

# NORTH OAKLAND COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

*Updated and Approved by the NOCCS Board of Directors, December 14, 2016*

## ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS, PREFERENCES, AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Admissions Requirements** are as follows:

- The applicant family must complete and submit an application form approved by the school.
- If a space becomes available, documentation must be provided to support the information provided in the application and to validate any admissions or lottery preference—*prior to* the seat being offered.
- Kindergarten applicants must meet the age requirements for public school attendance specified in SB1381: children must turn 5 years of age before September 2 of their entering year.

**Admissions and Lottery Preferences:** The 2015 NOCCS Charter Renewal Document provides the criteria for admissions and lottery preferences. This document reads:

As stated in the core principles, NOCCS is committed to building a community of learners, representing the diversity of Oakland, and providing educational opportunities to underserved children. To reflect these values, admission to NOCCS shall be granted in the following order of preference and according to the following rationale:

- Currently enrolled students: to ensure educational continuity
- Siblings of enrolled and admitted students: to keep families together
- Children of NOCCS staff (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment): to honor those committed to public education
- Children of NOCCS board members who have completed a required term of service<sup>1</sup> (not to exceed 10% of the total enrollment): to honor those committed to public education
- Students from underperforming schools within OUSD (in which 50% or more of students qualify for free and reduced lunch and in whose attendance boundary the charter school

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<sup>1</sup> Term of service for kindergarten applicants is 2 years. Term of service for all other applicants is one year.

resides)<sup>2</sup>: to provide an equitable, high quality public school option to Northwest Oakland students and families

- Other prospective students residing within OUSD boundaries: to serve as a public school option for students and families of Oakland
- All other applicants

If needed to establish / maintain relative gender balance,<sup>3</sup> a provision may be invoked to reserve a certain number of spots for a given gender group.

### **Definition of Terms:**

**Admissions Preference** – *Admissions* Preferences place students directly into available spots before the lottery is conducted. As of 9/1/2015 students in the groups below shall receive admissions preference, in the order listed:

- Currently enrolled whose parents or guardians have indicated, by a stated deadline, their intent to return for the following school year.
- Siblings of enrolled students whose parents or guardians have filed an application for admissions or have indicated, by a stated deadline, their intent to enroll the sibling of currently enrolled student.
- Children of NOCCS staff who have filed an application for admissions and/or have indicated, by a stated deadline, their intent to enroll their child. If a NOCCS staff member enters employment after the close of the lottery, they may exercise their preference at the time of hire. This does not guarantee that the employee's child will be admitted, but that they will be placed at the top of the waitlist for their grade, after any previously waitlisted siblings of enrolled students.
- Children of NOCCS board members who have completed the required term of service and have met participation requirements as outlined in the NOCCS Board Policy governing external board members.

**Lottery Preference** – *Lottery* Preferences are applied to provide applicants who meet the group criteria, outlined in the NOCCS Charter and detailed below, to participate with a weighted advantage in a lottery process. As of 9/1/2015 these groups and their weighted advantages will include the following:

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<sup>2</sup> For the 2015-2020 charter term, these schools will include the attendance zones of all OUSD schools in Northwest Oakland as described in section A of this charter. This includes Sankofa, Emerson, Hoover, and Claremont Middle School. Students from these neighborhood attendance areas will receive a lottery preference as outlined in the NOCCS Admissions Policies and Procedures.

<sup>3</sup> Relative gender balance means that we will work to ensure that a given gender within a grade level cohort does not exceed 60% of one gender. As such, NOCCS may reserve that a certain number of spots be reserved for applicants of a certain stated gender or that once 60% of all cohort spots are filled by applicants of one gender, that the remaining spots be pulled exclusively from the pool of applicants from the other gender group, until that gender group's waitlist is exhausted. The parent/guardian's identification of their child's gender will be used. If this identification is non-binary, the child will receive the gender preference. Applicants who qualify for an Admissions Preference receive priority over those who qualify under the relative gender balance provision.

- Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> grade applicants who provide proof of residence within the Oakland Unified School District's Northwest Oakland Neighborhood Attendance Area(s)<sup>4</sup> (Neighborhood Attendance Area School(s)<sup>5</sup>), for so long as 50% or more of its students qualify for free and reduced priced lunch, shall be drawn until 40%<sup>6</sup> of all available Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Lottery spots have been filled. In the case that there are fewer Neighborhood Attendance Area applicants than 40% of all available Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Lottery spots, the remainder of the available spots will be made available to the pool of all other Oakland Resident applicants.
- Oakland residents who provide proof of residence within the Oakland Unified School District will be drawn prior to Non Oakland Residents.

