

TUSD

Tucson Unified School District

2013-14 ADMISSIONS PROCESS FOR OVERSUBSCRIBED SCHOOLS For the 2014-15 School Year

I. USP LANGUAGE

II. STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

G. Application and Selection Process for Magnet Schools and Programs and for Open Enrollment

2. Oversubscribed Schools.

- a. *Magnet schools/programs. The District shall, as part of the Magnet School Plan, develop an admissions process – i.e., weighted lottery, admission priorities – for oversubscribed magnet schools and programs that takes account of the following criteria:*
 - *Students residing within a designated preference area. (No more than 50% of the seats available shall be provided on this basis.)*
 - *Siblings of students currently attending the magnet school or program.*
 - *Any students from Racially Concentrated Schools, whose enrollment will enhance integration at the magnet school or program.*
 - *Students residing in the District.*

- b. *Open enrollment schools. All students who reside within the school's attendance boundary shall be admitted. If space then remains in the school or program and it is oversubscribed, the District shall develop an admissions process – i.e., weighted lottery, admission priorities – for oversubscribed schools and programs that takes account of the following criteria:*
 - *Siblings of students currently attending the school.*
 - *Students from Racially Concentrated schools, whose enrollment will enhance integration at the receiving school.*
 - *Students who enhance integration at the receiving school.*

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a fundamental premise, as long as the number of applications does not exceed the number of available seats *all students are placed*. The Admissions Process for Oversubscribed Schools (“Process”) only applies to Oversubscribed schools.

The Process will replace the current “School Choice Lottery.” It describes the process and the rules for students who apply to attend a school outside their attendance boundary through Open Enrollment, or who apply to a Magnet School or Program through the Magnet Enrollment process. It has been designed: to enhance integration, to build on the existing “lottery” program; to be simple, understandable and transparent; and to respect student and parent choices that have already been made. It responds to the USP to make selective placements in such a way that race/ethnicity can be used as a key selection criterion to enhance integration in Oversubscribed schools.

Section IV includes the basic rules of selection; section V outlines the process used to determine the seats that are available in each program in each school. Section VI includes the process schedule, and section VII presents the steps in the lottery to select and assign students. Following the direction of the USP, the steps in Section VII are designed to assign as many students as there are applications and seats available to improve integration at the receiving school. This process is presented by way of example, and in a flow diagram at the end of the document.

III. DEFINITIONS

Attendance Boundary – the geographic area surrounding a school from which students are guaranteed acceptance to the school.

Designated Preference Area – a geographic area, which may be designated around a magnet school, to provide a higher admission priority to that school for students residing in that area as compared to students residing outside that area. (No more than 50% of the seats available shall be provided on this basis.)

Enhances Integration – Enrollment which moves the ethnic/racial percentages at that school toward the District average for that grade level. For example, suppose the average Anglo percentage at the High School level is 6%, and the Anglo percentage at Tucson High School is 5%. An Anglo student applying to Tucson High would “enhance integration” in that the addition of that student would help move the ethnic/racial percentage of Tucson High (5%) toward the District average for the High School level (6%).

Grade – A single year of study (e.g. 9th Grade).

Grade Level – The range of grade configurations within the District (ES, K8, MS, or HS).

Integrated School – As currently defined by the USP, an “Integrated School” is any school in which no racial or ethnic group varies from the district average for that grade level by more than +/- 15 percentage points, and in which no single racial or ethnic group exceeds 70% of the school’s enrollment.

Magnet Schools and Programs – a program within a school or a school which focuses on a theme or specific instructional approach, such as a specific academic area, a particular career or a specialized learning environment; attracts students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds; and encourages students to choose a school other than their attendance boundary school to participate in the magnet theme or instructional approach offered at that program or school.

Open Enrollment – refers to the student assignment provision permitting any District student to apply to attend any school, pursuant to the process set forth in Section (II) (G) of the Order.

Oversubscribed – a school where more students are seeking to enroll than available seats in that grade and/or a school that has more students enrolled than the capacity of its facility.

Pipeline Students – Those students who are placed at the next level of schooling (elementary to middle, middle to high) based on the compatibility of the program at the next school with the program in which they are currently enrolled.

Preference Area – geographic tools used to give students who live in close proximity to a school without attendance boundaries priority status in the admission process to such schools.

Priority Window – the period of time when open enrollment/magnet applications are first accepted for the following school year. Applications received during this time period will receive entered in the first lottery.

Racially Concentrated Boundaries – The in-District attendance boundaries of Racially Concentrated schools

Racially Concentrated School – any school in which any racial or ethnic group exceeds 70% of the school’s total enrollment, and any other school specifically defined as such by the Special Master in consultation with the Parties. This will be determined each year based on fortieth-day data.

School Choice – The election by a parent/student, through Open Enrollment or Magnet Enrollment, to attend a school other than the school that services the area in which they reside.

