School Choice Guidelines

Parents of applicants are invited to read this document for information and are encouraged to contact the School Choice office if there are any questions.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted online by 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the open enrollment period each year. All applicants must provide proof of residency within DeKalb County School District attendance zones at the time of applying and to hold a seat offer. Every applicant must meet the eligibility criteria for the program that they apply for to be considered for entry into the lottery. Eligibility criteria are listed under the "Programs" tab on the School Choice website. Applicants who previously applied but were not accepted into a School Choice Program must reapply during the next year's Open Enrollment window. **Note:** To be considered on time, an applicant must submit all supporting documents by 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the open enrollment period each year.

Late Applications

A late application period will be published each year. Late applications are processed only if seats are available after the initial lottery and all waitlists have been exhausted.

Lottery Policy

DCSD will conduct a random lottery using an online program through a contracted vendor. A waitlist is generated if the number of applicants exceeds available seats for any program. As seats become available, seat placement offers are made based on the wait list order. Visit the School Choice website for lottery and notification dates.

School Choice Selections

If desired, applicants may apply for as many programs as eligible and choose first, second, and third choice schools under each program. **Once a seat is accepted, all other selections and waitlist placements will be removed**.

Age Requirement

Applicants applying for preschool through first grade must meet the Georgia Age of Entry requirement. The applicant must be age-eligible **by September 1st** of the current school year.

Proof of Residency

Proof of residency is required for students not currently enrolled in ~~a~~ DeKalb County School District. Acceptable residency documents are gas, light, water bills, or lease/mortgage statements. Documents should be uploaded to the online application. If the parent or legal guardian does not have one of the listed proof of residence documents in their name, then the DeKalb County School District Affidavit of Residence form is required.

Eligibility for Programs Requiring Standardized Test Scores for Grades 4 - 9

From 2016-17 onwards, DeKalb County School District (DCSD) will utilize only the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (M.A.P.) current school year baseline score results as one of the eligibility criteria for High Achiever Magnet Program grades 4-10. M.A.P. replaces the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). No other assessments are used.

All enrolled DCSD K-12 students are administered the M.A.P. during the August-September test window. The DCSD School Choice department offers private and homeschooled students the opportunity to take the test **one time** during the fall of the current year. The test dates for private and homeschooled students will be publicized by September 1st. Information about testing eligibility and testing information can be found here.

Continuation Guidelines

Students enrolled in any School Choice Program must abide by the DCSD and local school contracts, policies, and guidelines to continue.

1. Attend school regularly and arrive on time as indicated below.
2. Avoid excessive check-outs and leave the campus promptly at the end of the school day or after participation in an authorized school activity.
3. Conduct themselves appropriately for school as indicated in the Code of Student Conduct Handbook for the current school year.
4. Maintain the required G.P.A. for academically eligible programs, including Special Interest Magnet, High Achievers Magnet, and International Baccalaureate High School Programs.
5. Successfully complete probationary periods as indicated by the school or School Choice office.
6. Complete mandatory parent and community service hours for Theme, Magnet, and I.B. programs.

Attendance/Behavior

Students enrolled in any School Choice Program must abide by the DCSD and local school attendance and behavior policies and guidelines as indicated in the DCSD Code of Student Conduct Handbook to continue.

- Behavior infractions – students with at least three (3) disciplinary infractions of level 3 or higher may be referred for exiting the selected program and school.
- If an infraction is at or above level 4, a student may be subject to immediate revocation upon the first violation.
- Attendance – students with at least five (5) unexcused absences or at least six (6) unexcused tardies may be referred for exiting the selected program.

Transportation

The most current DeKalb County transportation policy will be followed for the School Choice Programs. During the operating school year, students offered a seat in a Theme School, Magnet program, Arabia Mountain High School Career Pathway, or Champion Theme Middle School will have transportation services. All other school choice programs do not provide transportation. **Note:** Once the parent accepts a seat online, transportation information will be emailed along with the seat placement notification. Student must report to their preferred satellite pick-up location and will be transported to the school and dropped off at the same location after the school day.

Withdrawal

Once a student withdraws from a School Choice program or school to enroll in another school or program, the student forfeits their seat at the previous School Choice school. The seat cannot be reinstated, even if the student previously attended the school.

Families who wish to return to their previous School Choice school must submit a new application during the next School Choice lottery cycle. Placement is not guaranteed and is subject to program eligibility, available seats, and lottery selection procedures.

Disclaimer

If a deadline falls on a date that DCSD administrative offices are closed for business, the document will be considered due on the first business day after the deadline. The District reserves the right to change the timeline as necessary. No exceptions will be made for missed deadlines.

Students selected for any School Choice Program must register using the Online Registration system and refer to the school's website for additional instructions. If the applicant does not register with the stated time on the official offer letter and/or school website, the seat will be declined and offered to the next eligible applicant on the waiting list. All lottery results are subject to verification by the Management Information System Office. Any malfunction of the lottery system will result in the immediate voiding of the drawing. The DeKalb County School District reserves the right to void and repeat any lottery drawing that result from any system malfunction or human error. Alternate lottery dates for additional available seats will be held electronically as needed.

DeKalb County School District (DCSD) reserves the right to change any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, procedures, program guidelines, dates, curricula, and courses without advance notice or obligation. Failure to read this document does not excuse parents and students from the regulations and requirements described herein. It is the policy of the DeKalb County Board of Education not to discriminate based on age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or handicap in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices. The DeKalb County School District School Choice Office reserves the right to revise program guidelines, procedures, services, curricula, and student placements without advance notice or obligation to support local, state, and federal practices, regulations, and policies. Failure to read this passage does not excuse parents and students from the regulations and requirements described on this website and the DCSD School Choice webpage.