



# RUSSELLVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

Heath Grimes, Superintendent

*"A Tradition of Excellence"*

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The Russellville City Board of Education passed an Out of District Policy on March 3, 2016. The policy states Russellville City Schools will no longer transport students on buses who reside outside the Russellville city limits, which is what is now considered out of district. The policy also states students who reside outside the district and will be in grades K-7 next year will have to pay a \$600/year tuition.

We realize many of our parents and community members have certain questions about this policy, and we would like to take this time to clear up some of these concerns you might have:

- We've been made aware there are many people who have questioned why we used the city limits as our parameters for establishing the Russellville City School District, especially since the school system's campus isn't centrally located within the city limits. The Russellville City School System spends approximately \$1,750 of local revenue on each student attending our school system. This \$1,750 per student is generated through city sales tax and higher ad valorem taxes that city residents pay. We are aware there are many out of district students whose families shop inside the city limits and contribute to the city sales tax revenue. However, those who live outside the city limits do not contribute the same amount in ad valorem taxes, so we felt the city limits would be the fairest parameter for our Out of District Policy.
- We understand there are parents and students who are under the impression that we will have a quota as to how many out of district students we will accept and that students who have been attending Russellville City Schools might not be allowed to come back. We want to make it clear that we will **not** have a cap on the number of out of district students we will accept. Additionally, current out of district students who wish to continue coming to school at Russellville will be given priority consideration. No current RCS student who wishes to come back will be denied acceptance, with the exception of extreme cases of disciplinary, academic or attendance concerns.
- We also understand there are questions as to why we omitted the \$600/year tuition requirement for students who will be in grades 8-12 next year and did not grandfather all current students under the new policy. Students who will be in grades 8-12 have already established athletic and extracurricular eligibility. We have many talented and exceptional students who contribute greatly to our athletic and extracurricular teams and organizations, and the board did not wish to hinder their participation, especially since many of these students are entering their final years before graduating, and participation in these activities could enhance their ability to attend or pursue the college, career technical program or career of their choice.

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- Additionally, grandfathering all students into the new policy would defeat the purpose of addressing the overcrowding issues we are experiencing in our system. While we will be more than happy to welcome back all 900 out of district students we currently have, we need to have a revenue source in place to help support this large number of students if this were to occur.

We want all of our students' parents and guardians to know we want to give your child the best education possible so they will be fully equipped for whatever their future holds. However, in order to achieve the best learning environment possible, we need to make sure our classrooms aren't overcrowded and that we have the sufficient number of staff and resources to provide this type of education, and we believe our Out of District Policy and the implementation of an annual tuition will help achieve those goals.

For those who plan to continue sending your child to Russellville City Schools, we want to give you an idea of what you can expect in the coming school year:

- This tuition we collect from out of district students will be used to finance classrooms needed to house the out of district students.
- The tuition may also be used to fund additional locally funded teaching units, which will help us continue to expand and improve our current instructional programs.
- The system will be offering eight Advanced Placement courses in 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, nine Pre-AP courses for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades, and Honors and Pre-AP courses in 6th-8th grades.
- We will also expand our offerings to include an Engineering and Manufacturing Academy, Pre-Med and Nursing Academy, and a Business Academy. We also have additional academy plans for the future in order to have the most well-rounded course offerings as possible.
- We plan to add Enrichment courses for students at West Elementary.
- We have written a grant for two additional Pre-K classes that were not possible in the past because of enrollment as well as a 21st Century Grant to restart our After School Program. (We hope to have confirmation on those grants soon.)

Sincerely,

Heath Grimes,  
Superintendent

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