



## Catalyst Academy Charter School

### Admission and Enrollment Policies and Procedures

Catalyst Academy Charter School

Pittsburgh, PA

Board of Trustees Policy

#### ADMISSION OF STUDENTS AND LOTTERY PROCESS POLICY

##### 1. Purpose

1.1 The Board of Trustees of the Catalyst Academy Charter School (the "Charter School") recognizes that all resident children in Pennsylvania qualify for admission to the Charter School.

1.2 As a charter school, the Charter School shall not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a school district.

1.3 As a charter school, the Charter School may limit admission to a particular grade level, or a targeted population group composed of at-risk students.

1.4 As a charter school, the Charter School may establish reasonable criteria to evaluate prospective students which shall be outlined in the school's charter.

1.5 If more students apply to the Charter School than the number of attendance slots available in the school, then students must be selected on a random basis from a pool of qualified applicants meeting the established eligibility criteria and submitting an application by the deadline established by the Charter School. However, the Charter School may give preference in enrollment to siblings of students presently enrolled in the Charter School and to the child of a parent or guardian who has actively participated in the development of the Charter School.

1.6 Children from across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania may enroll on a space-available basis, and the student's district of residence shall permit the student to attend the Charter School. Pittsburgh Public Schools ("PPS") residents will be given preference in the admissions process in accordance with the Charter School Law.

1.7 The Charter School desires to continue its commitment to educating the At-Risk Student Community

## 2. Annual Enrollment Process

2.1 A re-enrollment period is established for no less than two weeks to determine who of the students already enrolled will return to the Charter School the following school year.

2.2 An open enrollment period with a cut-off date is established for no less than three weeks to determine the number of students who are seeking to attend the Charter School the following school year.

2.3 The number of available spaces in each grade for the following school year is determined after the close of the re-enrollment period.

2.4 A lottery place, date and time is established.

2.5 On the lottery date, one of the following two scenarios will occur:

2.5.1 If student applications do not exceed the number of available seats in a grade, all applicants will be given a space in that grade, or

2.5.2 If student applications exceed the number of available seats in a grade, a lottery will be conducted for that grade.

## 3.

3.1 The Charter School recognizes the importance of continuing its commitment to educate "At-Risk Students". For purposes of this policy, an At-Risk Student shall be defined as a student identified as a free or reduced lunch eligible student upon representation of eligibility as part of the Charter School application. Not later than September 30th of each year, the CEO will report to the Board of Trustees the number of At-Risk Students enrolled at the Charter School during that year's open enrollment or lottery, as applicable.

3.2 The Charter School will demonstrate good faith efforts to attract At-Risk Students and shall give an enrollment preference through a weight in the lottery (see 6.6) to At-Risk Students consistent with this policy. Good faith efforts include, but will not be limited to, advertising and marketing directed at historically underserved populations, and the inclusion of accessible information on the school's website.

## 4. Delegation of Responsibility

4.1 The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall conduct the application process.

4.2 The lottery will be conducted in public by Charter School employees and Board members who have no personal interest in its outcome. The lottery will be drawn electronically by the Charter School's enrollment software.

## 5. Guidelines

5.1 Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before the Kindergarten cutoff date in their school district of residence, or September 30<sup>th</sup>, whichever is earlier.



2 A completed Charter School application, which is timely submitted to the Charter School, is required for participation in the lottery.

## 6. The Lottery Selection Process

The selection process is as follows, and will be determined by subtracting from the total number of spaces available the total number of spaces already taken by each category set forth below in order, beginning with kindergarten and proceeding through the grades in order:

6.1 All students currently enrolled and attending the Charter School are exempted from the lottery process.

6.2 Students who reside in Pittsburgh and who have at least one sibling selected for enrollment in the lottery or currently enrolled in the Charter School ("PPS Sibling Preference"). A sibling shall be defined as one of two or more individuals having at least one common parent/guardian. In the event that a seat is not available for admission to the grade applied for and there is no space in the grade they should attend, said student will be placed on the Wait List in the next numerical position available. The Wait List does not assure admission.

6.3 Students who do not reside in PPS and who have at least one sibling selected for enrollment in the lottery or currently enrolled in the Charter School ("Non-PPS Sibling Preference"). In the event that a seat is not available for admission to the grade applied for and there is no space in the grade they should attend, said student will be placed on the Wait List in the next numerical position available. The Wait List does not assure admission.

6.4 Students who reside in PPS and whose parent/guardian has actively participated in the development of the Charter School. Active participation in the development of the Charter School means those who have: 1) been identified as a founder in the original charter application, 2) served on the Board of Trustees prior the first enrollment period for the Charter School, 3) being Charter School professional staff (as defined by Section 1101(1) of the Public School Code of 1949, 24 P.S. § 11-1101(1)) or 4) being an active contributor to the school design process prior to the first enrollment period for the Charter School as designated by CEO and approved by the Charter School Board of Trustees. In the event that a seat is not available for admission to the grade applied for and there is no space in the grade the student should attend, said student will be placed on the Wait List in the next numerical position available. The Wait List does not assure admission.

