

## 300. ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT, AND PLACEMENT

### 300.1. *Admission*

As required by state law (G.S. 115C-238.29F(g)), any child who is qualified for admission to a North Carolina public school is qualified for admission to the School. Admission shall not be determined according to the school attendance area in which a student resides.

The School shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. Except as otherwise provided by law or the mission of the School as set out in the charter, the School shall not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

#### **Re-Enrollment of Currently Enrolled Students**

In January of each year, parents/guardians of students are asked to complete a *TRCS Letter of Intent to Re-Enroll* in order to determine whether or not the student intends to return to TRCS the following fall. This helps the school to determine how many spots may be available for new students.

#### **New Applicant Procedures**

The school will only accept applications for admissions during the application period, from the third Monday of March through the following six weeks. If at the close of the application period there are more applicants for a grade level than there are seats available, all applicants will be placed into a lottery to determine who will be accepted to the school. The lottery process is designed to ensure fairness in acceptance for admission to all applicants.

During the application period, the Board of Directors will ensure that one or more information sessions are provided for potential applicants. These sessions will be led by the school director or designee and will provide information about the school and its educational program and activities along with the application for admission. As well, the director will schedule at least two open house days to allow families to visit classrooms in session.

The school may refuse admission to any student who has been expelled or suspended from a public school until the period of suspension or expulsion has expired. The director will determine whether a student should be refused admission following the completion of the application procedure.

#### **Lottery for Admission**

If the number of qualified applicants who apply for a grade level during the application period exceeds the spaces available in that grade, the Board of Directors will conduct a lottery to determine the order in which available spaces will be filled. In this way, a waiting list for admission to the school will be created for each grade.

The following procedures govern the lottery for admission:

- Prior to the day of the lottery, all applications will be screened by school staff to determine eligibility for admission.
- The lottery will take place during the first meeting of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors following the application deadline and review of student applications by school staff members.
- Candidates eligible for priority admission will be admitted without participating in the lottery unless there are more candidates eligible for priority admission than spaces available in the appropriate grade. In this case, a separate lottery will be held that includes only the priority admission candidates for a specific level of preference for the grade being considered.
- First, the weighted lottery will take place. Educationally disadvantaged students will be randomly chosen following the procedures below until 45% of the available spaces are taken.
  - Cards bearing the names and grade levels of applicants eligible for the weighted lottery will be placed in individual envelopes with the grade level recorded on the outside of the envelope.
  - 45% of the available spaces for each class will be determined (standard rounding procedures will apply).
  - Cards for Kindergarten will be placed in a clear large container.
  - A Board officer or designee will draw envelopes one by one from the container with the Board secretary recording the lottery order number and names of applicants as they are drawn. The lottery order number will also be recorded on the child's application and lottery card. Any admissions preferences created by the enrollment will be noted.
  - This process will be repeated for each grade level, filling 45% of the open spaces with applicants who qualify as educationally disadvantaged.
  - Cards of applicants that are not chosen during the weighted lottery will be included in the general lottery.
- The general lottery will take place next.
  - A card bearing the name of each eligible applicant and the grade level for which the child has applied will be made prior to the meeting. Each card will be placed in identical envelopes that are sealed and labeled with each applicant's grade level.
  - All envelopes for kindergarten applicants, including applicants from the weighted lottery that were not selected, will be placed in a large clear container. A Board officer or designee will draw envelopes one by one from the container with the Board secretary recording the lottery order number and names of applicants as they are drawn. The lottery order number is also recorded on the child's application and lottery card. This process continues until all envelopes have been drawn and recorded.
  - The first students whose cards are drawn will be admitted into the kindergarten class until open spaces are filled. Any admissions preferences created by the enrollment will be noted.
  - This process will be repeated for each grade level, filling the number of spaces available in the grade. Priority admission may require adjustment in other grade levels.

- All applicants will be notified by mail of results of the lottery for admission. To remain on the school roll, families of accepted students must respond to the notice of acceptance for admission within 14 days of receiving the notice.

### 300.2. *Admission Priority*

300.21 By law, the School may give enrollment priority to the following individuals:

- a. Siblings of currently enrolled students who were admitted to the School in a previous year. "Siblings" includes any of the following who reside in the same household: half siblings, stepsiblings, and children residing in a family foster home.
- b. Siblings of students who have completed the highest grade-level offered by the School.
- c. Limited to no more than fifteen percent (15%) of the School's total enrollment, the following:
  - i. Children of the school's full-time employees.
  - ii. A student who was enrolled in the School within the two previous school years but left the School (i) to participate in an academic study abroad program or a competitive admission residential program or (ii) because of the vocational opportunities of the student's parent.