**Sibling** - A sibling is a person with at least one parent or step-parent in common.

## APPLICATION

- 1) Families eligible for Admissions Preferences identified in the NOCCS Admissions Policy must complete and submit the Enroll Oakland Charters (EOC) common application form, as well as any specific additional NOCCS online forms linked to the common application—*noting any/all Admission Preference eligibility categories*—prior to the latest published application deadline. Failure to do so will mean that their application will not be given an admissions preference prior to the NOCCS Lottery and Enrollment Process. Families eligible for Admissions Preferences identified in the NOCCS Admissions Policy that submit the required application after the published deadline will be placed on the top of the NOCCS Admissions Waiting List in accordance to their Admissions Preference status, with first preference going to already enrolled students, second preference going to siblings, third preference going to children of staff, and fourth preference going to board members.
- 2) Families eligible for Lottery Preferences identified in the NOCCS Admissions Policy must be prepared to submit all relevant documentation for verification within 72 hours of a seat becoming available for their applicant(s). Failure to do so or submitting false documentation will mean that the offer of a seat will not be made and their application will be withdrawn from the NOCCS applicant pool.

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<sup>4</sup> This includes the attendance areas where NOCCS is located at 1000 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in Oakland, CA

<sup>5</sup> As per the 2015-2020 NOCCS Charter, and due to the closure of Santa Fe Elementary School in June 2012, beginning with the 2016-2017 admissions lottery, NOCCS Kindergarten applicants zoned to attend Emerson Elementary, Sankofa Elementary, or Hoover Elementary; and 6th grade applicants zoned to attend Claremont Middle School shall be qualified as Neighborhood Attendance Area residents.

<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of determining a whole number of available spots, any decimal above .1 shall result in the number being rounded upwards to the next whole number.

- 3) All applicants must submit a completed application prior to the stated application deadline. Failure to do so will mean that their application will not be entered into the lottery. Applicants that submit the required application after the stated application deadline will be placed at the bottom of the NOCCS Admissions Waiting List in the order they are received.
- 4) New families can request an information sheet including relevant requirements and dates of the admissions process. This information is also available on the website.
- 5) Complete applications must be received via the online portal by the published application deadline. Submitting a complete application is the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- 6) If/when a seat becomes available for an applicant, the family will have 72 hours to produce documentation to verify the following:
  - **Child's age and identity:** in the form of a religious, hospital, or physician's certificate showing date of birth; an entry in a family bible; an adoption record; an affidavit from a parent/guardian; a birth certificate; previously verified school records; or any other documents permitted by law.
  - **Residency:** THREE documents showing matching names and addresses (financial information may be blacked out), such as:
    - i. A copy of a parent/guardian's CA Driver's License or official California ID Card from the Department of Motor Vehicles with your current address on it, or change it officially with the DMV (can be done online for \$2 at <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/online/coa/welcome.htm>) and attach the printout to your CDL copy
    - ii. A bill dated within 90 days: PG&E, home telephone bill, water bill, garbage bill, cable bill, etc.
    - iii. Automobile registration AND automobile insurance (these documents count for two of the required documents, but must be provided together).
    - iv. Homeowner's/renter's insurance policy
    - v. Rental agreement copy
    - vi. Property tax statement
    - vii. Official letter from a social services/governmental agency within 90 days
    - viii. A copy of any OUSD letters or documentation of OUSD resident status

ix. Transitional families who reside at a non-permanent address (such as a motel/hotel, shelter, car, or are with relatives or friends) and are unable to establish a permanent residence are encouraged to contact the NOCCS office or the Oakland Unified School District for assistance.

- **Grade:** A copy of the child's most recent report card to verify grade level (waived for Kindergarten applicants)
- *Please note that NOCCS utilizes the documents above for the purposes of establishing an applicant's identity, age, and residency ONLY. We do not collect information to verify citizenship, nor does a parent or student's citizenship status affect enrollment.*

- 7) Applications must be re-submitted for every new academic year to ensure accuracy. Public Drawing waitlist positions are only good for the academic year for which the drawing was held.
- 8) Three documents verifying the address of the child must be made available within 72 hours of seat availability. Applicants wishing to exercise Oakland resident preference who reside at an address that may fall within multiple school districts must submit clarifying documentation within this timeframe. Applicants are advised to make all necessary prior arrangements in order to be prepared to provide the necessary documentation. Submitting complete documentation within 72 hours is the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- 9) If a family declines an offer of admission or relinquishes a spot after enrollment, the family's current position on the waitlist is forfeited for the admissions year. NOCCS may consider written requests to reinstate an offer of admission on a case by case basis, at the discretion of the Director of Enrollment, when there has been a significant change in a family's circumstances since the original offer. A request for reinstatement of an admission offer is not a guarantee of admission, since there may be no spaces available at the time. The applicant may be placed on the waitlist, at the discretion of the Director of Enrollment. Likewise, a sibling that did not previously enter the lottery may be considered for sibling preference on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the Director of Enrollment, if there has been a significant change in a family's circumstances since the lottery.

