

Enrollment Policy for **MATCH CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL**

Eligibility

Charter schools are public schools and therefore open to all Massachusetts students on a space available basis. Match Charter Public School serves grades K1 through 12th, ages 4 to 21. New students are accepted into our main entry points at K1 and 1st grade, and on a space available basis through 10th grade.

Match Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. Moreover, Match Charter Public School may not set admissions criteria that are intended to discriminate or that have the effect of discriminating based upon any of these characteristics. (G.L. c. 71, § 89(m); 603 CMR 1.05(2)).

Applicants must be a resident of Massachusetts to apply for admission and to attend a charter school in Massachusetts. Match requires that candidates successfully complete the grade prior to the grade for which they seek admission. In the case of applicants for grade K1, no previous school experience is required; the only requirement is that applicants must be 4 years old by September 1 to be eligible. Students who turn 5 before September 1 will not be eligible for entry in K1 in that year of admission and must apply for grade K2. In the case of applicants for grade 1, no previous school experience is required; the only requirement is that applicants must be 6 years old by September 1 to be eligible.

Special education services are provided to students in accordance with state and federal special education laws, M.G.L. C.71B and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the regulations implementing those laws. The Special Education Director and Special Education Teachers maintain all special education records in accordance with state and federal law, coordinate all annual IEP reviews, organize professional development for teaching and tutoring staff, coordinate weekly accommodation meetings with teaching faculty, and support teachers and tutors in making appropriate curriculum, assessment, and instruction modifications. All applicants will be notified in writing of the rights of students with diverse learning needs to attend Match Charter Public School and to receive accommodations and support services, including students who may have disabilities, require special education or are English language learners (603 CMR 1.05(4)). The availability of services is included in outreach materials, student handbooks and on the school's website (603 CMR 1.05(4)).

Match Charter Public School does not charge an application fee for admission or use financial incentives to recruit students.

Recruitment

The recruitment process is an extensive, citywide effort heavily focused on digital and online outreach in addition to advertising and information sharing throughout many Boston neighborhoods. We also participate in the annual, Boston-wide charter public school fair in a central location in Boston. In our recruitment materials and conversations with prospective families we emphasize orally and in writing that all students are welcome at and will be served at our school, very much including students with IEPs and who otherwise have or will have special needs.

Match Charter Public School provides information about the school to those who are interested throughout the year. Match Charter Public School has and implements a student recruitment and retention plan as outlined in G.L c.71, § 89(f); 603 CMR 1.05(1). The Match Charter Public School enrollment process is completely separate from that of the Boston Public School District and the other Commonwealth charter schools using the Boston Charter School Application online system.

Application Process

Match Charter Public School's application for admission is primarily made available online through the SchoolMint website. Interested families and students will be able to access the online application by typing in the URL directly (bostoncharterschools.schoolmint.net), or by linking to the application from the Match Charter Public School website (www.matcheschool.org). Eligible applicants will be able to choose Match Charter Public School and/or a number of other Commonwealth Charter Schools to whom to send their application. Applicants must be a resident of Massachusetts to apply for admission and to attend a charter school in Massachusetts.

The application for admission will also be available in physical copies in Match Charter Public School's main office located at 215 Forest Hills Street, Jamaica Plain, 02130, Boston Public Schools Welcome Centers (locations throughout the city as described here: <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/page/6539>) and other public meeting places. Physical applications should be mailed via USPS or hand delivered to Match Charter Public School's main office located at 215 Forest Hills Street, Jamaica Plain, 02130 or to any of the schools using the Boston Charter School Application. Applications will not be accepted by fax or email.

The application, both online and in hard copy, will be available in multiple languages to reflect the major language groups in Boston. All applications will be due by the last day of February of each year by 11:59 pm. No principal application deadlines or enrollment lotteries for student admission for the upcoming school year will happen until after January 1st and no later than March 15th of each year (603 CMR 1.05(3)(c)). Notice of the Application Form deadline will be provided at least one month in advance on our website (603 CMR 1.05(5)). An email or text will be sent to all students for whom we have received Application Forms as a notice that their Application has been received and will be included in our lottery. Match will not accept applications past the February 28th deadline. An Application Form containing false or inaccurate information pertaining to residency requirements or age requirements in K1 will result in a retraction of the offer of admission. All communications with families will be made in the parents' native language.

