

Four Rivers Charter Public School

Enrollment Policy

Four Rivers Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special needs, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

Four Rivers enrolls a new seventh grade annually and enrolls new students in grades eight through twelve as the school determines that openings are available.

Eligibility criteria:

In order for an application to be accepted the following criteria must be met:

- The student must expect to successfully complete the grade preceding the grade the student plans to enter.
- Parents or guardians of the student and the student must attend an informational session or meet with the school staff before the application deadline.
- Parents and students must sign a memo of understanding as demonstration that they agree with and support the school's mission.

If an application does not meet these criteria, the parents or guardian of the applicant will be notified in writing.

In order for post-lottery enrollment to occur:

- The student must have successfully completed the grade preceding the grade the student plans to enter. (If enrollment is mid-year, the student must be in good standing in his or her current grade.)
- In the case of someone who has been home-schooled, there must be evidence that the school considers sufficient that the applicant has met the standards of the preceding grade.

Four Rivers is defined as a regional school; enrollment priority will be given to residents of the Four Rivers region, which is comprised of the following school districts in Franklin County: Greenfield, Frontier Regional, Gill-Montague Regional, Mohawk Trail Regional, Pioneer Valley Regional, and Ralph C. Mahar Regional. Siblings of students who are already in attendance at the school in the year of application have preference for admission over non-sibling resident students.

Enrollment procedure:

All application deadlines are given public notice at least one month in advance of the deadline for the initial and any subsequent lotteries.

Applications are accepted until the deadline at the end of the annual primary enrollment period, which is two school days prior to the last day of February. If, at that time, there are more applicants than there are spaces available, the school will:

- Hold a lottery conducted by an individual who is not connected with the school.
- Prospective students will be divided into two categories for each grade: in-region and out-of-region. Names from the in-region category will be selected at random and assigned a number. The numbered order will be used to fill all available spaces in each grade, followed by a numbered wait list for each grade.
- If students come from a district that has reached its charter school enrollment cap, their names will be placed on the wait list in the order in which their names are selected. For those students to whom the above policy applies but who are also siblings of students who are currently in attendance at the school, the state may pay the child's tuition, subject to appropriation.
- Next, the names of out-of-region students will be selected at random, assigned a number, and placed on a wait list for each grade in the order in which they were selected.

- If there are spaces available in a grade after all in-region students have been placed in the affected grade, out-of-region students will be offered the next available spaces based upon the wait list order established by the out-of-region lottery.
- Students who are offered enrollment will have ten days from the date of the mailing of the school's notification to accept the offer of enrollment.
- Wait-listed students who are subsequently offered admission will be telephoned and a mailing of a formal offer will take place the same day.
- All students who decline an offer of enrollment will be asked to use the form provided in their mailing or to otherwise record their declination in writing. If they refuse, a note to that effect will be entered into the record.

Subsequent public lotteries:

Four Rivers may hold secondary lotteries:

1. If there are an inadequate number of applicants for open spaces as of the end of the primary annual enrollment process in late February or
2. If at any point in time the wait list is depleted subsequent to the annual enrollment lottery and additional openings are available for one or more grades.

Applications received after the annual primary enrollment process will be entered into subsequent lotteries along with any further applications received after posting of the one-month public notice regarding the subsequent lottery. Deadlines for subsequent lotteries are 4:00 PM on the school day prior to the lottery.

Residence requirements:

1. Students whose families live in the six sending districts of Franklin County, Massachusetts, at the time of the application deadline are given enrollment priority. Proof of residency may be required (except in the case of homeless students). Families that own property but do not have their primary residence in one of the six districts will not be considered residents. If a student lives in two households, and one of those households is in one of the sending districts, that student will be considered a resident.
2. Out-of-region applicants must be residents of Massachusetts.
3. Students enrolled in the school whose families move out-of-region but within Massachusetts will be able to continue to attend the school.

Definition of siblings:

Siblings are defined as brothers and sisters, half-brothers and half-sisters, or step-brothers and step-sisters that have the legal status of siblings as defined by the laws of Massachusetts.

Wait list:

Students whose names are on the wait list hold their place on the list for the full academic year. If at any time during the course of the year, openings become available, students from the wait list will be offered space in the order in which their names appear. When the next enrollment period begins, those students whose names are still on the current year's wait list may reapply and take part in the lottery for the coming school year.

Placement:

1. Students who have been home-schooled will be placed in the grade deemed appropriate by parents, teachers and the director. Factors considered will be the age and the level of skill/proficiency of the student.
2. Students who have been home-schooled and whose parents would willingly put them in either of two grades may not apply for two grades but must select the grade for which they are applying before the lottery. The school director and teachers will offer guidance to parents needing to make this decision.

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