Examples of significant changes in circumstances that *may be considered* include but are not limited to:

- change of primary residence address
- changes made by OUSD that affect the child's placement within the district: (bilingual status, LD assessment, re-zoning)

Examples of reasons that *are not likely to result* in a reinstatement include but are not limited to:

- change in financial status of the family
- change of heart
- admissions status change for child at a non-OUSD school.

- 10) NOCCS reserves the right to reopen the recruiting/admissions cycle once the waitlist has been exhausted.

## **PUBLIC DRAWING**

- 1) As described in the NOCCS Admission Policy, admission will be offered in order based on a set of preferences and a public random selection process. Collectively, these preferences and public random selection process are referred to in these Procedures as the "Selection Process".
- 2) An Admissions Team will be responsible for conducting the Selection Process, communicating with new and prospective families, and informing families of their admission status. The Admissions Team will be composed of two members, the School Director/Principal and a staff member assigned the duty of admissions management. In the absence of one or more members of this team, the Admissions Team will be composed of at least three members: one board member, one current family member, and one staff member.
- 3) An announcement of the time, date and location of the drawing must be posted outside the school facility at least 72 hours ahead of time.
- 4) The drawing must be open to the public. Formulae or computer programs (showing lottery settings) used to conduct or assist in the drawing process must be available for public review at the drawing.
- 5) The drawing must be attended by at least two board members and one member of the Admissions Team.
- 6) Minutes will be taken documenting the order in which applicants are drawn.
- 7) Drawings will occur for all grade levels for which there are applicants, regardless of available space.
- 8) A family with 2 or more children applying to the same grade level may elect to enroll a child other than the one whose name is drawn, giving the family the choice of which child(ren) to enroll in case not all are admitted.
- 9) Oakland resident families are prioritized first, in descending grade order.
- 10) As outlined in the NOCCS Admissions Policy, the Selection Process includes: 1) an admissions preference for already enrolled students; 2) an admissions preference for siblings of enrolled students and admitted students; 3) an admissions preference for children of NOCCS staff; and 4) an admissions preference for children of NOCCS board members. A sibling is a person with at least one parent or step-parent in common. All siblings must be entered on all applicable applications. If a NOCCS staff member enters employment after the close of the lottery, he/she may exercise their preference at the time of hire. This does

not guarantee that the employee's child will be admitted, but that they will be placed at the top of the waitlist for their grade, after any previously waitlisted siblings of enrolled students.

- a) Siblings of accepted children receive preference over other children in their grade levels, but not over siblings of enrolled children.
  - b) In the case of multiple siblings of enrolled students, order will be determined by the order in which the enrolled siblings were admitted, with a secondary sort on pull order in each respective drawing.
  - c) The preference for siblings of enrolled students is effective even in the case of enrolled students on the candidate list for graduation (i.e. siblings of 8th graders).
- 11) To support the core principle of equity, the NOCCS Admissions Policy allows for a lottery preference for Kindergarten and 6th Grade applicants who provide proof of residence within the Oakland Unified School District's Neighborhood Attendance Area(s) for 1000 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in Oakland, CA (Neighborhood Attendance Area School(s)<sup>7</sup>). Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade applicants' residential address at the time of application will be placed into the Schoolmint Address Finder system and used to determine if they are eligible for this preference. Applicants who qualify for this lottery preference shall receive 40%<sup>8</sup> of all available Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Lottery spots.
- 12) All applicants will be drawn, even past the point of available spots, to create a wait list order.
- 13) Families who are not Oakland residents are drawn similarly to Oakland residents in a separate pool. Their waitlist order number continues the sequence left off by the Oakland residents.
- 14) Applicant siblings of children who have been accepted will be noted, but the random drawings for their classes will occur normally. Applicant families should be aware that even if they are drawn at the top of their pool and a spot exists, siblings of admitted students in the same grade pool will be offered admission before their applicant.
- a) Applicant siblings of children who have been admitted will be given provisional preference over their peers. Their preference will go into effect only if the admitted sibling actually accepts the position and then enrolls by the given deadline. If the admitted sibling does not accept by the deadline or does not ultimately enroll, the waitlisted sibling's relative position within the applicant pool will default back to the original, randomly assigned order.