Match Charter Public School requires:

1. Applicants must be a resident of Massachusetts to apply for admission and to attend a charter school in Massachusetts. Match requires that candidates successfully complete the grade prior to the grade for which they seek admission. In the case of applicants for grade K1, no previous school experience is required; the only requirement is that applicants must be 4 years old by September 1 to be eligible. Students who turn 5 before September 1 will not be eligible for entry in K1 in that year of admission and must apply for grade K2. In the case of applicants for grade 1, no previous school experience is required; the only requirement is that applicants must be 6 years old by September 1 to be eligible.
2. Students must produce their proof of residency (residents of Massachusetts) at the time they are offered admission, and in order to attend the school (examples of proof of residency listed below)
3. That primary preference for admission be given to siblings of students "currently attending" the school and that the second preference is given to residents of Boston, in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations.
4. Reasonable proof of residency except in the case of homeless students (G.L. c. 71 § 89(m); 603 CMR 1.05(6)(b)); for example, an acceptable form of proof would include: TWO of the following documents (items cannot be from the same bullet):
 - 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
****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.*

This residency policy does not apply to homeless students. Students who may be considered homeless are eligible to apply and to enroll at Match. In order to determine preference for admission based on residency, proof of residency will be handled on a case-by-case basis to determine where a student who may be homeless lives.

and **strongly advises and requests:**

5. Parents/guardians and students attend an informational session and orientation session prior to enrollment (attendance is not required as a condition of enrollment).

Match Charter Public School **will not:**

1. Give preferences to children of staff members or Board members;
2. Give preference to siblings of students accepted to the school but not yet attending; or
3. Make statements in meetings intended to discourage, or that have the effect of discouraging, parents/guardians of students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, or any other protected group of students from submitting a lottery enrollment form to the school. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(1).
4. Require dual parent/guardian signatures on the application.
5. Administer tests to potential applicants or predicate enrollment on results from any test of ability or achievement (603 CMR 1.05(3)(a)).
6. Use financial incentives to recruit students.
7. Charge an application fee for admission (603 CMR 1.05(3)(a)).
8. Require potential students or their families to attend interviews or information meetings as a condition of application, admission, and attendance (603 CMR 1.05(3)(a)).
9. Require submission of the student's social security number.

None of the information requested in the application, such as language spoken at home or race/ethnicity is intended to or used to discriminate.

Lottery and Enrollment Process

Match Charter Public School serves grades K1 through 12th, ages 4 to 21. New students are accepted into our main entry points at K1 and on a space available basis through 10th grade. In the event that there are fewer spaces than eligible applicants, students will be accepted for admission by a lottery process (603 CMR 1.05(6)(a) and (c)). The number of spaces for all of our grades is determined by the maximum enrollment target established in the charter: 1250 students in K1 through 12th. The number of spaces in grades K1-10th is determined annually based on backfilling requirements as per amended Massachusetts charter school regulations. The total number of students attending a charter school in a given school year cannot exceed the total number of students in the school's pre-enrollment report submitted to the Department in the previous spring in accordance with 603 CMR 1.08(5).

If the number of student applicants exceeds the number of available spaces, a public lottery drawing is held. The lottery for admission is held in March of each year (no later than March 15). Notice of the lottery date will be provided at least one week in advance of each lottery (603 CMR 1.05(9)). The lottery drawing is conducted in public at the school at one of the school campuses, to be determined each year, and the location is provided in the public notice. The lottery drawing is conducted electronically, and a neutral party oversees the process to certify that the process is fair and that the selection is random (603 CMR 1.05(9)). Parents are notified on the lottery application that student names are publicly drawn, and they are given the opportunity to opt out through the use of a designated number.

All applicants that were submitted by the application deadline will be entered in the lottery. Each applicant will receive a randomly generated rank order and then preference for admission will be applied (or taken into consideration).

Siblings of students who are currently attending Match Charter Public School at the time of an offer of admission are given preference for admission over non-siblings, regardless of whether the sibling applicant lives in Boston (603 CMR 1.05(6)(b)). In order to be considered siblings, students must share a common parent, either biologically or legally through adoption (603 CMR 1.02). Boston residents will be given preference over non-Boston residents.

A single waiting list is formed for each grade based on the original, random, electronic lottery selection. The order of a student's placement on a waitlist may change depending on preferences that exist at the time an offer of admission is extended, such as a student moving up on a waitlist due to their sibling now attending or changes in residential status (603 CMR 1.05(10)). Each family will be notified via their online application account (either a text, an email, or both, depending on their selected communication preference) of their results in the lottery. Lottery results and changes to the waiting list are also available in real time to each family in their online application account.

Students for whom enrollment would cause the sending district to exceed the tuition cap may not be offered admission, but will remain on the waiting list. In cases where offering admission to a student, who is not a sibling of another student who is currently attending the charter school, from the waitlist would exceed the district charter tuition cap, the student should be skipped but kept on the waitlist. In cases where the enrollment of a student who is a sibling of a student already attending a charter school would exceed the district charter school tuition cap, and the school has not admitted other students prior to admitting the sibling, the sibling may be offered admission and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will provide tuition for the sibling, subject to appropriation. G.L. c. 71, § 89(i); 603 CMR 1.05(10)(b).

