

SCHOOL CHOICE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where is the School Choice Division located?

The School Choice Division is located at 430 Cleveland Avenue, in the Columbus City Schools Central Enrollment Center on the Ft. Hayes Campus. The phone number is 614-365-7459. The fax number is 614-365-7468.

My child is not currently in Columbus City Schools but I live in the Columbus City Schools district. How do I find out where my child will attend school?

Parents/guardians may call the FACTline (614-221-FACT) or call/visit the School Choice Division (614-365-7459) to find out their assigned school by address.

What if I prefer a school other than my assigned school by address?

Parents/guardians may apply for a different conventional or alternative school through the School Choice lottery process for the following school year. You are highly encouraged to investigate your choices by visiting the school, reading the school profile, or visiting the School Choice Fair before submitting an application.

What is the timeline for placements under the School Choice Lottery for the 2017-2018 school year?

In order for an application to be included in the High School electronic lottery draw, an electronic application must be submitted via the Parent Portal to the School Choice Division between January 9, 2017 and February 28, 2017.

In order for an application to be included in the Middle and Elementary School electronic lottery draw, the electronic application must be submitted via the Parent Portal to the School Choice Division between February 6, 2017 and March 31, 2017.

How do I apply for a school other than the school of assignment?

If your child currently attends a Columbus City School, you must create a Parent Portal account to submit a lottery application. In order to create a Parent Portal account you must have your GUID (access key) information, which can be obtained from your child's school. There are step by step videos and documentation available regarding the Parent Portal and School Choice Application. Visit the Columbus City Schools webpage at www.ccsch.us and click on Parents. Then click on the Parent Portal link on the left side of the page.

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If your child is **NOT** currently enrolled in a Columbus City School, you will need to complete the Online Registration via SpeedyPass by visiting <http://ccsoh.us/Enrollment.aspx>. During the final step of the Online Pre-Registration, you will need to schedule an appointment to meet with an Enrollment Specialist and present required documents. Once the documents are received and enrollment into the database is complete, you will receive your GUID (access key) information to create a Parent Portal account.

High School lottery applications must be submitted via the Parent Portal by February 28, 2017, to be included in the High School lottery. Middle and Elementary lottery applications must be submitted via the Parent Portal by March 31, 2017, to be included in the lotteries.

Late applicants will be added to the end of the waitlist after all of those who had applied within the lottery deadline. Applying by the deadline gives a student a better opportunity to be considered for one of the desired schools.

What is the difference between a conventional school and an alternative school?

All Columbus City Schools utilize the same curriculum. Alternative schools differ in either how the subjects are taught (methods, classroom design, etc.) or in the focus of the instruction (arts, language, math and science, etc.)

How many of the schools are alternative and what are they?

There are 5 alternative high schools: Columbus Alternative, Columbus North International, Eastmoor Academy, Fort Hayes Arts and Academic and Africentric Early College (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12).

There are 4 alternative middle schools: Arts Impact (AIMS), Columbus City Preparatory for Girls, Columbus City Preparatory for Boys, and Africentric Early College includes grades K-12 (see above).

There are 2 Kindergarten-through-8th grade schools: Berwick Alternative and Indianola Informal.

There are 7 Kindergarten-through 6th grade alternative schools:

Language Immersion Schools: Columbus Spanish, Ecole Kenwood

International: Hubbard Mastery

Individually Guided Education (IGE): Fairwood

Traditional: Stewart

STEM: Hamilton STEM Pre K-6, Windsor Alt. (There are two additional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Academies: Linden STEM and South Mifflin STEM)

There currently are 8 Elementary (K-5) alternative schools

Math and Science: Cassady, Georgian Heights, plus K-8 Berwick Alternative

Project Adventure: Cedarwood and Devonshire

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Arts Impact: Duxberry Park

Literature Based/Language Arts: Olde Orchard

Traditional: Oakland Park, plus Stewart K-6

Academic and Physical Excellence: Westgate

What is the difference between Total Lottery/Citywide Draw, Total Lottery/Regional Draw, or Has an Assigned Population with a Citywide or Regional Draw?

Total Lottery/Citywide Draw: No students are assigned to the school by virtue of their address. Students from any of the six communities may apply for the school. If they are accepted, transportation would be provided if they live more than 2 miles from the school.

Total Lottery/Regional Draw: No students are assigned to the school by virtue of their address. Only students who live in the eligible community(ies) may apply for the school.

Has an Assigned Population with a Citywide Draw: After students who live in the school’s regular assignment area are placed, any vacancies that still exist are filled through the lottery process. Students from any of the six communities may apply for the school.

