

WESTERN SIERRA CHARTER SCHOOLS

ADMISSIONS, ENROLLMENT, PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWING POLICY

I. Introduction

The goal of the admissions policy of Western Sierra Charter Schools (hereinafter “Schools”) is to attract, enroll and retain children of parents (or guardians) who are seeking to be their child’s primary educator. This is sometimes called homeschooling, independent study, home based education, or non-classroom based education. Whatever the term, the fundamental matter is the primacy of the parent’s role and responsibility in the education of their child.

II. Admission Policies, Procedures, and Requirements

“Admission policies and procedures, consistent with [Education Code Section 47605] subdivision (e).” Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(H).

The Schools will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition or discriminate against any student based upon any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220.

Schools will admit all pupils who wish to attend the Schools. The Schools will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in Schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or his or her parent or legal guardian within the state. In accordance with Education Code Sections 49011 and 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv), admission preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A), the Schools shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the Schools for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605e()(2)(B)(iii), including pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Similarly, in accordance with Section 47605(e)(4)(C), the Schools shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the Schools to disenroll from the Schools or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to the academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii), as listed above.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(D), the Schools shall post a notice developed by the CDE on the Schools website, outlining the requirements of Section 47605(e)(4), and make this notice available to parents.

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Schools will adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth.

Schools shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student's disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. The Schools will not request submission of a student's IEP, 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(A), for a student who has an IEP and wants to participate in independent study, a determination will be made as to whether independent study is appropriate within 30 days, and if appropriate, written into the IEP. The Schools may request information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the Schools. Post-matriculation, various assessments may be administered to further determine readiness or maintenance of the said grade.

III. Public Random Drawing

The Schools will operate an admissions process, which shall include reasonable time for all of the following: (1) voluntary information sessions for students and parents held at the school site; (2) an application period; (3) public random drawing ("lottery"), if necessary; and (4) enrollment. The Schools may fill vacancies or openings that become available after this process by holding an additional public random drawing ("lottery"), if necessary.

Schools will schedule regular informational meetings for parents and prospective students throughout the year. During these meetings, parents and students will be informed on the educational philosophy, what the school provides, requirements, and other information about Schools, along with details about the application and lottery procedures and timing (if necessary), including statement that parents need not attend the lottery to secure a space for their child. Schools will maintain a list of all applications of prospective students throughout the year.

IV. Admission Process and Open Application

The Schools shall require students who wish to attend the Schools to complete an Application Form. Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year. The Application Form includes the student's

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name, grade, birthdate, home address, email, and phone, and student school district of residence. All interested families will be required to submit a completed Application Form directly to the Schools before 3:00 p.m. on the date of the annual Application deadline. Following the open application period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade span has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Schools will hold a public random drawing (or “lottery”) to determine admission for the impacted grade span, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed admission in the following school year.

In the event there are fewer Applications submitted than spaces available for a particular grade as of the application deadline, all applicants will be admitted and emailed the link for the Enrollment Packet; the Schools will continue to conduct outreach.

Admission Eligibility and Requirements

In order to be eligible for enrollment in the Schools, students must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- All students must have successfully completed their education through the grade level prior to the grade in which they are seeking to enroll.
- All students must have been fully immunized and present the appropriate health examination record in accordance with the California Health and Safety Code.
- All Transitional Kindergarten students must be age 5 between September 2 and April 2.
- All Kindergarten students must be age 5 on or before September 1 of the school year in which he/she seeks enrollment.
- No student may concurrently attend a private school that charges the student’s family for tuition.
- All students and their parents or guardians must read, agree to and sign the Schools’ Master Independent Study Agreement.
- All students shall be documented as residents of the county the School is authorized in or an adjacent county.

In order to ensure that all students will be placed appropriately and benefit fully from the education program, the following documentation and procedures are required to complete registration and finalize student enrollment. Failure to comply with any of these procedures may result in denial of admission. An admitted student may be involuntarily withdrawn from the School if failure to comply with these procedures is discovered after admission has been granted.

After admission, students will be required to submit an **Enrollment Packet**, which shall include the following:

1. Student enrollment/registration form
2. Proof of Immunization
3. Home Language Survey
4. Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form

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5. Proof of minimum age requirements
6. Release of records¹
7. As applicable, current expulsion order
8. As applicable, prior evaluation by any previously-attended school as to whether remaining in independent study is in the best interest of the student pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(b).

