

Arkansas Department of Education
ATTN: Office of School Choice

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you today to file an appeal of a revision of a previously accepted school choice application for two of my children, [REDACTED].

There are several reasons I am appealing this decision. The first reason is because my son [REDACTED], who will be entering the third grade in 2026-2027, has attended Euper Lane Elementary in Fort Smith since he was in kindergarten. He was originally placed here because the school we lived in district for did not have an appropriate program/classroom for him. My son has multiple disabling conditions, and Euper Lane has historically served children with the most extensive needs in our area for a long time. Only next year is the school in our resident district able to accept him. However, he is already used to attending Euper Lane, is familiar with the staff there, knows the building layout, and is comfortable there. [REDACTED] is nonverbal, autistic, and has a rare genetic epilepsy condition. Change is extremely difficult for him. I think sending him to a new school will cause undue distress and regression. I applied in February for school choice and on February 25th, our application was approved. Next year I will also have an incoming kindergartener. She is also autistic. While she has not attended Euper Lane because they closed the preschool classroom the year she was old enough to attend, [REDACTED] also has a history of struggling with transition. During the school year 2024-2025, [REDACTED] attended a 2 day per week, 4 hour per day program through the public school district for special education preschoolers at Carnall Elementary in Fort Smith. It took her several months to adapt to attending. For the 2025-2026 school year, we intended to repeat the program since there was no longer a full time preschool class available at Euper Lane. The classroom was moved to Tilles Elementary, and changed to a schedule of Monday and Tuesday. [REDACTED] struggled the entire time she attended to adjust to the change in routine. I eventually had to pull her from the program and enroll her in a different state funded preschool for children with developmental delays and disabilities, called Kids Unlimited, where she attended a full week program. I did this because she does need occupational therapy and speech therapy and I did think a preschool setting was needed to help prepare her for kindergarten. [REDACTED] has attended many events at her brothers school over the years and is comfortable with this school building. She always wants to go in and has never cried or tried to avoid entering the building like she did at Tilles. I also applied for school choice for [REDACTED] and it was also approved on February 25, 2026. For this reason, I think due to my children's disabilities and their comfort level at Euper Lane, along with the fact that their application was already approved, the school district should honor that approval.

Additionally, I found the "DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE" on the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's website that states the following:

2-2.03 A transfer student attending a nonresident school under Arkansas Code, Title 6,

Chapter 18, Subchapter 19 and these rules may complete all remaining school years at the nonresident district.

2-2.03.1 A present or future sibling of a student who continues enrollment in the nonresident district under Section 2-2.03 of these rules and applies for a school choice transfer under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-1905 may enroll in the nonresident district if the district has the capacity to accept the sibling without adding teachers, staff, or classrooms or exceeding the regulations and standards established by law.

2-2.03.2 A present or future sibling of a student who continues enrollment in the nonresident district and who enrolls in the nonresident district under Section 2.03 of these rules may complete all remaining years at the nonresident district.

2-3.04 Except as provided in Chapter 4, for each application received under this rule, the nonresident district shall notify the applicant in writing as to whether the student's application has been accepted or rejected within fifteen (15) calendar days of the nonresident district's receipt of the application.

2-3.04.1 If the application is rejected, the superintendent of the nonresident district shall state in the notification letter the reason for the rejection.

2-3.04.2 A transfer under this chapter is effective:

2-3.04.2.1 At the time the non-resident district provides notice that the application is accepted; or

2-3.04.2.2. At the time the application on appeal is approved by the State Board of Education.

2-3.04.3 A student who has an effective transfer under this chapter may:

2-3.04.3.1 Immediately transfer to the new district; or

2-3.04.3.2. Transfer to the new district at the beginning of the following school year.

2-3.04.3.2.a If the student elects to remain at the district the student attended at the time the application was filed for the remainder of the school year, the district shall continue to provide all educational services for that student for the remainder of the school year and the student shall continue to be counted towards the district's average daily attendance for the remainder of that school year.