Has an Assigned Population with a Regional Draw: After students who live in the school’s regular assignment area are placed, any vacancies that still exist are filled through the lottery process. Only students who live in the eligible community(ies) may apply for the school.

How do I determine my “eligible community” when I apply for a regional alternative elementary?

In the list below, find the school for which you are assigned by address and then determine your community (Northwest, Northeast, East, South, West or Center City).

<u>Northwest</u>	<u>Northeast</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>Center City</u>
Colerain Como Cranbrook Gables Hubbard Mastery Indian Springs Salem Weinland Park Winterset	Alpine Avalon Cassady Devonshire East Linden E. Columbus Forest Park Hamilton STEM Huy	Berwick Broadleigh Easthaven Fairmoor Leewood Liberty Oakmont Olde Orchard Scottwood	Cedarwood Lincoln Park Moler Parsons Southwood Watkins	Avondale Binns Burroughs Eakin Georgian Hts Highland Lindbergh Starling Sullivant	Eastgate Fairwood Livingston Ohio Siebert Stewart Trevitt

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	Innis Linden STEM Maize North Linden Northtowne Parkmoor S Mifflin STEM Valley Forge Windsor STEM	Shady Lane Woodcrest* *Year Round		Valleyview West Broad West Mound Westgate	
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Once you have determined your community, please refer to the chart below to determine the regional alternative schools for which you are eligible to apply.

You may also apply for any of the Citywide Alternatives: Duxberry Park; Hubbard Mastery, Indianola K-8, Olde Orchard, Africentric, Columbus Spanish Immersion (CSIA), Ecole Kenwood. Applicants for grades 2 through 6 for CSIA (Spanish) or Ecole Kenwood (French) must be proficient in the language and must pass an interview at the school to be approved for a lottery placement.

Northwest (1)	Northeast (2)	East (3)	South (4)	West (5)	Center City (6)
Hamilton	Cassady	Fairwood	Fairwood	Fairwood	Fairwood
Devonshire	Olde Orchard	Berwick	Berwick	Georgian	Hamilton
Oakland Park	Devonshire	Olde Orchard	Cedarwood	Heights	Devonshire
Windsor	Oakland Park	Cedarwood	Stewart	Cedarwood	Stewart
	Windsor	Stewart	Westgate	Stewart	Windsor
		Windsor		Westgate	Westgate

How do I know what school would be good for my child?

Evaluate your child’s aptitudes, abilities, and interests. For instance, does your child seem to learn more when self-directed or when provided with detailed instructions? Does your child have a particular talent or interest in reading and writing, in the arts, in foreign languages or cultures? Think about other things significant to your child. Although all of our schools will foster learning in every child, not every school is the best fit for every child.

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Determine what other things are important to you. Is bus transportation critical for you or were you planning to provide your own transportation? Does your child need special education services? Do you need a before-school or after-school Latchkey program? Do you need a school near your daycare provider?

At the middle and high school levels, you might wish to seek schools or programs that mesh with your child's aspirations for college selections or career goals.

Call and set an appointment to visit schools in the late fall, including what would be your automatic assigned school for the upcoming year. Come to the school fair to meet with the school administration. Ask questions about any particular interests you might have and use it to evaluate your possibilities.

How can I find information on the various schools?

Start in the fall, which will give you several months before the application period opens to find out information. Visit the website of schools for which you might be interested, visit schools and check out other items such as transportation availability. There is a book in each of the Columbus branch libraries entitled, Fast Facts about Columbus Schools, which includes a page or two about each of the schools.

Attend the school fairs.

Can I just show up at a school to get a tour?

Most schools provide tours only on specific dates and times. It is best to call the individual school office to make arrangements ahead of time. The majority of schools will not hold tours in February or March because they are trying to focus fully on preparing for the spring tests, so contact the school as early as possible. Several hold informational open houses for interested parents. Check with the desired school. Phone numbers for each school can be found under the school profiles.

When are the school fairs or other informational meetings?

This year, the High School Fair will be held on January 9, 2017 at Africentric High School, 3223 Allegheny Avenue from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The Middle School Fair will be held on February 8, 2017 at Columbus City Prep School for Girls, 1390 Bryden Road from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The Elementary School Fair will be held on February 9, 2017 at Africentric High School, 3223 Allegheny Avenue from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

All principals will attend their respective fair to answer questions about their school.

High school career center courses are accessed through the guidance counselors and internship coordinators at all high schools. Information on career centers and post-high school-graduate career apprenticeships will be available at the high school fair or from any high school guidance counselor.

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We hope that you will be able to join us on these evenings.

What is the procedure for potential placement through the lottery?