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<sup>7</sup> Commencing with the 2015-2020 NOCCS Charter Term and due to the closure of Santa Fe Elementary School in June 2012, beginning with the 2016-2017 admissions lottery, NOCCS Kindergarten applicants zoned to attend Emerson Elementary, Sankofa Elementary, Hoover Elementary, and 6th grade applicants zoned for Claremont Middle School shall be qualified as Neighborhood Attendance Area residents.

<sup>8</sup> For the purpose of determining a whole number of available spots, any decimal above .1 shall result in the number being rounded upwards to the next whole number.

- b) In the case of multiple siblings with provisional preference, order will be determined by the order in which their admitted siblings were drawn.
  - c) Children with siblings admitted after the drawing will receive provisional preference over other waitlisted children but not over enrolled or admitted children. If the admitted sibling does not accept by the deadline or does not ultimately enroll, the waitlisted sibling's relative position within the applicant pool will default back to the originally assigned order.
  - d) Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade applicant siblings will occupy provisional spots designated for the general Oakland Resident pool (not the neighborhood attendance area pool to which 40% of all available lottery spots will be given).
- 15) In preparation for the Lottery, during the drawing, and if/when moving through the waitlist, the relative gender balance will be checked and the provision applied, if needed.
- 16) The waitlist shall remain in effect throughout the following academic year. However, families will be informed that position on the waitlist does not supercede higher order preferences. For instance, a 3rd grader enrolling mid-year with a sister in 1st grade and seeking admission at NOCCS -- if an opening becomes available in the 1st grade later that academic year, the sister will be offered admission before anyone on the waitlist.
- 17) Any applications that come after the deadline will be added to the end of the waitlist in order of receipt date. However, NOCCS reserves the right to run a secondary lottery in special cases, such as the creation of a new classroom, etc. In the case that a secondary lottery is needed due to special circumstances, any applications that come after the deadline will be added to one of two additional pools independent of the pool created for on-time applications:
- a) Oakland residents
  - b) Not Oakland residents
- 18) In the case of a secondary lottery, another two drawings will be scheduled and held for these two pools, respectively.

## **ADMISSIONS**

- 1) A student who was drawn for an open slot in the lottery or granted a placement through an admissions preference shall be notified by email and/or telephone/voicemail. NOCCS staff will post a public list of the lottery results within 5 working days of the drawing.
  - a. The deadline by which the family must accept (following submission and verification of required documents) or decline will be made clear at this time.

- i. For applicants offered placement after the NOCCS lottery this timeline will generally be a 72 hour period.
    - ii. For applicants offered placement from the waitlist this timeline will generally be a 24 to 48 hour period.
  - b. For 4 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade applicants offered placement after the NOCCS lottery, a ½ day “student visit day” will be scheduled. This day will be scheduled prior to the deadline for acceptance of the offer of admissions. In order to minimally disrupt our educational program, no other special arrangements will be available between the offer of admission and deadline for acceptance.
  - c. For 4 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade applicants offered placement from the waitlist, a ½ day “student visit day” may be scheduled at the discretion of the Director.
  - d. For K – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade applicants offered placement after the NOCCS lottery, the school will host a reception and question/answer session. This event will be scheduled prior to the deadline for acceptance of the offer of admissions. Children may attend this session with their parent(s), however, visits to classrooms will not be permitted at this event.
  - e. For K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade applicants offered placement from the waitlist an informational meeting may be scheduled with a NOCCS staff member at the discretion of the Director.
  - f. Application documentation must be provided and verified *prior to* a student or family attending any of the above events.
- 2) The family must accept (following submission and verification of required documents) or decline admission by the stated notification deadline. Acceptances or declines must be made via Schoolmint, email or in writing and received by NOCCS by the stated deadline. The absence of either will be taken as an implicit decline.
- 3) If a family declines, the next family on this waitlist is offered admission.
- 4) Until all available spots are filled, the status of all applicant families is undecided.
- 5) A prospective, current, or waitlisted family may submit a formal grievance to the Board.
- 6) Applicants granted admission or waitlist status on false pretenses will result in forfeiture of enrollment or waiting list placement at NOCCS for the admissions year. This is the case even if the false information had no material effect on the applicant’s admission to NOCCS.
- 7) Applicants granted admission must submit all required documents for enrollment in order to secure the offered spot by the deadlines given by the Admissions

Team. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in a withdrawal of the admissions offer.