



Magnet School Online Lottery Application Frequently Asked Questions

Question not answered here? Contact CPS' Customer Care Center:
(513) 363-0123

Q: Why did the Cincinnati Public Schools change to an online lottery application for magnet schools instead of continuing its longstanding first-come policy?

A: The CPS Board of Education ended the first-come application process in October 2015 over concerns about people camping out at high-demand magnet schools to secure a place near the front of the line. Not all parents could take time off work or away from family obligations to camp out. The Board also considered safety issues involved with people camping out in cold and inclement weather.

Q: What grades are covered in the online lottery for magnet schools?

A: The online lottery application is for entry into elementary school grades at magnet schools — preschool to 6th grade (and preschool to grade 8 at magnet schools offering grades 7-8).

Q: How does the online application lottery work?

A: Parents living within the Cincinnati Public School District access the online application system from CPS' website's home page (cps-k12.org) **during the annual application period (dates are set each year)**. Parents create an account and a password, enter requested student information and select up to five magnet schools, in order of choice.

Parents apply for a magnet school seat for the upcoming school year for their child.

After the Round 1 application period ends, CPS begins processing all applications received, assigning a computer-generated random number to each application. There's no need to be "first in line" with an application.

Magnet school seats are assigned until spaces fill up, starting with the lowest lottery numbers.

Parents are notified by mail in January of each student's status (accepted or on a waiting list). Waiting lists are created as magnet schools fill up, and for magnet schools with entrance requirements, pending confirmation that requirements are met.

Waiting lists for magnet schools are in effect until June 30. If a child has not been placed in a magnet school by June 30, the child's parents should register the child at the assigned neighborhood school (assigned by home address).

The magnet school online lottery is run in **three rounds**, spaced about five weeks apart before the end of the school year. Round 2 and Round 3 will process **new applications only** that were not submitted in Round 1, as well as reassign students placed on waiting lists in earlier rounds if spaces have opened up in magnet schools (due to families moving, changing their minds about a magnet school, etc.).

For example, a child placed in a second-choice magnet school in Round 1 could move up into a first-choice magnet school if space opens up for various reasons.

If CPS cannot contact parents using the telephone, address or email provided in the online application, the student will lose the assigned magnet school seat.

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Q: Do siblings of current magnet school students still have priority to enter the sibling’s magnet school?

A: Yes, siblings still receive priority, but parents do not use the online lottery to apply for a sibling seat. A paper application is filled out for sibling application and handed in at the magnet schools. A Sibling Application Period is set annually, and runs before the regular magnet lottery opens.

Q: Can children now in preschool at magnet schools stay in the magnet school?

A: Yes, current eligible preschoolers (based on age) automatically roll up to kindergarten at their current magnet schools, as has been the practice in the past. Parents **do not** have to submit online applications for current preschoolers to move up into kindergarten or for younger preschoolers to stay in their current magnet preschool.

Q: How do students in specialized classrooms apply to magnet schools?

A: Parents may select magnet schools via the online process for students with special needs, and CPS’ Department of Student Services will work with families to ensure that each student attends the school that meets the student’s needs.

Q: How do parents apply to schools outside their magnet area (East or West)?

A: Out-of Area applications are not part of the online lottery application process. Parents fill out paper applications for out-of-area requests and turn them in at the magnet schools, starting at a time in spring set annually.

Q: When do parents who live outside the CPS district apply for Open Enrollment?

A: Open Enrollment applications are accepted annually May 1-31 via a separate online system.

Q: Do parents need a home computer to enter online applications?

A: Online applications can be submitted from **any computer or tablet with Internet access, or the CPS smartphone App**. If needed, computers are available for parents to use at the CPS Customer Care Center, inside the CPS Education Center, 2651 Burnet Avenue, 45219 (Corryville); at the public library and at any CPS school. At the Customer Care Center, CPS staff can help parents enter online applications.

Q: Are twins assigned into the same magnet school?

A: Yes, the online application will assign twins (or triplets, or other multiple births) into the same magnet school, **based on birth date and if the parent selects the same magnet schools in the same order on the online application.**

Q: Is the online application available in languages other than English?

A: No, but parents needing translation assistance may call our English as a Second Language Office: (513) 363-3251