
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

SB 1082 (Niello) - Pupil attendance: interdistrict transfers: agreements: policies

Version: April 22, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: May 4, 2026

Policy Vote: ED. 7 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill proposes various changes to the procedures for school interdistrict transfer requests.

Fiscal Impact: This bill could result in one-time Proposition 98 General Fund costs ranging from the tens of thousands of dollars to low hundreds of thousands of dollars for school districts to develop or modify their interdistrict transfer policies and also provide guidance to parents. This estimate assumes that each district would require several hours of personnel time on these activities.

Background: Existing law authorizes the governing boards of two or more school districts to enter into an agreement, for a term of up to five school years, for the inter-district attendance of students who are residents of the school districts. It authorizes the agreement to provide for the admission to a school district other than the school district of residence of a student who requests a permit to attend a school district of proposed enrollment (that is a party to the agreement). The law also requires the agreement to stipulate the terms and conditions under which inter-district attendance shall be permitted or denied and authorizes the agreement to stipulate terms and conditions established by the school district of residence and the school district of enrollment under which the permit may be revoked.

Existing law requires that a student who has been determined by personnel of either the school district of residence or the school district of proposed enrollment to have been the victim of an act of bullying (committed by a student of the school district of residence), to be given priority for inter-district attendance, at the request of the parent. A school district of residence shall approve an intra-district transfer request for a victim of an act of bullying unless the requested school is at maximum capacity, in which case the school district shall accept an intra-district transfer request for a different school in the school district. A school district of residence is prohibited from prohibiting the transfer of a student who is the victim of an act of bullying if the district only has one school offering the student's grade level (so there is no option for intra-district transfer), regardless of whether an agreement exists or a permit for inter-district transfer is issued, if the school district of proposed enrollment approves the application for transfer.

Existing law requires a school district of proposed enrollment that elects to accept inter-district transfers to accept all students who apply to transfer until the school district is at maximum capacity. A school district of proposed enrollment shall ensure that students are selected through an unbiased process that prohibits an inquiry into or evaluation or consideration of whether or not a student should be enrolled based on academic or athletic performance, physical condition, proficiency in English, family income, or any of

the individual characteristics for protected classes (race or ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, and immigration status).

Proposed Law: This bill modifies the existing requirement for the governing board of a school district entering into an interdistrict attendance agreement to adopt a policy regarding the relevant procedures and timelines relating to a request for an interdistrict transfer. Specifically, the bill provides that all agreements entered on or after January 1, 2027, shall include the following provisions:

1. Applicable timelines that the school district will begin accepting and processing interdistrict transfer requests for the subsequent school year.
2. The criteria the school district will use to approve or deny a request, and any information or documents that must be submitted as supporting evidence.
3. Any other relevant information regarding the appeals process for requests that are denied.

This bill provides that if either the school district of residence or school district of proposed enrollment determines that a request for an interdistrict transfer is incomplete with regard to the application and materials required by the policies of the school districts, the school district shall notify the parent within 30 calendar days of receipt of the application and identify missing information or documentation required to process the request.

This bill provides that if either the school district of residence or school district of proposed enrollment determines that additional time is needed to gather required information, as specified, the school district may extend the review period by up to an additional 30 calendar days if written notice is provided to the student and parent within 30 days of receiving the request.

Related Legislation: SB 399 (Niello, 2025) would have required school districts to keep a record of all requests for interdistrict transfer and records of the disposition of those requests and to annually submit the information for the current school year to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. SB 399 was held on the Suspense File in this committee.

AB 1127 (Luz Rivas & Robert Rivas, Chapter 781, Statutes of 2019) requires a school district of residence to approve an intradistrict transfer request for a victim of an act of bullying and requires a school district of proposed enrollment that elects to accept an interdistrict transfer to accept all students to apply pursuant to this bill, as specified.

Staff Comments: This bill makes various changes to the existing processes that allow students to transfer to other school districts. Interdistrict transfers are a mechanism that allows a student to transfer from one district to another when both districts consent to the transfer. A student may wish to transfer for multiple reasons, including seeking certain educational programming not available in their district of residence. For a district of residence, many districts evaluating a request have a limited set of reasons for which they will release a student, and examples may include the availability of child care in the other district or the attendance of a sibling already enrolled in the other district. For a

district of proposed enrollment, they may be evaluating impacted enrollment at the school and within the grade, as well as capacity constraints for the student's expected courses if they are in middle or high school.

However, according to the author, "families requesting interdistrict transfers "often experience lengthy delays—sometimes 60 to 90 days or longer—from the district of residence. During this time, districts of desired attendance frequently wait to begin their own review until a release decision is issued. These delays are rarely intentional and often reflect administrative workload and capacity constraints. However, the impact of families can be significant, leaving them unable to make timely educational decisions and increasing the likelihood of appeals to county boards of education. SB 1082 builds on existing law by clarifying expectations and ensuring that inaction does not function as an unintended denial."

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