Upon a determination that a student who has been offered admission is under a current expulsion order from another local educational agency, registration of the student shall be strictly conditioned upon the requirements of Education Code Sections 48915.2 and 48918. Upon a determination that a student who has been offered admission has been the subject of an evaluation pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(b), as to whether it is in the best interests of the student to remain in independent study, the Schools will review the written records of the findings in the Student Record. If the Schools or another local educational agency has determined that it is not in the best interest of the pupil to remain in independent study, registration will cease and the student will not be enrolled in the Schools. The model of education within the Schools is independent study and if independent study is not appropriate for an enrolling student, in accordance with Education Code Section 51746(b)(1), registration will not be in the student's best interest. If it is discovered after enrollment of a student that a current expulsion order exists or the Schools or another LEA made a prior determination that it is not in the best interests of the student to remain in independent study, the Schools will proceed with its involuntary removal procedures as described below in Element 10 and in accordance with the legal requirements described in Education Code Section 47605.

V. Public Random Drawing Procedures

Policy and Procedures for Public Random Drawing of Potential Students at a WSCS School

Background:

California Education Code 47605.6(e)(2)(B) states the following:

If the number of pupils who wish to attend the Schools exceeds the school's capacity, attendance, except for existing pupils of the Schools, shall be determined by a public random drawing. Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending the Schools and pupils who reside in the county except as provided for in Section 47614.5. Other preferences may be permitted by the chartering authority on an individual Schools basis and only if consistent with the law.

¹ In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(B), the Schools shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to the Schools before enrollment.

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Education Code 47605.6 means that, should the number of students interested in enrolling in a Western Sierra Schools (WSCS) school exceed the available open spots, WSCS will hold a public random drawing for the purpose of creating a ranked list of those potential students.

Pursuant to this Education Code, Western Sierra Schools hereby implements the following policy.

Procedure:

1. All students who are interested in enrollment in a WSCS school must first fill out the Application Form.
2. If there is not space currently available in the desired school the school will hold a public random drawing (lottery) for the purpose of creating a ranked list of those potential students.
3. Prior to lottery, people on wait list students who have completed the Application Form will be contacted and given information on lottery date, deadline to respond to school admission offer, and will also be given a family number for lottery purposes. This number will be used on the website after the lottery so that families can see their placement in a confidential manner. This number and family information will be written on their lottery card which will then be used for lottery drawing.
4. Priority will be given to students in the following order
 - a. Staff or WSCS Board member with a child to enroll
 - b. Sibling of a student already enrolled in another WSCS school
 - c. Grade level of student
 - d. Students residing in the boundaries of authorizing school district
 - e. All other applicants
5. Each priority group will be drawn as necessary, beginning with priority letter “a”, then priority letter “b” and so on (See #4 above).
6. Students will then be drawn by family. This means that when we draw a family's number all students who have submitted an Application Form in that family who have will be able to enroll (except in the case where we have less spaces available than there are students in the family--in that case we would give that family priority for the next openings as they would fall into category “b” in priority (see above).
7. After lottery, families would be listed on our website in the ranked order they were drawn using their assigned number.
8. Families will be responsible to make contact with the school and will have 48 hours to contact us to accept or deny Admission offer. If the 48 hour time period falls on either a weekend or holiday then the deadline would be within school business hours. Families would know deadline ahead of time.
9. Contact to accept Admission offer can be made by either phone call, email, or filling out a contact form on the website.
10. Upon acceptance of Admission Offer, student/ family will be given the link to the Enrollment Packet

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11. Should families not submit their Enrollment Forms within a clearly designated amount of time, their acceptance shall be forfeited.
12. Lotteries will be open to the public and announced on our websites 72 hours in advance. They will be held at the appropriate school's location.
13. As spaces open throughout the year we will contact families on the current ranked lottery list until the list is exhausted.
14. A ranked lottery list is only valid through the school year it was performed. Families that were not enrolled in the current school year can reapply for admission for the following year.
15. If new families fill out the Application Form after the current lottery drawing, they will be placed on a wait list for the next lottery drawing.

The Board of Directors may review and revise the Admission, Enrollment and Public Random Drawing Policy as necessary.

The Board of Directors will take all necessary efforts to ensure lottery procedures are fairly executed. Lottery spaces will be pulled by the Executive Director-designated lottery official, and recorded by a School's employee.

School staff will be available to assist families in completing the Enrollment forms. Voluntary orientation meetings will be held, as necessary, throughout the school year to provide parents and students with more information about the Schools and answer their questions. Attendance is not required. Should a family decline the position, the next family on the list will be contacted until the open position is filled.

Should families not submit their complete Enrollment Packet (See above) within a clearly designated amount of time, their acceptance shall be forfeited.

Adopted: 6/13/2023