

Magnet School Enrollment Process and Transportation for Valley Middle School of STEM

District 196 magnet schools offer families increased choices for learning while helping the district achieve state-required integration goals.

Middle Level School Choice

Any middle school-age student who lives within Independent School District 196 has the opportunity to apply for enrollment in the Valley Middle School of STEM magnet program. Non-resident students may also apply, but will only be considered after applications of students residing in District 196 are processed.

Magnet Transportation to Valley Middle School of Stem (VMSS)

Magnet students are District 196 middle school students who have been accepted to VMSS and do not live in the school's attendance area. If a magnet student is eligible for transportation to her or his home middle school, she or he has the opportunity to be transported to VMSS via district transportation. VMSS currently utilizes a shuttle system for students who request it and are eligible for transportation.

- **Morning Shuttle:** Magnet students will board the bus at their designated high school stop in their neighborhood and travel to their attendance area high school. From there, they will be shuttled to VMS.
- **Afternoon Shuttle:** Students will be shuttled from VMS to their attendance area middle school, where they will then take their neighborhood route bus home to the designated middle school stop in the neighborhood in which they reside.

For those students not eligible for bussing or for those choosing to not ride a bus, the VMSS Aviary (student center) is open for study and student collaboration beginning at 7:00 AM.

Morning and afternoon transportation will be provided to all district resident magnet school students who live more than one and one-half mile from Valley Middle School of STEM, according to Policy 707, Student Transportation. Students who reside in District 196 and live less than one and one-half mile from Valley Middle School of STEM, may take advantage of the fee-for-service transportation option (Administrative Regulation 507.2AR, Student Fees and Fines). All transportation change requests must be received and no later than August 1st. Transportation is not provided for non-resident students.

Enrollment Guidelines

1. District 196 will provide a fair and open process for enrolling students in the magnet schools. This process will be reviewed annually.
2. Each year, the district will publish the timeline and process for application and selection.
3. The application and selection process will be administered by the Instruction and Achievement Department staff, for Magnet Schools, with final approval from the superintendent.
4. To apply for the magnet school enrollment lottery, a family must complete and submit an application no later than December 12, 2025.
5. If the number of applicants exceeds available space, a random selection process will determine placement and wait list status.

6. Families will be notified of placement or wait list status no later than December 19, 2025.
7. Once enrolled, students may remain at Valley Middle School of STEM as long as their enrollment continues uninterrupted.

Enrollment Provisions

Phase One: Attendance-Area Enrollment (no magnet application necessary)

The following students will be automatically enrolled to attend the magnet school:

- Students who live in the attendance area of Valley Middle School of STEM.

Phase Two: Magnet Application

Next, placements will be made from the following groups in the order listed, using a random selection process. If space no longer remains when a name is drawn, the student will be added to a waiting list.

1. District residents who live outside the magnet school attendance area, but have one or more siblings currently enrolled there.
2. Applicants to Valley Middle School of STEM from Cedar Park Elementary STEM School and Echo Park Elementary School of Leadership, Engineering and Technology (District 196 Residents)
3. All remaining applicants who are District 196 residents.
4. Siblings of current magnet school students who do not reside in District 196.
5. Applicants to Valley Middle School of STEM from Cedar Park Elementary STEM School and Echo Park Elementary School of Leadership, Engineering and Technology who do not reside in District 196.
6. Current open-enrolled students who do not reside in District 196.
7. All remaining applicants who do not reside in District 196.

Phase	Enrollment	Valley Middle School of STEM
1	Attendance Area	Students residing in the attendance area of the magnet school
2	Magnet Application	Siblings of current magnet students who reside in the district but live outside the magnet school attendance area
		Fifth grade magnet student applicants who reside in the district, from Cedar Park Elementary STEM School and Echo Park Elementary School of Leadership, Engineering and Technology
		District 196 Residents
		Siblings of current magnet school students who do not reside in District 196 (Transportation not provided)
		Applicants to Valley Middle School of STEM from Cedar Park Elementary STEM School and Echo Park Elementary School of Leadership, Engineering and Technology who do not reside in District 196 (Transportation not provided)
		Current Open-Enrolled students who do not reside in District 196 (Transportation not provided)
		Non-District Residents (Transportation not provided)