After the Lottery parents are given two weeks (from the date the offer is made) through the months of March through July in order to reserve a spot in the incoming class, along with reasonable proof of sibling status and residency (603 CMR 1.05(10)(a)). If we do not receive their acceptance within that period of time, the offer will be rescinded and the student will have no further special standing. Students must begin attending the school within ten (10) days of their anticipated start date (e.g., the first day of school) in accordance with the school's attendance policy. Failure to attend the school will result in the school assuming the student has declined their offer of admission. The offer of admission will be rescinded and the student unenrolled. If the student wishes to be considered again for admission, they must re-apply in a future application cycle.

We expect that some students will decline to attend Match Charter Public School, and this will generate names to be drawn from the waitlist. If a student stops attending the charter school or declines admission the next available student on the waitlist for that grade, subject to preferences at the time of admission, will be offered admission until the vacant seat is filled. G.L. Chapter 71, § 89(n). Parents are called in order, with consideration of preferences, to offer admission from the waitlist for that grade until the vacant seat is filled. Parents are given 1 week (from the date the offer is made) through the months of August through October, to accept admission by returning a signed acceptance form to us along with reasonable proof of sibling status and residency. For the months of November through February, parents are given 4 days (from the date the

offer is made) to accept the offer of admission. If we are unable to reach a parent by phone, we will send a notice to the address listed on the application mail, offering admission and listing the deadline for response. No student will be admitted ahead of other eligible students on the waiting list except in cases where enrollment preferences change or as described in 603 CMR 1.05(10)(b); 603 CMR 1.05(8).

As Match Charter Public School anticipates high application-to-slot ratios, once the application deadline is closed, no further applications will be accepted until the next school year.

If a student withdraws from Match Charter Public School, written documentation or a withdrawal form is filled out and verbal communication with parent and/or guardian is required and/or a withdrawal meeting with parent/guardian is scheduled. A student who withdraws and who wants to re-enroll will have to re-apply through the lottery.

Match Charter Public School is required to backfill students in K1 through 5th grade, and will electively backfill students in grades 6-10 as vacancies become available up to February 15th. Vacancies in grades 6-10 will be filled based on academic programming needs, staffing needs, financial considerations, and cohort sizes. The school does not backfill in grades 11-12.

As a result of the annual lottery drawing, a single waiting list is formed for each grade. These waiting lists are based on the original, random, electronic lottery selection. The order of a student's placement on a waitlist may change depending on preferences that exist at the time an offer of admission is extended, such as a student moving up on a waitlist due to their sibling now attending or changes in residential status. We keep accurate records of the waitlist for each grade, containing students' names (first, middle, last), dates of birth, cities or towns of residence, and grade levels of students who entered the lottery but did not gain admission (G.L. c. 71, § 89(n); 603 CMR 1.05(10)(a)).

If the principal enrollment process fails to produce an adequate number of enrolled students, or if the waitlist is exhausted through subsequent backfilling, the lottery process may be repeated. The required lottery process is strictly followed, including public notification and deadlines (603 CMR 1.05(8)). Match Charter Public School will not admit students in excess of the school's approved maximum enrollment. The waitlist is only maintained for the school year for which the students sought admission.

A vacancy not filled after February 15th moves into the subsequent grade, to be filled the following September provided such grade is not in grades 10, 11, or 12. Seats for students who have accepted an offer of admission in the charter school but have never attended are exempt. 603 CMR 1.05(10)(c).

Disclosure

Match Charter Public School will not disclose student information unless permitted by law. As required by law, Match Charter Public School will provide the names and addresses of students to the Boston Public Schools, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, any other schools and school systems in which my student has previously been enrolled, any governmental departments, health or social service providers, or other offices whose activities bear directly on the programs or services with which the student is provided at the receiving charter school. Also as required by law, (G.L. c. 71, § 89(g); 603 CMR 1.05(6)(e)) the Match Charter Public School will provide the names and addresses to a third-party mail house for mailings unless the parent requests that the school withhold their child's information. Furthermore, the Match Charter Public School may provide all allowable directory information (including student names and addresses) under 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a) to third parties unless the parent requests that the school withhold their child's information. Parents wishing to request that their child's directory information be withheld may indicate their request while completing the application process or by contacting us at admissions@matcheducation.org or calling the school. Opt-out forms will be provided to parents via mail or email.

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