

Susan Canaga

From: OSPI Customer Support
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 3:04 PM
To: OSPI Customer Support
Cc: Susan Canaga
Subject: Status Update on the Choice Transfer system

TO: Choice Coordinators
FROM: OSPI Customer Support on behalf of Susan Canaga, Digital Learning Department of OSPI
SUBJECT: Status Update on the Choice Transfer system

Hello Choice Coordinators,

The [Standard Choice Transfer System](#) is up and running across the state! Many thanks to all of you that participated in the training webinars, asked questions, and provided feedback. This email is very long but provides clarifying guidance and important information about fixes and requested features.

CLARIFYING GUIDANCE

These questions have been asked frequently. Answers are now posted on the SCTS website (click on the link) and are available by scrolling to the end of this email.

[Q. Does a request need to be denied for typos or minor errors?](#)

[Q. How do we handle the situation if we do not make a decision on requests within the 45 day timeframe? What happens in the system?](#)

[Q. As a resident district, how accountable are we for the validity of the behavior responses?](#)

[Q. How is a Choice Transfer handled for homeless students, foster families, and custody arrangements?](#)

[Q. What if our district wants to use the system for all Choice Transfers and Interdistrict Agreements but the other district is only going to use it for online enrollment?](#)

[Q. As the resident district, do I need to know the first and last days of school for the nonresident district to input on the transfer?](#)

FIXES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE

These are errors, confusing elements, or required functionality that was not delivered at launch time. The fixes have been made and will be implemented in the production system on Friday night, 6/6/14. They include:

1. **Begin date:** If the nonresident district accepts a request after the begin date that was originally entered, the system will now set the begin date to be the date of the acceptance. (Example: Begin date is entered as 9/1, but the request is not accepted until 9/15. The begin date is automatically changed by the system to be 9/15.)
2. **Student search:** The search feature now operates like the CEDARS student search and returns all students—not just the students that are currently enrolled in your district/school. (Enter a complete first and last name for best response time.)
3. **Export to Excel:** Contact information (email and addresses), grade level, parent name, program name have been added to the export. With easy access to this information, a district could do a mail merge (email or postal) to communicate important information to families such as renewal reminders or approval timeframes.
4. **Home page (“inbox”):** The default sort is now the status date so that your most current activity is displayed first. A grade level column was added. The template links were removed since they were obsolete, and the most current templates are available on the SCTS website.

5. Input Screen: Tab order on student name is fixed so it doesn't go sideways until the name is completely entered. SSID is now visible on the screen and the print friendly view. SSID may be manually entered.
6. Email text: Revisions were made to address some confusion.
 - a. School year was added.
 - b. Different statements are made for a new request versus a renewal.
 - c. Families are instructed to contact the requested school or the Choice Coordinator to complete the enrollment (before it was just the Choice Coordinator).
 - d. Grade level was added to the subject line

REQUIREMENTS PENDING

These features were in the original requirements, but could not be delivered within the timeframe for launch.

1. Provide an advanced search feature to efficiently locate a student within a high quantity of requests and locate requests within an archive/history from previous years
2. Auto-generate messages to coordinators on email delivery errors (versus the current personal message from Susan Canaga!)
3. Enhance SRX to provide discipline and attendance information and modify misleading messages about the status of a transfer

REQUESTS FOR NEW FEATURES

These are requests that are outside of the original requirements defined for the system. I am not sure if funding will be available to address any of these, but I will follow up with you soon to learn which you consider critical and your highest priority. Here are requests I have received so you know what I have on record—they are presented in no particular order.

1. Provide ability to edit a request that has errors
2. Add a review step before the request is actually submitted
3. Capture whether the request is new or a renewal
4. Identify who/what changes were made to the Interdistrict Agreement
5. Establish a "view only" role in EDS
6. Enable the system to work for Intradistrict transfers as well
7. Provide a parent frontend to EDS and get rid of the paper request form
8. Auto format birth date and phone number with the dashes
9. Capture the school of the student's resident district attendance area
10. Provide ability to easily add siblings
11. Provide ability to enter comments about the request
12. Add an interface to enrollment systems
13. Provide a means to capture an image of the signed parent request form
14. Provide the ability to change a school during the renew process. (For example: changing from middle school to high school)
15. Provide statistics for administrative reporting
16. Provide direct access within the Choice Transfer system to SRX for verification of student information (discipline, attendance, special education, 504, etc)

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CLARIFYING GUIDANCE (The complete listing as referred to above.)

