



## Normandy Student Transfer Frequently Asked Questions

Since the announcement by the Normandy School District that the Francis Howell School District would be the district to which they would provide transportation as a result of the Supreme Court decision, many questions have been generated by our community. Responses to many of these frequently asked questions are found on the following pages.

Knowing that not all of the community's questions can be answered in this format, a town hall meeting to discuss this situation will be held at the Francis Howell Central High School gym on Thursday, July 11, from 6-7:30 PM. Please know that we are working to find answers to all questions, but there are some for which we do not have answers at this time. As we have additional information, we will continue to share it.

### Background

On June 11, 2013, the Missouri Supreme Court issued an opinion on *Breitenfeld v. School District of Clayton*. The decision of the Missouri Supreme Court requires accredited school districts located in St. Louis County, or any adjoining county, to admit students who currently reside within the two unaccredited schools districts in St. Louis County - Normandy and Riverview Gardens.

This decision will allow transfers from unaccredited school districts to enroll in accredited school districts starting in the 2013-14 school year. According to the ruling, Normandy and Riverview Gardens would have to cover tuition costs for students transferring out of their districts, and they must also select one district to which they would transport students. Normandy has selected the Francis Howell School District. At this time, Riverview Gardens has not designated a district to which transportation will be provided.

Revised Missouri State Statutes that might provide additional information are the following:

- [Statute 167.131](#)
- [Statute 167.121](#)
- [Statute 167.241](#)

## **FHSD Board of Education**

- **What was the role of the FHSD Board of Education in this decision?**

Neither the Board nor the Superintendent had a role in this decision. No vote was taken by the Francis Howell Board of Education. The Missouri Supreme Court ruled unanimously that existing legislation was constitutional. The Francis Howell Board of Education has no authority to supersede a ruling of the Missouri Supreme Court.

- **Why doesn't Francis Howell just refuse to accept any transfer students?**

No district is allowed to refuse students. To do so, the District would be in violation of state law, as upheld by the Missouri Supreme Court.

## **Academics**

- **Will current FHSD students' state standardized test scores be combined with the new transfer students or will the transfer students' scores go back to their home district?**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is currently determining which district will be accountable for test scores.

- **How will this decision affect current FHSD class sizes?**

At this time, we do not know the exact number of students requesting to transfer to Francis Howell. It is our intention to not disproportionately impact any single teacher or school as we assign the transfer students to classrooms.

FHSD has policies in place that define our class sizes. It is possible that some teachers will have an increase in the number of students in their classroom, while other teachers may not have any additional students.

- **How many students from Normandy School District will actually be placed in each individual FHSD school?**

At this time, the number of transfer students has not been determined. The enrollment process will begin in Normandy on July 8 and end on August 1. Francis Howell will have final information as to the number of student transfer requests on August 2.

## **Safety/Security**

- **Will Francis Howell have the authority to discipline transfer students?**

FHSD will continue to have high behavioral expectations for its students. All students who attend FHSD schools will be required to adhere to District policy and the FHSD Code of Student Conduct.

- **What assurance is there that disciplinary problems will be dealt with quickly and fairly?**

FHSD has highly qualified staff members who are responsible for dealing with student disciplinary issues. All students will be treated fairly in regard to student discipline. All students will be held accountable for their actions and disciplined in accordance with the FHSD Code of Student Conduct.



## Finance

- **How will the transfer decision affect my tax dollars as a FHSD resident?**

The tuition received from the sending district should be sufficient to cover the costs of education for the transfer students. The Francis Howell School District will receive tuition payments for each student who transfers from the Normandy School District. The law requires that the sending district pay tuition to the receiving district. The tuition rate for FHSD will be approximately \$11,000 per student.

- **How was the tuition rate determined?**

The tuition calculation is based on requirements stipulated in the transfer student statute. Francis Howell has no discretion in adjusting this number.

- **Who will receive state and federal money for the attending students?**

The Normandy School District will continue to receive its basic state aid. By law, Francis Howell School District will receive tuition payments for each student that transfers from the Normandy School District. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is currently reviewing how federal monies will be dispersed.

- **Does FHSD expect special programs or other funding to be cut to accommodate the increase in students?**

FHSD does not anticipate reduction in special programs or other funding as a result of the increase in the number of students. We will operate in accordance with the District budget. FHSD may use some of the transfer tuition money to provide additional academic support for struggling learners.

- **Who will cover the cost of transportation for student transfers?**

Normandy will pay the cost of this transportation. The sending district is required by law to provide transportation to one, or more accredited districts in the same county or adjoining county; the Normandy School District has chosen to provide transportation to FHSD. Parents in unaccredited school districts may send their children to other accredited school districts, but must provide their own transportation.

## Activities

- **Are the transfer students allowed to participate in sports?**

Yes. Any student who transfers to FHSD from an unaccredited school will be allowed to participate in all school activities, clubs, sports teams, etc., per Missouri State High School Activities Association guidelines.

- **Does the district have to pay for transportation for extracurricular activities if Normandy students participate?**

No. The Normandy School District will be responsible for the cost. This includes arrangements for extracurricular activities.

## Other

- **Can other unaccredited school districts also select FHSD as the district to which they will provide transportation?**

Yes, there is a possibility that Riverview Gardens could choose FHSD. Riverview Gardens plans to announce its decision on July 9.

- **Will FHSD community members have the opportunity to express concerns about the transfer process issue in a public forum?**

FHSD will host a public town hall meeting on Thursday, July 11, 2013, in the Francis Howell Central High School gymnasium, located at 5199 Highway N from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

The town hall meeting is an open forum designed to answer questions about the student transfer process involving Normandy School District students, and give community members an opportunity to express their opinions on this topic. Francis Howell School District Board of Education members and administrators will be present to address the public.

Any additional concerns regarding the student transfer process can be addressed by sending an email to [fhsdtransfers@fhsdschools.org](mailto:fhsdtransfers@fhsdschools.org). Updates will also be posted on the [District website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) as new information becomes available.

- **Why did Normandy choose Francis Howell?**

The Normandy School District did not consult Francis Howell on this matter. We do not have additional information other than what was published in the newspaper and on Normandy's web site. Click [here](#) to view the statement provided by Normandy School District.

- **The Normandy district requires a dress code and clear backpacks for the high school students. Will this impact the rules at our high school?**

No. FHSD will follow our current policy.

- **Will high school students' schedules of chosen courses be changed due to increased enrollment numbers?**

There are often schedule changes at the beginning of a school year. However, there will not be schedule changes made due to student transfers. It is our intention to honor currently enrolled students' course selections.

- **By law, can Francis Howell refuse students who have poor records or school records including violence?**

The District can only exclude students who are currently in violation of the Missouri Safe Schools Act. All transfer students, as part of the transfer application process, need to complete a Safe Schools Affirmation stipulating they are not currently suspended and have not been convicted of or indicted for any violation of the Safe Schools Act. Click [here](#) to see a copy of the Safe Schools Affirmation. The Normandy School District is required to provide Francis Howell with official copies of a student's record, including discipline issues.

- **What training will teachers receive to facilitate the transition?**

We will be working with all of our staff to ensure a smooth transition for the incoming students from Normandy School District. The District is currently developing plans to provide diversity training for its teachers and administrators. A number of our schools have already completed training in this area.

- **How will transfer students be prepared for their transition? Will they be informed of District policy before or after deciding to transfer?**

As part of the application process, students and families agree to follow the receiving district's policies, guidelines and codes of conduct.