IV. BASIC ASSIGNMENT RULES

- a. Students who are currently enrolled can continue at the same school without application.
- b. In-District Pipeline Students are placed before the lottery (only relevant for magnet schools with a continuing or compatible theme). Out-of-District K-8 students do not receive a pipeline offer. If an out-of-District student would like to continue in the same magnet theme strand, they must apply for admission through a magnet application and are subject to lottery rules.¹
- c. The School Choice application allows the parent to choose whether or not the student should be considered as a sibling.
- d. The School Choice application will indicate whether the student is applying to a magnet program or open enrollment. For example, a parent may choose Tucson High Fine Arts Magnet as their first choice, and Tucson High School Open Enrollment as their second choice.
- e. The School Choice application allows parents to choose three schools/programs.
- f. The lottery will only make one assignment per student.
- g. The lottery will always apply to students applying as incoming Kindergarten, 6th grade, or 9th grade students. The lottery will only apply to other grades if the number of applications exceeds the number of available seats (by grade) by the following thresholds: ES(10), MS/K8(20), HS(25)
- h. Students are placed into the school/program according to the number of students accepted based on projections (see IV Enrollment Projections in this document). Magnet students are never placed into open enrollment slots, and open enrollment students are never placed into magnet slots. If a program/grade level at a school is full (at or above capacity) no more students will get assigned to that program/grade level.
- i. All in-District students are placed before any out-of-District students.
- j. Out-of-District students are not considered in the first lottery; they are placed in the second lottery, after in-district students.
- k. Once a student is placed in their first choice, they are removed from the pool.
- l. Students who receive their second or third choice will remain in the pool and will be reconsidered for their first choice if space becomes available.

¹ Students can enter the pipeline at multiple stages of their K-12 trajectory.

V. ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

The Planning Department works with school principals each year to project how many students will attend the school in each grade level the following school year, with estimates of any new open enrollment/magnet applications. The principals then report how many students they can accept at each grade level for magnet programs and open enrollment per the example on the next page.

EXAMPLE:

| | Fine Arts Magnet | Life Sciences Magnet | Open Enrollment |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 9 th Grade | 225 | 225 | 30 |
| 10 th Grade | 40 | 20 | 20 |
| 11 th Grade | 10 | 20 | 10 |
| 12 th Grade | 0 | 0 | 10 |

These are the number of students who will be placed at the school through the lottery process.

VI. LOTTERY PROCESS

The schedule below shows the process for accepting School Choice Applications. The dates are specific to the 2014-15 school year placements but the process is the same from year to year.

- 11/1/13 Priority Window opens and applications are accepted through 12/16/13
- 12/16/13 Priority Window closes
- 12/20/13 Applications entered into the student information system
- 1/3/13 Principals provide their enrollment numbers (see Enrollment Projections below)
- 1/6/14 1st Lottery run
- 1/6/14 Letters sent to parents via U.S. mail offering placements; the offer is entered into Mojave and is visible to the schools
- 1/20/14 Offer letters are returned with parent signature indicating acceptance; parents have two weeks to return the letter to School Community Services
- 2/1/14 2nd Lottery Run [for this and subsequent lotteries, the application window closes about 10 days before the lottery and the process for parent notification is the same]
- Monthly Additional lottery runs until each school grade is filled to the extent there are applications for that school and grade

VII. LOTTERY PROGRAM

The lottery is a program in the student information system. It uses the steps shown below to place all applicants that meet each criterion before going to the next step. (See Appendix A). The District will review attendance boundaries and establish designated preference areas. Once boundaries are redrawn and preference areas are established, students residing within a designated preference area will receive admissions priority within the process.

The lottery assigns a random number to each applicant. If in any step, the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats (by grade, by program, and by integration target), applicants will be selected based on the random numbers generated during the lottery (lower numbers receiving priority). Within the placement process, students are assigned a placement code that reflects their status within the process:

Placement Codes

O = Offered

A = Accepted

D = Declined

NR = No Response

In-District Students – The following steps apply all lotteries to place in-District students. Out-of-District students are placed in the second and subsequent lotteries after all in-District students are placed (see below).

1. **Choice #** – All first choices are run first. If a student cannot be placed in their first choice they are run, after all first choices are placed, in a lottery for their second choice. Then if still not placed they are run following the same process for their third choice. Students that are placed in their second or third choice are keep in the lottery pool and run in subsequent lotteries to place them in their first choice if that becomes available.
2. **Sibling** – If a student has a sibling attending their school of choice, or placed in that school in an earlier lottery, they are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade, by program, and by integration target).
3. **Residents of Racially Concentrated Boundaries** – Students within the Racially Concentrated Boundaries are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade, by program, and by integration target).
4. **Any Not Placed** – All remaining students are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade, by program, and by integration target).

Out-of-District Students – The following steps apply to the second and subsequent lotteries to place out-of-District students after all in-District students are placed; out-of-District students are not placed in the first lottery.

1. **Choice #** – All first choices are run first. If a student cannot be placed in their first choice they are run, after all first choices are placed, in a lottery for their second choice. Then if still not placed they are run following the same process for their third choice. Students that are placed in their second or third choice are keep in the lottery pool and run in subsequent lotteries to place them in their first choice if that becomes available.
2. **Sibling** – If a student has a sibling attending their school of choice, or placed in that school in an earlier lottery, they are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade, by program, and by integration target).
3. **Any Not Placed** – All remaining students are placed in this step if seats are available (by grade, by program, and by integration target).

APPENDIX A

LOTTERY FLOW DIAGRAM

There are a number of lotteries. The first is the priority-window lottery run in January; additional lotteries are run for schools with available seats until each school grade is filled to the extent there are applications for that school and grade. Students not placed in the first lottery or who do not receive their first choice are placed in subsequent lotteries with no preference for the application date. All lotteries follow the steps below.

