

Florida Connections Academy Enrollment and Lottery Policy

Purpose

Florida Connections Academy (“FCA”) is committed to maximizing open enrollment within its annually set enrollment limits, while carefully considering student/teacher ratio to ensure students are provided with quality instruction and support. Each year the school will conduct an open application period and as needed, hold a public random selection process, both as set forth in this policy, thus providing all applicants with an equal chance of admission in accordance with state law and authorizer requirements.

Nondiscrimination Assurances

FCA does not discriminate against any person on the basis of ethnic group identification, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, physical or mental disability, athletic performance, language proficiency in English or another language, prior academic achievement, or age in the admission to, participation in, or receipt of any educational services or activities.

Open Application Period

Each year, FCA will have an open application period for the following school year which will take place in the spring. The dates of the open application period will be announced on the school’s website and as otherwise required by law. During this period, applicants who are interested in enrolling must complete the online registration form, which will be made available on the school’s website under “Enrollment”. No applicants will be enrolled during the open application period. At the conclusion of the open application period, the school will determine the total number of applicants eligible for the lottery by grade level or cluster, as well as determine which applicants are eligible for the enrollment priorities as set forth in this policy.

Lottery Procedure

Upon accounting for returning students, their eligible siblings, and other enrollment priorities, if there are more completed applications than available spaces at the end of the application period, a random lottery will be conducted in accordance with this policy.

The lottery may be conducted in three (3) grade clusters:

- Grades K-5
- Grades 6-8
- Grades 9-12

The order in which those clusters are drawn, and the total number of students selected for each cluster may vary each year in consideration of the school’s overall enrollment limit, the expected number of returning students and any of their eligible siblings who complete an enrollment application during the

open application period, and/or other operational factors.

Randomization of Lottery

To ensure a random lottery without the possibility of human bias and error, FCA will utilize a computer-generated randomization. The program will randomly select a student name from the pool of enrollment applicants for a specific grade cluster until the number of available slots are filled, or the pool of enrollment applications is exhausted.

Enrollment Preferences

FCA will prioritize the enrollment of certain students in accordance with applicable law, rules, and authorizer requirements. Enrollment preferences will be given to:

- Students who are siblings of a student enrolled in the charter school.
- Students who are the children of a member of the governing board of the charter school.
- Students who are the children of an employee of the charter school.
- Students who are the children of an active-duty member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces.
- Students who attended or are assigned to failing schools pursuant to s. 1002.38(2).
- Students residing in Hillsborough County Public Schools.
- Students who are the children of a safe-school officer, as defined in s. 1006.12, at the school.

Lottery Selection Process

As each student in a grade cluster is selected, siblings of that student who have also completed the applicable registration will be accepted if a space in their grade cluster is available.

The parents/legal guardians of selected students will receive an email confirmation within five (5) business days after the lottery and must confirm student attendance by completing all enrollment requirements within a specified deadline. A parent/legal guardian who has not confirmed attendance within the time given will forfeit their student's space to the next eligible student on the waitlist.

When all available spaces in a grade cluster have been filled, students not selected in the lottery will be placed on a waitlist in the order of their lottery number. The parents/legal guardians of students who are not selected will receive an email notification within five (5) business days after the lottery that their students are on the waitlist. These students will be given an opportunity to enroll as space becomes available in their respective grade cluster. The parents/legal guardians will be subsequently notified when an opening in the student's grade cluster becomes available. The parent/legal guardian must confirm student attendance by completing all enrollment requirements within a specified deadline or will forfeit their student's space to the next eligible student on the waitlist.

Waitlists

Students who are eligible for one or more enrollment preferences, but who were not exempt from the lottery process and were not selected in the lottery will be placed on the Preference Waitlist. These students will be offered the first opportunity to enroll as space in their respective grade clusters becomes

available. Students on this list with the lowest lottery number will be placed first.

When all slots are filled via the lottery, students not selected will be placed on the waitlist in the order of their lottery number. These students will be offered the opportunity to enroll after students on the Preference Waitlist, as space becomes available. Again, students on this list with the lowest lottery number will be placed first.

FCA will continue to accept applications after the open application period. If the school is not over-subscribed by the end of the open application period, no lottery will be held and FCA will continue to accept applications and admit eligible students in the order in which enrollment applications are received and based on availability in their respective grade clusters. If the school is over-subscribed, these students will be placed on the waitlist in order of the time/date stamp automatically recorded when they complete the enrollment application. These students will be offered the opportunity to enroll after all students on the waitlist as a result of the lottery, based on the availability of space in their grade cluster and their place on the waitlist. Students who complete the process first will be offered the space first.

The waitlists are for one school year only and will not carry over from school year to school year. A new application must be submitted each year.