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# INQUIRY CHARTER SCHOOL

Formerly Belmont Academy Charter School

## **Admission and Enrollment Policy for 2019-2020**

INQUIRY Charter School is committed to enrolling a diverse student population and shall abide by all State and Federal provisions forbidding discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, gender, marital status, religion, ethnicity, or disability.

INQUIRY Charter School will admit students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender. INQUIRY Charter School shall enroll an eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building. In such cases, all applicants shall have equal chance of being admitted through a random selection process. In addition, INQUIRY Charter School may give enrollment preference to specific populations as noted in State and Federal law.

Families interested in enrolling a student at INQUIRY Charter School will be required to submit a non-discriminatory application requiring basic information: student name, birthdate, contact information and last grade completed. Applications will be made available at 1301 Belmont Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19104 and online through the school website. Additional applications may be made available through community events, information sessions, and other means provided that availability does not discriminate against any parent, student or family in any way. Applications are available in English and Spanish and can be translated into any language upon request.

Note: Applicants must be 4½ years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> to enroll in our Kindergarten (4) program and 5 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> to enroll in Kindergarten.

Prior to the start of school, an enrollment period will be established. At the end of the enrollment period, parents will be notified of acceptance to the school or assigned a lottery number in the event that applications exceed capacity. If capacity is not reached after the established enrollment period, subsequent applications will be accepted in the order they are received.

Upon submission of an application, all information will be reviewed for attendance eligibility. Addresses will be verified to ensure all applicants are residents of Philadelphia. At each phase of the admissions process, the appropriate correspondence will be generated and communicated to each applicant. The process will be closely monitored to determine the need for a lottery or waitlist, which will be required if there are more applicants than available seats at the end of the open enrollment period.

Applications will be accepted each year during an on open enrollment period and on a rolling basis to maintain capacity at each grade level. All applications will be date and time stamped as they are received and filed by grade level. If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building, a public lottery will be held to determine which applicants are admitted. The number of seats available will be determined by the number of students who recommit minus the capacity. The drawing will continue until every name has been drawn and scheduled for enrollment, placed on a numerical waiting list, or placed back into the applicant pool. The lottery will be randomly generated. If an applicant is selected in the lottery, the parent of the applicant will be offered a seat no later than seven (7) days after the date of the lottery. If an accepted applicant decides not to attend the school, the slot will be given to the first person on the waiting list. All post-deadline applicants will be added to the waitlist in the order in which they are received. Enrollment offers will be extended as seats become available.

All accepted applicants will be required to submit the following five documents within fourteen (14) days to formally accept their seat. The following documentation will be required:

- Proof of Age (ex. Birth Certificate, valid passport, baptismal certificate indicating DOB, notarized letter from family indicating DOB)
- Proof of Residency (ex. Lease, deed, residency affidavit, two utility bills)
- Recent Immunization Records
- Home Language Survey
- Parent Registration Statement

Admitted students will forfeit their right to enroll if such submission is incomplete.

Any student who withdraws or is removed from admission or enrollment will not be entitled to reinstatement of a prior situation. But, they will still retain the right to reapply for a later school year or assume a place on the waitlist in the same manner as a late applicant.

### **Lottery Rules and Procedures**

1. For the purposes of the following rules, the following terms are defined as follows:
  - a. All references to dates are defined to mean CLOSE OF BUSINESS on the date indicated.
  - b. Lottery refers to the selection of applicant names by a random method such as a system generated process or the blind drawing of individual names from a container in sequence until all names have been exhausted.
2. All applicants without preference will participate in the lottery.
3. Only applications received prior to the end of the admissions deadline are eligible to participate in the initial lottery.
4. All applicants offered a seat shall be required to respond to the offer within fourteen (14) days.
5. A lottery shall be conducted by a school to include all grades in which the number of applicants exceeds the number of expected seats available.
6. If the number of applicants is less than the number of anticipated seats available for a specific grade, then no public lottery shall be conducted for that grade.
7. All offers of enrollment shall be made in the order of lottery results.

### **Preferences**

1. All preference categories shall be published prior to the lottery being conducted.
2. All applicants entitled to receive a placement shall be identified prior to the lottery.
3. Preference status entitles an applicant to be offered an available seat ahead of applicants without preference status.
4. Preferences extended to applicants differ by school

### **Preferences – INQUIRY Charter School**

The school will give preference to the following applicants, in order of priority:

- Children of direct INQUIRY Charter School and Belmont Charter Network employees
- Siblings of enrolled students
- Students living in Philadelphia

Note: INQUIRY Charter School defines sibling as one of two or more individuals having one common parent.

### **Admissions Application Process**

For the 2019-2020 school year, the enrollment period will begin on Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup> and conclude on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. All applications will be due on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. Applicants will be notified of acceptance on Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> according to school preferences. If there are more applicants than available seats, a public lottery will be held on March 15<sup>th</sup> to fill all available positions. All students who are notified of admission will have fourteen (14) days to return a completed

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enrollment packet. Once all seats are filled, additional applicants will be placed on a waitlist by grade and admitted on a rolling basis as seats become available. The waitlist will follow preference criteria and will rest annually.

**Withdrawals and Transfers**

Inquiry CS will comply with all provisions outlined in the Public School Code for withdrawing students without penalty. Students who intend to withdraw or exit will need to provide notice of intent to withdraw, which will require parental approval if they are under 17 years of age.

Inquiry CS will agree to withdraw a student if they intend to transfer and enroll in another school and have obtained approval pursuant with the rules and regulations of that school system. Student records will be released when all paperwork is complete.

Students who fail to comply with the code of conduct may not be administratively withdrawn. If a student commits an expellable offense, as outlined in the student handbook, school administration may expel the student only after due process has been afforded to the student and the Board of Directors has determined that expulsion is the appropriate consequence. CEAWP will notify the school district within three (3) business days of any action expelling or withdrawing a student.

**Re-enrollment**

Students will be required to submit a re-enrollment form indicating their intent to return for the following school year prior to March 10<sup>th</sup>. Students who fail to re-enroll during this period will not be guaranteed a seat and will be considered a new applicant, subject to all policies governing the general admissions process.

Students who withdraw or transfer in the middle of the year will not be eligible for re-enrollment except through the open enrollment process.