Q. Does a request need to be denied for typos or minor errors?

A. If the identity of the student is not in question by the districts, and it is clearly understood what school/program the student is requesting to be released to, it is not necessary to deny the request for inconsequential errors. Districts may communicate outside the system by phone or email for clarification. If an error is made that needs to be corrected, the resident district needs to ask the nonresident district to deny the request with a reason of something like “Entry Error – *explanation*”. The resident district would then re-enter the request.

Q. How do we handle the situation if we do not make a decision on requests within the 45 day timeframe? What happens in the system?

A. The Choice Transfer request remains active in the system as “pending release.” The parent is not notified that 45 days have passed or that the status has changed in any way. It is still available for a district to accept or deny—even after 45 days pass. Districts need to be aware of the 45 day rule (WAC 392-137-205 Section (2)(a), <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=392-137-205>) because a parent may contact you to exercise their right to appeal. If your district is unable to meet the timeframe, we advise that you be proactive in your communication of the timeframe such as posting a notice on your website, sending a notice to applicants, etc. The Choice Transfer system provides the parent email and mailing address in the Excel Export to make it easier for districts to communicate with the group of applicants.

Q. As a resident district, how accountable are we for the validity of the behavior responses?

A. If you are using the OSPI template for the parent request form, one of the acknowledgements the parent makes by signing the form is that they have provided complete and accurate information. The parent is accountable. If you have ready knowledge about the student that clarifies the parent information or would be otherwise useful, it is generally expected that you would add it. But, if you do not have information on the student, it is the district decision on how much research or verification you perform. The Student Record Exchange (SRX) is being enhanced to provide discipline and attendance information, so nonresident districts will be able to verify student information. That enhancement should be available soon. A nonresident district could reserve their right to rescind a transfer if accurate information is not provided from a parent by stating it as a condition of rescindment in district policy.

Q. How is a Choice Transfer handled for homeless students, foster families, and custody arrangements?

A. Follow these guidelines:

- Homeless students: Students who qualify under McKinney-Vento would not need a Choice Transfer.
- Foster families: Residency is defined as the district where the student is expected to live for 20 consecutive days. If this is not the resident district, then a Choice Transfer is required.
- Custody arrangements: If the parenting plan shows that the parents will split custody 50/50, the parents should decide which district the student will attend and a Choice Transfer is not necessary. If the split is not even, and the parents want to enroll their student in the district where the parent with less than 50% custody lives, a Choice Transfer would be necessary.

Q. What if our district wants to use the system for all Choice Transfers and Interdistrict Agreements but the other district is only going to use it for online enrollment?

A. The system was designed with the intent to facilitate communication, management, and recordkeeping among the districts for all types of transfers—beyond what is required in statute. We encourage districts to examine the benefits of using the system and would like to understand the reasons why it would not be used. Please contact OSPI, susan.canaga@k12.wa.us, 206-543-5426.

Q. As the resident district, do I need to know the first and last days of school for the nonresident district to input on the transfer?

A. Resident school districts do not need to align the dates with nonresident district school year dates. The begin date of the transfer represents when the nonresident district is able to claim funding for the student and defaults to 9/1 in the system. The resident district may release the student earlier if their school year begins in August so that the student is not held to attendance standards in the resident district when they are going to start the school year in the nonresident district. The nonresident district notifies the student when to begin attending school during the enrollment process. As

for the end date, transfer requests are typically approved for one school year and end on 8/31. An end date before 8/31 represents a midterm transfer for only part of the year (such as first semester only).

**** We are sending this email to users with the Choice Transfer Coordinator User role access in EDS. If someone else in your district should receive this information, please forward it to them. The only way to remove yourself from this email distribution list is to have your District Data Security Manager remove the role access from your EDS account, which would also terminate your ability to access applications in EDS.***