



## Q & A Information for Washington Township Schools Community – *Non-Resident Students*

**Question: Why offer non-resident families an opportunity to apply for enrollment in our schools?**

**Answer:** Our country's K-12 school environment is operating in an atmosphere of parental choice. Our district has a long-standing legacy as a district of choice. When parents living outside of our boundaries consider public and private schools in Marion County, we believe that we should be among the choices. Being a district of choice has been a contributing factor in our consistent high academic standards as well as our high expectations for all co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

**Question: How many non-resident students attend Washington Township Schools?**

**Answer:** Approximately 750 students annually attend our schools.

**Question: If non-resident students did not attend Washington Township Schools would schools still face overcrowding?**

**Answer: Yes.** All seven elementary schools, even without non-resident students would still be faced with a resident student enrollment larger than the student capacity of the buildings.

**Question: Would the scope of the needed upgrades to Washington Township Schools be reduced if non-resident students did not attend our schools?**

**Answer: No.** The needed upgrades to our schools include items such as safety and security systems, expanded learning environments that support students learning in groups and teams, cafeterias and common areas that allow students to interact in an appropriate amount of space, upgrades to HVAC systems, repair and replacement of aging roofs, expansion of classroom spaces so that students are not forced to attend classes in make-shift classroom spaces, and the elimination of trailers used as classrooms. All of the required renovations and upgrades are necessary regardless of the district's acceptance of non-resident students.

**Question: Does tuition support come to the district with the non-resident students?**

**Answer: Yes.** The state of Indiana allocates tuition support for all students attending a public school system at the same rate per student, regardless of where the student resides. The revenue non-resident students bring to Washington Township is approximately **\$4.5 million** for the 2015-2016 school year.

**Question: Would the exclusion of non-resident students from Washington Township have a negative effect on class sizes and student supports?**

**Answer: Yes.** Without the \$4.5 million in tuition support the non-resident students bring to the district, we would be required to eliminate \$4.5 million in expenses from our General Fund budget. The majority of this reduction would be in faculty and staff. Non-resident students are spread throughout the district's seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and the high school. We are able to manage non-resident student enrollment by grade level at each building. A result of the increased tuition support is an overall positive effect on teacher/student ratio thereby supporting *all* students, including our resident students.

For example, across our seven elementary schools:

**Approx. 250 Non-Resident Students ÷ 7 Elementary Schools = Avg. 38 Non-Resident Students per building**

**Approx. 250 Non-Resident Students ÷ 210 Classroom Teachers = Avg. 1.2 additional students per classroom**

**Approx. 250 Non-Resident Students = Approx. \$1,495,500.00 in additional tuition support revenue**

Additionally, the non-resident tuition dollars allow us to offer curricular options (such as multiple world languages at the high school), a fully staffed high school Learning Center (providing student academic supports), as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular clubs and organizations at all levels.

**Question: Is there a definitive maximum number of non-resident students the district will enroll?**

**Answer: No.** The number of approved non-resident students is based primarily on the teacher/student ratio by grade level within each school. Student enrollment exceeds the building capacity in all elementary schools with or without the acceptance of non-resident students. The middle schools and high school are not experiencing the same overcapacity issues as the elementary schools.

**Question: Are there additional advantages non-resident students bring to our district?**

**Answer: Yes.** There are more private schools that reside within the MSDWT boundaries compared to most other districts in Indiana. For decades, the MSDWT has been a school of choice for students inside and outside of our district. The non-resident students in the MSDWT contribute to the high quality of our curricular as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular student programs. In addition, the non-resident students attending North Central carry an average grade point average of 3.9 and are positively contributing to the school culture. Potential young home buyers with school age children or those planning for future children look to the quality of schools and the quality of programs as a *major* factor when shopping for homes. Our current resident families have many schools within our boundaries to consider when making choices for their children. We view this competition for students and families as a positive. We believe that it is because of this school choice that our district continues to offer high quality programs and experiences for our students. It helps make our district unique and special.

Our outstanding student programs (co-curricular and extra-curricular) are successful due to both resident and non-resident students. Outstanding student programs draw potential homebuyers to our community. Parents often shop for schools based on co-curricular and extra-curricular programming as much as academic opportunities. We believe strong student programs influence potential future parents' decisions to move to our community.

Our non-resident families are some of the most involved and engaged families. All students benefit from fundraising efforts, volunteer hours, in-kind services, and donations of goods, services, and dollars generated from our relationships with non-resident families.

**Question: Are other school districts in Marion County accepting out of district students?**

**Answer: Yes.** 6 out of 11 Districts in Marion County Accepting Non-Resident Students:

Lawrence Township – Beech Grove – Wayne Township – IPS – Perry Township – Washington Township

Beech Grove:  $920/3045 = 30\%$  of the student body

**Question: Does the inclusion of Non-Resident Students at the high school put resident students at a competitive disadvantage academically?**

**Answer: No.** Resident students consistently make up the vast majority of students performing academically in the top 10% of each grade level.

Certainly, when students are achieving at high academic levels, a competitive environment is created. *All* students benefit from this environment. Colleges and universities pay close attention to the academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular profile of high schools when considering students for admission. North Central is one of the most respected high schools in the Midwest by colleges and universities. Our high expectations and student performance (resident and non-resident) provides opportunities for admission to some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the nation.