

UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION (USCO)

Ensuring that all of Georgia's Schools are Safe

Georgia's goal for USCO is to lead the nation in improving student achievement, we have to ensure that all of our schools provide safe, nurturing environments where students can learn and are valued and respected, and to do that we have to maintain stringent standards. The focus of the rule is not to label schools as unsafe, but to work with LEAs proactively to identify those schools at risk of being labeled persistently dangerous and provide them with the professional development and technical assistance they need to improve.

Ensuring that all of Georgia's Schools are Safe Under No Child Left Behind, states must develop a definition of "persistently dangerous" schools and allow public school choice for students who have been victims of a violent criminal offense or who attend a school that meets the definition.

Georgia's Definition of a Persistently Dangerous School is any school in which for three consecutive years:

1. At least 1 student is found by official tribunal action to have violated a school rule related to a violent criminal offense (including aggravated battery, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sexual battery, aggravated sodomy, armed robbery, arson, kidnapping, murder, rape, & voluntary manslaughter) either on campus or at a school-sanctioned event;
2. At least 2% of the student body or 10 students, whichever is greater, have been found to have violated school rules related to other identified criminal offenses, including non-felony drugs, felony drugs, felony weapons, terroristic threats;
3. Any combination of 1 & 2.