

1506 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

uniformly throughout the system must be used if any choice is to be denied. Each student and his parent, or other adult person acting as parent, must be notified in writing of the name and location of the school to which the student is assigned hereunder promptly upon completion of processing his first or any second choice. A school system may, at its option, give preference to any student whose choice is for a school at which students of his race are a minority.

§ 181.50 Transfers for Special Needs

Each student must attend the school to which he is assigned under the foregoing provisions, except that any student who requires a course of study not offered at that school, or who is physically handicapped, may be permitted, upon his written application, to transfer to another school which is designed to fit, or offers courses for, his special needs.

§ 181.51 No Limitation of Choice; Transportation

No factor, such as a requirement for health or birth records, academic or physical examinations, the operation of the school transportation system, or any other factor except overcrowding, may limit or affect the assignment of students to schools on the basis of their choices. Where transportation is generally provided, buses must be routed to the maximum extent feasible so as to serve each student choosing any school in the system. In any event, every student choosing either the formerly white or the formerly Negro school (or other school established for students of a particular race, color, or national origin) nearest his residence must be transported to the school to which he is assigned under these provisions, whether or not it is his first choice, if that school is sufficiently distant from his home to make him eligible for transportation under generally applicable transportation rules.

§ 181.52 Officials Not To Influence Choice

No official, teacher, or employee of the school system may require or request any student or prospective student to submit a choice form during the choice period other than by the prescribed letter, notice, and choice form. After the choice period, the school system must make all reasonable efforts to obtain a completed choice form from any student who has not exercised a choice. However, at no time may any official, teacher, or employee of the school system, either directly or indirectly, seek to influence any parent, student, or any other person involved, in the exercise of a choice, or favor or penalize any person because of a choice made. Information concerning choices made by individual students or schools to which they are assigned may not be made public.

§ 181.53 Public Notice

On or shortly before the date the choice period opens, the school system must arrange for the conspicuous publication of a notice describing the desegregation plan in the newspaper most generally circulated in the community. The text of the notice must be in a form prescribed by the Commissioner. Publication as a legal notice is not sufficient. Copies of this notice must also be given at that time to all radio and television stations serving the community. Any other announcement published by the school system concerning enrollment, such as might be made in connection with scheduling pre-enrollment procedures for prospective first grade students, must (1) state clearly that under the desegregation plan a choice of school is required for each student whose choice has not yet been exercised, (2) describe and state where copies of the prescribed letter, notice and choice form may be freely obtained in person, or by letter or telephone request, and (3) state the period during which the choice may be exercised.

§ 181.54 Requirements for Effectiveness of Free Choice Plans

A free choice plan tends to place the burden of desegregation on Negro or other minority group students and their parents. Even when school authorities undertake good faith efforts to assure its fair operation, the very nature of a free choice plan and the effect of longstanding community attitudes often tend to preclude or inhibit the exercise of a truly free choice by or for minority group students.

For these reasons, the Commissioner will scrutinize with special care the operation of voluntary plans of desegregation in school systems which have adopted free choice plans.