

RIVERVIEW GARDENS

SCHOOL DISTRICT

August 17, 2015

Scott Spurgeon, Ed.D.,
Superintendent

Demetra King
Administrative Assistant
to the Superintendent

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MISSION

The Riverview Gardens School District, along with families and the community, nurtures academic excellence in all students, preparing them to be college and career ready in an ever-changing society.

VISION

The Riverview Gardens School District creates a community of learners equipped to be competitors in a global society and leaders demonstrating social and civic responsibility.

Special Administrative Board

Lynn Beckwith, Jr., Ed.D.
Chair, C.B.M.

Veronica Morrow-Reel
Vice-Chair, Master C.B.M.

Mark Tranel, Ph.D.
Secretary/Treasurer, C.B.M.

Superintendent Sarah Riss
Webster Groves School District
400 East Lockwood Ave
St. Louis, MO 63119

Re: 2015-2016 Transfer Student Tuition

Dear Dr. Riss:

On behalf of the Special Administrative Board of the Riverview Gardens School District, I am writing about the 2015-2016 tuition charges for those students transferring from our district to receiving school districts or potential receiving districts in St. Louis County and adjacent counties. I would like to thank those districts that helped us last year by charging us less in tuition for transfer students. I would also like to thank you for your participation in the new St. Louis Regional Collaborative for Educational Excellence, supported by Governor Nixon, that will assist us continue to improve our performance.

As you know, the past two years have been challenging for sending and receiving school districts in light of the various issues involving transferring students from unaccredited districts, while waiting anxiously for a Legislative solution that has not yet appeared. The Normandy School District was driven to virtual insolvency before being lapsed and taken over by the State Board of Education. Without fiscal fairness, Riverview Gardens School District will likely face the same predicament in the not too distant future.

We are writing in hopes of reaching some accommodation with our fellow school districts to lessen the tremendous financial drain on Riverview Gardens that will occur if tuition costs continue at some of the rates imposed for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. We do want each receiving district to be reimbursed for their additional costs in providing educational services, materials and supplies for transferring students. However, due to the unique variations in every school district, tuition rates have ranged from approximately \$7900 to \$20,000 among the various receiving districts. Many receiving district tuition rates are substantially higher than the per pupil revenues available to our District. Several districts, as well as the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education, have acknowledged the disparity of the money received versus the costs of educating the transfer students.

In an effort to try to maintain the financial solvency of our District, we are asking each receiving District for the 2015-2016 school year to charge a tuition rate calculated pursuant to DESE's most recent Guidance dated June 19, 2014. It is our understanding that that formula will yield an annual tuition charge of approximately \$7200-\$7300 per transfer student. If your District does not believe that tuition rate will cover your additional expenses, Riverview Gardens asks that you provide sufficient information so that we may consider an alternative rate.

We realize this is a challenging issue for every receiving district. But once again, we are trying to obtain a temporary "solution" to reimburse receiving districts for their additional expenses, while attempting to maintain our District's financial solvency and have the ability to utilize much needed funds to help those students remaining in our District. We are making significant progress in providing educational services to our children and any funds we can save can be used in our District to hasten our ability to regain accreditation. We also realize this is only a temporary step and not a long term solution.

We sincerely hope that your district will adopt this proposal for the forthcoming school year. We are making an identical request to all other receiving districts. We look forward to hearing your District's response. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. I look forward to your response by email at sspurgeon@rgsd.k12.mo.us or by calling me on my cell phone at (314) 971-8372 for further conversation.

Respectfully,



Scott D. Spurgeon Ed.D., Superintendent
Riverview Gardens School District