6.5 Students who not reside in PPS and whose parent/guardian has actively participated in the development of the Charter School. Active participation in the development of the Charter School means those who have: 1) been identified as a founder in the original charter application, 2) served on the Board of Trustees prior the first enrollment period for the Charter School, 3) being Charter School professional staff (as defined by Section 1101(1) of the Public School Code of 1949, 24 P.S. § 11-1101(1)) or 4) being an active contributor to the school design process prior to the first enrollment period for the Charter School



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6.6 Students residing within PPS who do not meet any of the criteria set forth in sections 6.1, 6.2 or 6.4 above.

If the total number of applications for students in any given grade from PPS exceeds the spaces available as mandated by the Charter School's Charter and applicable law, a lottery will be held to determine who will be given a space in the grade.

If a seat is not available for admission to the grade applied for and there is no space in the grade they should attend, said student will be placed on the Wait List in the next numerical position available. The Wait List does not assure admission.

6.7 Lastly, students residing outside of PPS that do not meet any of the criteria set forth in sections 6.1, 6.3 or 6.5 above.

If the total number of enrollments for said students in any given grade exceeds the spaces available after all other students eligible under 6.1 - 6.6 above have been given a space, a lottery will be held to determine who will be given a space in the grade. If a seat is not available for admission to the grade applied for and there is no space in the grade the student should attend, said student will be placed on the Wait List in the next numerical position available. The Wait List does not assure admission.

6.8 PPS Sibling Preference and Non-PPS Sibling Preference (together referred to as "Sibling Preference") may also apply during the lottery. When the name of a student with a sibling is assigned a space in a grade, then the sibling will automatically receive a positive space in the grade in which he or she is seeking to enroll if a space is available. Sibling Preference in the lottery will not apply to students being placed on the Wait List. Students will be placed on the Wait List in the order in which their names have been drawn.

6.9 Students residing within PPS will be given preference on the Wait List.

## 7. Enrollment Process after the Cutoff Date (Post-Enrollment)

7.1 If the enrollment process produces a greater number of students than spaces available in any given grade, applicants after the cutoff date will be accepted by the Charter School's electronic enrollment software. These applications will not be included in the lottery. After the Wait List has been established, these applications will be placed on the Wait List in the order they were received. Students residing within PPS will be given preference on the Wait List.

7.2 If the initial enrollment process does not produce an adequate number of enrolled students in any given grade, enrollment will continue beyond the cutoff date and a lottery process will not be held for that school year. Applicants will receive spaces on a first-come, first-serve basis using the student preference criteria outlined in this policy.

## 8. The Lottery Waiting List

8.1 Applicants on the Wait List will be notified in sequential order through the school's electronic enrollment system and also via phone if space becomes available.

8.2 The Wait List will terminate at the end of the next school year.

## 9. The Lottery Process

9.1 The lottery is conducted annually in March unless otherwise designated by the Board of Trustees and will include all applications received from the start of the open enrollment period through the end of February unless otherwise designated by the Board of Trustees.

### 9.2 Conduct of the Lottery

9.2.1 The lottery will assign students to spaces for a grade as follows:

1. The names of the students in the grade with complete submitted enrollment applications will be placed in the Charter School's enrollment lottery.
2. The lottery will be run with the use of the Charter School's electronic enrollment software. The names of students in the grade will be drawn from the lottery. Students will be assigned to spaces in the order their names are drawn.
3. When the name of a student with a sibling is assigned a space in a grade, then the sibling will automatically receive a positive space in the grade in which they are seeking to enroll if a space is available.
4. Sibling preference in the lottery will not apply to students being placed on the Wait List. Students will be placed on the Wait List in the order in which their names have been drawn.
5. Students residing within PPS will be given preference on the Wait List.

9.2.2 The results of the lottery will be tabulated as follows:

1. The names of students who have re-enrolled or have sibling preference due to an already re-enrolled student, or have met criteria for the professional service preference, will be displayed to document the number of spaces already taken before students are assigned by the lottery.



2. The names of students who are assigned spaces in a grade by the lottery will be posted.

3. The names of students who are assigned to the Wait List in a grade will be recorded and posted.

#### 10. Notification to Parents/Guardians of Applicants

10.1 Within one week after the lottery has been held, a notification will be sent to all applicants through the Charter School's electronic enrollment system. This notification will indicate either that the student has been offered a space or a place on the Wait List.

#### 11. Student Selection for Vacancies

As soon as a space becomes available in a grade, the next applicant on the Wait List will be contacted and offered admission in "number" order for the grade.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH THE CHARTER SCHOOL'S CHARTER OR APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS AND/OR THE CHARTER CONTROL.

ADOPTED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_ 2020