Open enrollment is one form of public school choice.

Open enrollment lets students select and transfer to the public school they would like to attend, rather than attending a school based on where they live.

### 46 states, plus the District of Columbia, have open enrollment policies.

Only Alabama, Illinois, Maryland and North Carolina do not address open enrollment in state policy. See this [50-State Comparison](https://www.ecs.org) for more about open enrollment in each state.

### Across states, open enrollment policies vary widely by program element.

#### INTRADISTRICT

- **35 states** have policies that allow students to select and attend another school within their resident district.

#### INTERDISTRICT

- **42 states** have policies that allow students to select and attend another school outside their resident district.

| 28 states | have mandatory policy provisions, which mean they require districts to offer open enrollment in at least some circumstances. |
| 34 states | have voluntary policy provisions, which mean districts may choose whether to participate. |

States may also limit availability of programs by:
- Stipulating which students or schools can participate.
- Limiting the number of students who can transfer.
- Allowing districts to have final approval.

### States often require districts to set enrollment priorities for students...

- Living in the school or district residence zone.
- Who are siblings of currently enrolled students.
- Whose parents are school employees or military personnel.
- Transferring from low-performing schools.
- From low-income families.
- In foster care or those with disabilities.