An electronic draw will be completed for each school and grade after the deadline for on time applications. Parents will receive an automated call and email when lottery results are available to be viewed through the Parent Portal. Parents will be able to view if an offer is being made and/or the waitlist number for each of the school to which they applied.

The School Choice staff works with all of the Columbus City Schools to determine the number of offers that must be accepted to fill the vacancies for each school. Subsequent notifications of offers will be made to the phone number and email displayed on the Parent Portal. Parents have two days to accept an offer, therefore it is vital that the email and phone numbers are kept current and checked often. Offers not accepted by the deadline will be declined and the next student on the waitlist will offered placement.

For how many schools may I apply?

For any application, you may apply for up to 3 different school choices in any combination of conventional and alternative schools. A school may only be selected one time. Be sure to apply for the correct grade for the 2017-2018 school year.

How long do I have to accept or decline an offer?

Answers to offers must be entered within two days of the offer. Parents/guardians may not keep any offer on hold. They must make a decision on all offers made to them. If a response to an offer is not received by the stated deadline, offers will be declined and the offer will be given to the next student on the waitlist.

If I am on the waitlist for all of my school choices, how will I be notified if an offer can be made?

You will receive an email and an automated call with the offer.

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Is there anything I can do to make sure the process runs smoothly for my child's application?

Make sure your Parent Portal reflects the correct current address, email, phone numbers and household members. If there are corrections needed to your address or household members, please contact your child's school immediately. For an address update you must provide address verification (a copy of your lease/mortgage, gas, electric or water bill) to your child's school or the Central Enrollment Center. You can update your household phone number in the **Household Information** tab and your email and cell phone numbers in the **Family Members** tab of the Parent Portal.

Why must I make a decision on offered schools within 2 days? Why can I not wait a few weeks to see if I might get offered another school?

If an offer is accepted, it reduces the remaining number of seats available to offer other applicants. When an offer is declined, it allows us to offer the seat to the next applicant on the waiting list. If no one gave an answer, no one on the waiting list would ever move up so we could offer the next child a seat. The process for placement would come to a halt.

Remember, if you are still on a waiting list, you are hoping others will decline offers for your desired school in order to move your application higher on the waiting list. Please understand that others are in similar situations.

What occurs if I accept an offer through the lottery?

Once a school is accepted, the student is committed to that building. All other applications are canceled and his/her seat in the previous school or home school is offered to other students. **If a student changes his/her mind, he/she must put in a new application for a different school, even if it is for their original school by address.** The student will still be assigned to the school they first accepted unless another school can be offered. In the winter of 2018, students may once again apply for a different school through the lottery, if the school they initially chose does not fully meet their needs.

Depending on the timing, if a return to the home or previous school is desired, it may not always be possible, so it is important that parents/guardians and the student be certain that they want the school being offered before accepting placement.

Once an acceptance is made, wait a few days then call the school and find out about any orientations or information nights.

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After one year is completed at the school chosen through the lottery, can my child return to his/her “home” school by address?

Not automatically. In early January of each year a Request to Return to Home School form is made available on the internet and at each school building. Parents may complete the form and submit it to the Division of School Choice. This does not guarantee a return, but if space is available the student is placed back into the school of address before any lottery placements are made. If a student **cannot** be returned to the school of address, the parent will be contacted.

A few questions that should be weighed in the decision-making process are: If you knew ahead of time you cannot return to a previous school, if you change your mind, would it make a difference in your decision? If your child is doing well, is happy, and you are pleased with the child’s current school, is it wise to accept an offer for another school?

If I get into a school through lottery, must I apply every year to stay?

Once you are accepted through the lottery, you will be assigned to that school through the last year offered in that building unless you apply for and accept another school, or move to a new address within CCS and elect to immediately change to your new school by address. If you move to an address outside of CCS, you would need to apply to stay. See later FAQs concerning Interdistrict Open Enrollment.

Which CCS elementary schools offer full-day versus half-day kindergarten?

All Columbus Elementary Schools offer full-day kindergarten.

May I still apply for the lottery if my child will not be 5 by September 30, 2017 if I am applying for Early Entrance Testing (EET)?

Applications for children who will not be 5 until after September 30 will not be accepted until the child has passed the Early Entrance Testing (EET), which is completed in June by the Gifted and Talented Department. Late lottery applications for children who meet the criteria will be accepted in June if the application is accompanied by a copy of the EET approval letter.

What if my child has special needs such as Special Education or English as a Second Language (ESL), or I wish to apply for the ECLIPSE program?

