice enrollees. Parents must provide their own transportation to and from school for children accepted for enrollment through the Kent ISD Collaborative Schools of Choice Plan.
2. The Michigan High School Athletic Association imposes a one-semester prohibition on athletic participation for Schools of Choice enrollees in grades 10-12.
3. Most Kent ISD school districts also participate in the state regulated 105c choice program that allows movement between school districts in different ISDs. Please contact the district of choice to learn more about these options, as it is separate from the Kent County plan.