



Katy Purcell White &lt;kathryn.purcellwhite@oesu.org&gt;

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## School Choice Follow-Up

2 messages

**Emilie Knisley** <emilie.knisley@oesu.org>

Wed, Oct 27, 2021 at 10:16 AM

To: Danielle Corti <danielle.corti@oesu.org>, Angeline Alley <angeline.alley@oesu.org>, Jean Wheeler <jean.wheeler@oesu.org>, John Barone <john.barone@oesu.org>, Scott Blood <scott.blood@oesu.org>, Randall Gawel <randall.gawel@oesu.org>, Kathryn Purcell White <kathryn.purcellwhite@oesu.org>, Loretta Cruz <loretta.cruz@oesu.org>, Alison Kidder <alison.kidder@oesu.org>, Lomond Richardson <lomond.richardson@oesu.org>, Dawn Blanchard <dawn.blanchard@oesu.org>, Kathleen Garone <kathleen.garone@oesu.org>, Bernadette Smith <bernadette.smith@oesu.org>, Jodi Hart <jodi.hart@oesu.org>

As promised here is some information on school choice for BMU and OHS:

1. BMU and NES: I am attaching the last agreed to documents that outline a 1:1 swap program that was agreed upon between the NES and BMU School Boards. These documents date back to 2016 and are what I could find, but the agreement may be older than that. These have not been officially renewed since the merger and are not currently being utilized. With the merger of OUUSD a swap choice program was created between BES and NES and this seems to have been a more popular avenue for current families at NES. BMU families have not requested any swaps. Technically these have expired.

2. OHS/BMU 7th and 8th Choice: I am attaching the last known document that I can find on this program. This enables three OHS students to attend BMU and three BMU students to attend OHS. Currently, one OHS student is attending BMU and zero BMU students are attending OHS. These three students have played into the ten student limits set by BMU for public choice and the 14 student limit set by OHS for Public choice.

3. Public High School Choice: This enables any VT student in grades 9-12 to apply to attend another VT Public High School through the defined choice process (they may not attend private schools like TA and St. J Academy). This was made law in 2012. Each school sets limits for the number of students it allows out and into its system. Currently BMU has a limit of 10 and OHS has a limit of 14. BMU has zero students at OHS, and OHS has seven students at BMU under this system. The AOE maintains a webpage on the topic: <https://education.vermont.gov/vermont-schools/school-operations/public-schools/public-high-school-choice>

All three programs require a spring application process for enrollment the next year. Exceptions can be made and we are currently researching the details of those, but my current understanding is that the Board would need to be involved in those decisions at the HS level. Students needs to apply to the schools that they would like to attend through the local school process.

Lastly, there is also school choice for towns that don't operate a school and the rules for those are different (this applies to Thetford and Waits River and some of our neighbors like Peacham and Barnet).

We often get questions from families about "vouchers" for other schools for BMU and OHS families and that is not something we have--for example a request to go to Peacham or Thetford Academy. We do not operate voucher towns, and therefore we do not have those available. This would instead be a discussion around an alternative placement and would require the payment of tuition by the sending school district, students also have to apply and be accepted to those institutions. We may not place students in independent schools. Parents may also send their students to those schools and pay tuition on their own.

I would recommend that each Board put this on their agenda for review and discussion to see if there is interest in continuing the two BMU/OUUSD agreements

**Emilie B. Knisley, M.Ed., CAGS, CAEL**  
**Superintendent**

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*Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future. —John Fitzgerald Kennedy*

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**2 attachments**



**BMUNewbury Swap 16 17.pdf**  
195K



**2015-16 BMU Oxbow Grades 7 and 8 School Choice Agreement.pdf**  
1139K

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**Danielle Corti** <danielle.corti@oesu.org>

Wed, Oct 27, 2021 at 1:38 PM

To: Emilie Knisley <emilie.knisley@oesu.org>

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Thank you!  
Danielle Corti  
Board Chair  
Oxbow Unified Union School District  
(OUUSD)

PLEASE NOTE I HAVE A NEW EMAIL:  
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