The district’s Special Education Department, the English as a Second Language Department, or the Gifted and Talented Office may provide you with information on program options. Parents/guardians may contact staff at the following numbers:

Gifted and Talented = 614-365-6626

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ESL = 614-365-8802

Special Education = 614-365-5206

What is ESL and how do I access the program?

ESL stands for English as a Second Language. Children who are born or have been living in a country other than the United States, or whose primary home language is not English, or who have one or both parents who were born outside of the United States, will be assessed for English acquisition at the time of enrollment (grades K-12).

What do I need to bring to enroll my child in school?

Please visit the Enrollment page on the Columbus City School website (<http://www.ccsch.us/Enrollment.aspx>) for a list of the documents needed for enrollment.

Is a childcare placement possible through the Division of School Choice?

No. Childcare placements based on demonstrated parental need are only available from the Division of the Registrar during the school year after the lottery process for the year is completed. Prior to the start of school, parents should apply for placement through the regular lottery school choice process. After the school year has begun, parents can apply through a childcare transfer. Only if the lottery waitlist has been cleared for the grade and school requested can a childcare transfer be approved.

Parents should contact the Division of Registrar at 614-365-5692.

What if my child was expelled from school, are they eligible to apply for a school through the lottery?

Students who are expelled with a transfer, may not apply to return to the school for which they were expelled. Students who were expelled for 10 or more days during the current school year, may apply through the lottery for 100% lottery schools only for the next school year.

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I am moving to a new address in the Columbus City School District. What do I need to know?

A decision regarding enrollment must be made at the time of the move. You have two options:

You may keep the child in the current school but, depending on where the new residence is located, you may be responsible for transportation. Note: If you elect to remain at your current school for the remainder of the school year, you would need to apply through the lottery to attend your “new school by address” for the following year. You would not be able to just walk in to the other school and get enrolled. Please contact the Division of School Choice for advice if you believe you will be in this situation. We can give you an estimate of your chances for success in transferring for the following year. If it is very late in the school year, other options might be possible. If you have questions, call School Choice at 614-365-7459.

The other option is that you may immediately enroll the child in the new school by address at the Central Enrollment Center, located at 430 Cleveland Avenue.

I need to apply under Interdistrict Open Enrollment (IOE); is there any special information I need to know?

General Eligibility for Application

- Only those students who would like to be enrolled full-time in grades K-12 in a Columbus City School (**CCS**) are eligible to apply for IOE. Part-time students are not eligible for IOE placement.
- Students must be 5 years of age by September 30th to apply for IOE kindergarten.
- The residence of the custodial parent/guardian must be located outside of the boundaries of the Columbus City Schools.
- Students who were suspended or expelled for 10 or more consecutive days during the previous school year are ineligible to apply for admission through IOE for the upcoming school year.

Columbus City School residents take top priority for placement.

If a waitlist for any specific school and grade is clear of all CCS residents, the order of priority for additional placements would be: CCS Employees' children, returning IOE applicants, then new IOE applicants. Most Interdistrict placements occur in early summer, or in August after the administrators are back on duty.

Additional information regarding IOE

An application must be filed each year to be considered for IOE continued placement. Applications become available in February/March. At the high school level, applicants will receive automatic approval to remain in the same school if they have earned the required credits to move to the next

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grade level. For high school students who did not earn enough credits to move one grade level, and for middle and elementary levels, space availability and building capacity for CCS residents is given highest priority.

Note: Students who moved to another district over the school year, and were allowed to finish the year tuition-free, must file a new application for the following year. However, they would have higher priority than new IOE applicants who did not attend CCS in 2016-2017. If concerned about the “chances” for the following year, contact the School Choice Division (614-365-7459).

Transportation

Transportation for a student attending a school through IOE is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. If there is room on a bus route already servicing the accepted school, they may access Columbus City Schools’ bus transportation. If the bus becomes full due to an increased number of riders assigned automatically by the Transportation Department, the parent/guardian again would need to provide the transportation. Columbus City School District residents receive top priority for available space on a CCS bus.

Athletic Eligibility

There is a ruling from the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) that may affect athletic eligibility for new placements of Interdistrict high school students entering after the start of the 9th grade. Those students may need to sit out for a period of time before regaining athletic eligibility. Be sure to ask about your child’s status prior to accepting a new school through IOE. Upperclass HS IOE students returning to the same CCS HS would continue their eligibility since there was no break in enrollment at that school.

There is additional information that can be provided to IOE applicants when they come in to apply.

What if I have additional questions about the lottery process?

Although we highly encourage you to come visit us so we may answer all of your questions at one time, please feel free to call us at 614-365-7459. Our office hours are M-F 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

School Choice information may also be obtained from the FACTline at 614-221-3228 (614-221-FACT).