



Enrollment Policy

Introduction

The Lowell Community Charter Public School is a public school serving Kindergarten I through Eighth grades. LCCPS is currently enrolling students from Kindergarten I through Eighth grades. LCCPS was established under a Commonwealth Charter in September, 2000. LCCPS welcomes any child that resides in Massachusetts, although preference for admission is given to Lowell residents and siblings of current students. LCCPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, homelessness status, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement (Outlined in G.L.c.71,§ 89(m), and 603 CMR 1.05(2)). LCCPS provides a range of accommodations and support services to students who require them. Applicants will be notified in writing of the rights of students with diverse learning needs to attend LCCPS and to receive accommodations and support services, including students who may have disabilities, require special education, or are English language learners. Information on these services is provided as part of outreach materials and is given to all students when they enroll as part of their handbook. The information is also available on the school's website.

Eligibility Criteria

- Applicant must be a resident of Massachusetts **to apply, to enroll, and to attend** a Massachusetts charter school.
- The age threshold for **Kindergarten I(KI)** is four years old as of September 1st for the year of enrollment.
- The age threshold for **Kindergarten II(K2)** is five years old as of September 1st for the year of enrollment.
- Kindergarten I and Kindergarten II eligibility requires a birth certificate or other government-issued proof of age, such as a passport, I-94, etc.
- Applicants in grades one through eight must successfully complete the grade prior to the grade for which they seek admission. Applicant eligibility requires a report card or transcript from the previous school or district demonstrating successful completion. Required documents must be turned in by August 15th.

LCCPS does not require potential students and families to attend interviews or informational meetings as a requirement for enrollment. The school does not administer tests to potential applicants or use the results from any test of ability or achievement as part of the enrollment or admissions process. However, all students are assessed after enrollment to determine specific learning gaps. Results of assessments are used only for course and/or grade placements and do not affect enrollment status.

Application and Enrollment Process

LCCPS in a given school year will not exceed the total number of students in the school's pre-enrollment report submitted to the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education in the previous spring in accordance with 03CMR 1.08(5).

LCCPS has and will implement and update a student recruitment and retention plan. LCCPS follows its recruitment and retention plan (outlined in G.L.c.71,§ 89(f), and 603 CMR 1.05(1). Each fall, LCCPS will advertise that it is accepting applications through local media, flyers and distributed media at various cultural events throughout the city. The advertisements inform the community about meetings, tours, application acquisition, deadlines, and the date of the lottery. LCCPS' enrollment application process is not integrated with that of the school district. LCCPS does not charge an application fee for admission or use financial incentives to recruit students. An application form is attached to this policy.

Applications must be fully completed in order to be eligible for admission. A complete application will include the following:

- LCCPS application form
- Proofs (two) of residency except in the case of homeless status students, who are exempt from these requirements.*
- Proof of sibling status, if relevant. Proofs of sibling status may be in form of birth certificate, legal documents, or other medical documents that will identify the students share a common parent or legal guardian.
- LCCPS reserves the rights to request proof of residency and or sibling status at any time.

Please note: The applicant is responsible for updating their status due to changes in enrollment (sibling preference status) or residency (residency preference status). The applicant is also responsible for ensuring that their contact information is correct and up to date. If an offer of admission is made and the applicant does not submit the required documents identified in this policy by the response deadline (see below), LCCPS will rescind their offer of admission.

LCCPS requires two proofs of address for each application and the following documents may be used to prove residency.

- A parent/guardian's valid MA driver license
- A utility bill (not water or cell phone) dated within the past 60 days
- A deed, mortgage payment dated within the past 60 days, or property tax bill dated within the last year
- A current lease, Section 8 agreement, or landlord affidavit
- A W2 form dated within the year or a payroll stub dated within the past 60 days
- A bank or credit card statement dated within the past 60 days
- A letter from an approved government agency** dated within the past 60 days

* Homeless students are eligible to apply and enroll at LCCPS. Eligibility will not be affected by homelessness status. If other reasonable documentation is not available, an affidavit may be sufficient. The location of a student's prior permanent residence does not provide a residency preference for admission. Homeless students, however, must still provide reasonable proof of residency to receive an admission preference based on where they are currently living, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**Approved government agencies: Departments of Revenue (DOR), Children and Family Services (DCF), Transitional Assistance (DTA), Youth Services (DYS), Social Security, any communications on Commonwealth of Massachusetts Letterhead.

Enrollment preferences will first be given to:

- 1st Priority: Siblings, residents or non-residents, of students who attend the school at the time an offer of admission is made receive a preference for admission over non-siblings. Siblings are defined as children with a common parent, either biologically or through adoption.
- 2nd Priority: Residents of the City of Lowell receive a preference for admission over non-residents students.

LCCPS will accept applications for the next school year from September through the published application deadline, which occurs between January 1st and March 15th. An application deadline will be published each year with public notice given at least one month in advance. LCCPS conducts one principal application deadline and enrollment lottery each year after January 1st and before March 15th. If there are more applications in a grade group than available spaces after the application deadline, then the applications are entered into the lottery. If there are fewer applications than available spaces, all applicants with completed applications will be offered a seat.