According to this document, it sounds like the school choice approval was considered effective when we received the approval letter on February 25, 2026. We accepted that approval. I feel the district should have to honor this approval, since at the time there was sufficient staffing and the district chose to remove classrooms from this school, effectively removing staffing. The only reason given for the revision was lack of staffing, which was not the case at the time of the approval, and would not have been the case if classrooms were not removed. I am attaching a

copy of our initial approval letters, the revision letter, and the letter I received with the "proposed placement". I would like to reject the proposed placement and proceed with accepting the approved school choice application. Please consider my appeal as I believe that keeping my children at Euper Lane Elementary will be in their best interest.

I would like to request a hearing.
Thank you for your attention to this matter.





February 25, 2026

Dear Ms. [REDACTED]

The school choice application submitted (January 1 – June 1) for [REDACTED] regarding a fall intradistrict (FSPS school to FSPS school) transfer to Euper Lane Elementary School has been accepted based upon available staffing capacity (set by the State of Arkansas at 95%).

Your current residence school and requested school are aware of your approved impending transfer. Your requested transfer school is looking forward to welcoming your student into their learning community on the first day of school in the fall.

- Elementary – Current resident/attendance school will note this transfer in “Next School Building.” for the fall.
- Secondary – Current resident/attendance school will note this transfer in “Next School Building.” for the fall. School and counselors from current and requested transfer school will coordinate course selection for the incoming student.

Transferring students in grades 7-12 wishing to participate in interscholastic activities in their new school were required to complete a Changing School Athletic Participation (CSAP) form with their school choice application. Transferring schools without CSAP approval will negatively impact eligibility to participate in interscholastic activities. Eighth grade students must complete the school choice application and receive approval before they are eligible to participate in off season or spring practices at a non-feeder high school.

Based upon staffing capacity, acceptance into a school does not guarantee a particular class or program will be available. In addition, transportation to school using an intradistrict transfer is the sole responsibility of the family.

We encourage you to reach out to the Student Services department if you have any questions or need further assistance. We look forward to supporting and partnering with your family regarding the education of your child in Fort Smith Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Michael Farrell, Ed.D.
Executive Director of Student Services

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May 11, 2026

Ms. [REDACTED]
2302 S 22nd Street
Fort Smith, AR 72901

Dear Ms. [REDACTED]

This letter is to inform you that the previously approved application and acceptance for [REDACTED] to attend Euper Lane Elementary School for the 2026-2027 school year is being revised due to a change in staffing capacity at Euper Lane.

As a result of this staffing adjustment, Euper Lane is no longer able to accommodate additional students within the established capacity guidelines. Therefore, your student will be moved to the waiting list for Euper Lane Elementary School. Should space becomes available, Student Services will contact you regarding any change in placement status.

In the meantime, [REDACTED], will be assigned to the special educational program to support the student's individual education plan at Fairview Elementary School, the student's home attendance school. This program was not available at Fairview prior to the 2026-2027 school year and is now available to appropriately serve students within the attendance area.

We understand changes such as this can be disappointing and appreciate your understanding as we work to ensure appropriate educational programming and staffing capacity for all students. If you have any questions or need additional assistance, please contact the Student Services Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Farrell".

Michael Farrell, Ed.D.
Executive Director of Student Services

kd
F4:Revised Status



Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of Fort Smith Public Schools' ongoing efforts to ensure equitable access to specialized services and supports across the district, we are reviewing specialized classroom placements for the 2026–2027 school year. These decisions are being made carefully based on student needs, staffing, program capacity, available classroom space, and proximity to students' home-zoned schools when possible.

Your child's proposed placement for the 2026–2027 school year is:

Fairview / 3-5 Specialized Classroom

We understand that transitions may bring questions for families. Our goal is to ensure students continue to receive strong instructional support and access to appropriate services and resources.

To provide additional information regarding these proposed changes and the transition process, Parent Information Meetings will be held on:

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

7:30 a.m. — Park Elementary PD Room

Thursday, May 21, 2026

5:00 p.m. — Euper Lane Elementary Cafeteria

During the meetings, district and school staff will review the reasons for the proposed changes, discuss student supports, and answer general questions from families.

We value our partnership with families and remain committed to supporting students throughout this process.

If you have immediate questions or concerns, please contact Domonique Alexander at 479-785-2501.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Domonique Alexander".

Domonique Alexander, M.Ed.
Director of Special Education