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Assistant Superintendent



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### Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program (GSNS) Annual Notification 2016-2017

As the parent of a student who receives special education in our school system, we are required to let you know about your options to exercise public and private school choice. Under a state law passed by the Georgia State Legislature in 2007, parents of students who receive special education may choose to transfer their child to another public school or private school in Georgia.

#### **Public School Choice Options**

A parent can request a transfer to another public school within their school system as long as there is available space at that school and the school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing Individualized education plan. A school system must agree to accept the student however. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent is responsible for transportation to and from the school.

The parent may request to transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the system and school has a program with the services agreed in the student's existing individualized education plan. A school system must agree to accept the student however. If the parent chooses this option and the school system accepts the child, then the parent is responsible for transportation to and from a school in that system.

The parent may also request a transfer to one of the state schools for the deaf and/or blind operated by the State Board of Education. Acceptance into a state school will depend on whether that setting is appropriate for the student's needs. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent is responsible for transportation to and from the state school. Please contact the Georgia Department of Education for more information about transferring to a State School.

#### **Private School Choice Option**

If you are interested in transferring your child to a private school in Georgia, you may be able to take advantage of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. These scholarships provide funding that can be used to offset tuition costs at participating private schools in the state of Georgia. If a parent chooses this option, then the parent is responsible for transportation to and from the private school. For more information on the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship and the parent application process, please visit the Georgia Department of Education's website at <https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx>.

It is important for parents who are considering the private school option to understand that under state law: "Acceptance of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship shall have the same effect as a parental refusal to consent to services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C.A. Section 1400, et seq.,". Parents should carefully review the law as well as information provided on the State Department's website. Private schools are not required to provide any specialized instruction or specific services to a student and the nature of the services provided by private schools varies according to the school.

Please know that the Superintendent or an administrative staff member is available to discuss with you any questions you may have regarding the options available under the law and the services provided by the Brantley County School System. My contact information is listed at the bottom for your convenience. Parents are strongly encouraged to thoroughly research the provisions and requirements of this law prior to accepting a scholarship based on a determination that a private school can best meet the needs of your child.

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