300.22 Two Rivers Community School chooses to give preference to students who qualify as educationally disadvantaged.

- a. This includes children who:
  - i. Qualify for free or reduced lunch
  - ii. Have an IEP
  - iii. Are homeless
  - iv. Are English Language Learners
  - v. Are immigrants or migrant students
- b. Status as educationally disadvantaged will be determined based on optional questions on the lottery application. Verification of status will not take place until the student has been enrolled through selection in the weighted lottery.
- c. If a family is selected for enrollment through a weighted lottery, they must provide supporting documentation of eligibility during the school's regular enrollment process. If a family is unable to provide supporting documentation necessary to qualify for the weighted lottery, the family will be contacted to offer assistance. If the family is still unable to provide the documentation, the applicant should be returned to the general waiting list.

### 300.3. *Open Enrollment*

The School will hold an annual open enrollment period.

The school will begin taking applications for new student enrollment no later than the third Monday of March for the following academic year. Enrollment will close on the first day after Watauga County's 2<sup>nd</sup> semester begins or as a grade fills, whichever is earlier. This is typically in early January. By vote of the Board of Directors, enrollment in some classes may be closed earlier to ensure an appropriate classroom environment

and/or to minimize classroom disruption. No student will be admitted to TRCS after enrollment closes. Families applying for admission after enrollment closes will be placed on a call list and contacted in March once enrollment opens for the following school year. At the conclusion of the enrollment period, if the number of applicants for a particular grade does not exceed the number of available spaces for that grade level, all eligible students who have properly applied by the deadline will be accepted. At the close of the enrollment period, if the number of applicants for a particular grade level exceeds available spaces for that grade level, a lottery system will determine admission eligibility.

Students who are not offered enrollment will be placed on a wait list. After all spaces for a grade level are filled, the lottery will continue until all applying students have been assigned a priority number on the wait list. The wait list will not carry into the next School year, but will remain and be used for admission should a space become available during the current School year for which it was conducted.

In the event a space becomes available (up until enrollment closes for the school year), then the Parent of a student who is first on the wait list for that grade shall be notified in writing and offered enrollment. The student's Parent will have no more than five business days to accept admission by notifying either the Principal or his or her designee of the decision to accept the enrollment offer. If the position is declined or not accepted within five business days, the next person on the wait list shall be contacted. This process will continue until the space is filled or the wait list is exhausted.

After admission and during the School year, serious and/or repeated deviations from the policies and procedures defined by the School will result in an evaluation of the student's placement in the School, as allowed by law.

### **Admission Procedures**

1. Following acceptance for admission, these documents must be submitted for each student no later than May 31 (or the last Friday of May):

- copy of birth certificate
- immunization record or school-recognized alternative documentation
- records transferred from previous school

If these documents are not received by the deadline, the family will receive written notification that acceptance is withdrawn and the next student on the waiting list for that grade will be accepted and notified.

2. A parent or guardian of all accepted students **must** attend the annual orientation meeting held prior the beginning of the school year.

### **Student Completion of Enrollment**

To complete the enrollment process, both new and continuing students must attend class at the beginning of the school year. The attendance policies to complete enrollment in Two Rivers Community School include the following:

1. Each student must attend classes on the first day of school. If a student cannot attend the first day of classes, written notice must be provided by a parent or guardian. Students absent for more than the first five days of school will be removed from school rolls and the first child on the waiting list for that grade will be enrolled. While the school will attempt to contact the family of students who miss the first day(s) of school, it is the responsibility of families to notify the school if a student cannot attend the first day(s) of school.

2. In accordance with the Student Information Management System (SIMS) guidelines of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, students who attend the first day of classes but accumulate ten consecutive, unexcused absences in the first 20 school days will be removed from the school rolls.

Note: Excused absences include illness or injury, quarantine, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, court or administrative proceedings, religious holidays or observances, and valid educationally excused absences. The NCDPI does not consider a valid educational opportunity with approval prior to the absence an acceptable legal absence until after the child has attended school and completed enrollment.

#### **300.4. *Placement***

The School reserves the right to place students in grade levels determined by competency tests, regardless of the grade level a student was in at a previous School. For example, if a student applying to enter the fourth-grade tests more than one year below the fourth-grade competency level, the School may offer admission to the lower and more appropriate grade.

#### **300.5. *Withdrawal***

Parents choosing to withdraw a student from the School should contact the School office and follow the procedures established by the School, which require written notification of the intention to withdrawal to be provided to the school by the student's parent/guardian.