

Nov. 30, 2023

Dear Parents and Stakeholders,

You may recall that in 2022, the Kansas Legislature passed a law requiring all school districts in the state to have a policy allowing for students living outside their district boundaries to attend their schools, if there is capacity to do so. With this new law going into effect for the 2024-25 school year, we wanted to provide an update on the process for adopting this policy, and what it could mean for Goessel Schools.

Historically, USD 411 has accepted out of district students, but on a selective basis. These students are an important part of our Goessel school family. This school year we have 61 out of district students; of these, 44 are returning and 17 are brand new students. Mr. Boden and I screen out students who have poor attendance or who have had a history of suspensions. The new law essentially requires districts to follow a two-step process:

1. Adopt a policy for how the Board of Education will determine capacity for each school. At our November BOE meeting, our Board finalized the proposed policy. The Board will hold a public hearing about the policy, as required by statute, on Monday, December 11, at 5:50 p.m. We invite public comment at that meeting or by reaching out directly to me or any of our BOE members. Concerns about the law itself, and the requirement to admit out-of-district students, should be directed to the legislators who collectively enacted the law. This is not popular legislation as it does change our process of screening incoming students for all school districts. The Board may discuss the policy again later at the December 11 meeting, and we will then take action on the policy.
2. In the spring, the district must determine the capacity that each of our schools has to enroll out-of-district students. In grades K-8, that capacity historically has been up to 24 students, but also determined by grade level needs with input from teachers. We look at the maximum capacity of classrooms, class chemistry and other factors.

In grades 9-12, capacity is determined as a whole, rather than at each specific grade. The same factors, plus anticipated demand for particular courses or programming, can be used in making this determination at the high school level.

The district must determine the number of open seats available to nonresidents at each grade, building or program level by May 1, and publish that information on its website by June 1. From June 1-30, the district must accept applications from out-of-district students. If the number of out-of-district students applying is less than the capacity available, all students must be admitted. If the number of applicants is more than capacity, the district must hold a lottery process to determine who will be accepted.

Per statute, priority is given to military students, students in the custody of the Department of Children and Families, and, in future years, to any sibling who already has been accepted to enroll in our schools, as long as there are open spots for those siblings. Once a student has been accepted, he or she can remain a Goessel student until graduation, provided the student meets attendance and behavioral expectations specified in the policy. Out-of-district families will be notified by July 15 if they have been accepted to enroll for that school year. Unless required by laws pertaining to a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan, districts have no obligation to transport nonresident students.

Our Board of Education and administration look forward to hearing your feedback as we navigate this new law and policy.

Sincerely,



Mark K. Crawford, Superintendent
Goessel Schools – USD 411