Following the public lottery, applicants will be notified within one week of their status by mail, telephone or email. Applicants who have been offered a seat will have 72 hours to decline or accept the offer of admission. If the offer is accepted, enrollment paperwork will be mailed to the applicant. Applicants who accept the offer will have seven (7) business days from the date of receipt of the enrollment paperwork to complete and return all documents. If this deadline is not met, then the seat offered to the applicant is forfeited and the seat will be offered to the next applicant in order on the waitlist.

Applicants who are placed on the waitlist and subsequently offered a seat will be contacted by telephone or email. Applicants who have been offered a seat will have 72 hours to decline or accept the offer of admission. If the school is unable to contact the applicant within that time frame, then the application will be removed from the waitlist and the seat will be offered to the next applicant in order on the waitlist. All applicants who receive an offer between March and June, have seven (7) business days to submit the required enrollment paperwork; applicants who receive an offer between July and August have five (5) business days; and applicants who receive an offer after the first day of school and before February 15 have three (3) business days.

All offers of acceptance at any time are contingent upon receipt of a completed application that includes all necessary supporting documents (these include proof of residency, except in the case

of homeless students, and proof of age or sibling status as relevant). Updated residency documents may be requested at the time an offer of admission is made by LCCPS.

All students accepted at any point must begin attending LCCPS in accordance with the LCCPS attendance policy and calendar. Students will be unenrolled and the seat will be given to the next person on the waitlist if the student does not enroll within ten (10) school days.

LCCPS does not require dual parent/guardian signatures on its applications. Any information requested in the school's application, such as family language spoken at home or race/ethnicity is not intended and will not be used to discriminate. The school shall provide a form for parents/guardians to allow them to consent or deny disclosure of information. No third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the parent/guardian. Consent form is due to LCCPS at time of registration. When granting consent to LCCPS, the parent/guardian shall have the right to designate which parts of the student's record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate placed on file. LCCPS, upon request, will provide the names and addresses of students to a third party mail house for mailings unless the parent/guardian requests that the school withhold their child's information.

Lottery Process

Each year LCCPS will determine the number of spaces available in each grade. A notice announcing the school's public lottery date, if needed, is posted publicly at least one week earlier. If there are fewer spaces than eligible applicants, students shall be accepted for admission by a lottery process. The lottery will determine the original random order of student applicants. Preference for admission will then be applied and applicants will be selected for the available spaces as well as the order for the waiting list. All lotteries are conducted publicly at LCCPS located on 206 Jackson Street, Lowell, Massachusetts, 01852 with a neutral party drawing numbers electronically to certify that the lottery process is fair and the selection is random. Each completed applicant is assigned a number which will be used for the lottery. Parents are informed of their student's number prior to the lottery. Reasonable public notice will be given at least one week prior to any public lottery.

Students not selected in the enrollment lottery will be placed on a single waiting list in the order their numbers were drawn. When spaces become available, applicants will be drawn from the waiting list in order, taking into account sibling and resident preference status.

If the first enrollment process fails to produce an adequate number of enrolled students or if the existing waiting list is exhausted during the school year, then the application and lottery process may be repeated. The same steps of public notification and process will be followed for any additional lotteries and these will be repeated as needed until all open spaces are filled (603 CMR 1.06(5)).

In cases where the enrollment of a student, who is not a sibling of another currently enrolled student, from the waiting list would exceed the district charter tuition cap, the student should be skipped over but kept on the waiting list. In cases where the enrollment of a student who is a sibling of a student already attending at LCCPS would exceed the district charter school tuition

cap, the sibling may be enrolled with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts providing tuition for said sibling, subject to appropriation. G.L. c.71,§89(i);603 CMR 1.05(10)(b).

Waiting List

Students not offered admission through lottery process will be placed on a single waiting list in the order their numbers were drawn (see lottery process), taking into account sibling and resident preference status.

The waiting list status can change if a sibling of a child on the waiting list enrolls in the school or a family on the waiting list has a change of district/town or out of district/town status. Reasonable proof of current residency or sibling status will be required at the time an offer of admission is made. 603 CMR 1.05(10)(a). If a family has a child on the waiting list and their status changes, it is the responsibility of the family to inform the school so that records can be maintained accurately.

The school will keep accurate records of the waiting list, containing students' names (first, middle, last), dates of birth, cities or towns of residence, home addresses, telephone numbers and grade levels of students who entered the lottery but did not gain admission. However, the waiting list does not roll over from year to year and applicants who wish to be admitted for the subsequent year must reapply.

When a student stops attending the school for any reason, a vacancy is created in that students' grade. The school shall fill vacant seats in grades KI-4 up until February 15th of each school year. When enrollment in grades 5-8 falls well below our anticipated class sizes, the school may choose to fill those vacancies up until September 27th of each school year. The waitlist for grades 5-8 will expire on September 27th. Any vacancy in grades KI-3 not filled after February 15th moves into the subsequent grade, to be filled the following September. Any vacancy in grades 4-7 not filled after September 27th of each school, may be filled the following September, when enrollment in grades 5-8 falls well below our anticipated class sizes.

No student will be admitted ahead of other eligible students on the waiting list unless said student is either a sibling of a currently attending student or a resident of the city of Lowell. If a student declines or gives no response to an offer of admission, the next available student on the waiting list for that grade will be offered admission until the vacancy is filled.

Students who do not meet the eligibility criteria, decline an offer of admission, stop attending or have withdrawn from LCCPS for any reason must reapply for admission in a future application cycle and are subject to this enrollment policy in the same manner as any new applicant.