

PPS RESIDENT LOTTERY WAITLIST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a lottery waitlist?

Admission to most specialized PPS programs is through an annual lottery. If there are more lottery applicants than open seats, students who do not receive an offer are placed on one or more waitlists. After the lottery has run, new applicants can also be added to the waitlist.

How long is the waitlist in effect?

Waitlists are open through the end of September at most schools. Waitlists at alternative programs and select other schools may remain open after September.

How do I find my student's waitlist number?

Waitlists change substantially after lottery results are published and some families decline their offers, so waitlist details are not available immediately. Beginning May 29, you will receive a unique code and may access the Waitlist Viewer through pps.net/schoolchoice. You may also contact the Enrollment and Transfer Center beginning May 29, 2024 to learn your student's waitlist position. Please do not contact your requested school, as they do not have additional waitlist information.

How is the waitlist order determined?

Lottery priorities are described in PPS policy 4.10.051, and also determined the waitlist order.

- Top priority goes to students who qualify as co-enrolled siblings at focus options and dual language immersion program.
- At most programs, students who meet income eligibility guidelines also receive lottery priority. Income eligibility is the highest priority at Metropolitan Learning Center and ACCESS Academy.
- Remaining applicants are assigned to open seats or a waitlist position using a randomly generated number and a small weight for gender balance.

Will my student's waitlist number change?

If seats become available after the lottery has run, offers are made starting with the top of the waitlist. While your student can move up the waitlist, they can also move down if new students are added to the waitlist who have higher lottery priorities (such as siblings or students who qualify for income priority). An additional weight may be added for students who present verified special circumstances.

What is a waitlist special circumstance?

A waitlist special circumstance is an urgent situation that poses imminent health, safety or serious educational concerns for the student. The special circumstance has to be verified by the Enrollment and Transfer Center.

For example, a student who was enrolled in a technical high school in another state, and has just moved to Portland would qualify as having an extenuating circumstance for mid-year entry to Benson Polytechnic HS. Similarly, students who are native speakers requesting to enter or remain in dual language programs qualify as special circumstances.

However, reasons such as attending school with friends or disappointment at not receiving a lottery offer generally do not qualify as special circumstances.

How do I request special circumstance consideration for my student?

If you applied during the lottery and would like the special circumstance information you included on your lottery application to be reviewed, please email enrollment-office@pps.net, and include your student's name and birthdate.

If you applied in the lottery but did not include special circumstance information at that time, please [complete this form](#).

If you have not yet applied for transfer, you may submit an open enrollment application, including special circumstances information, beginning May 29, 2024.

How are waitlist special circumstances determined?

Enrollment and Transfer Center staff review requests and consult with school staff where necessary. Families are notified whether the student qualifies for a waitlist priority, usually within 1-3 weeks. If a request is denied, families receive information about how to appeal the decision.

Learn more about lottery priorities at <https://www.pps.net/Page/10521>.

Waitlist and Open Enrollment details, from Administrative Directive [4.10.054-AD](#):

II(3)(a): Lottery transfer requests must be submitted by the annual transfer deadline to be considered. Following the lottery, new transfer requests into lottery-based schools and programs are made through the open enrollment application.

IV(10): Following the lottery cycle, lottery-based schools and programs with unfilled spaces will be open for transfer through the Open Enrollment application. Open Enrollment applicants to lottery-based schools and programs without available spaces will be added to the waitlists based on the lottery preferences and weights.

VI (1): The centralized lottery generates the wait list for each lottery-based school and program that has more applicants than spaces. The wait list is based on the same weighted factors and preferences as the lottery. Following the lottery, Open Enrollment applicants may be placed on wait lists if there is currently no grade-appropriate space available at the requested school. An additional weight may be added for Open Enrollment applicants who present verified extenuating circumstances.

VIII(1): A family may appeal the ETC's decision to deny a petition transfer or a lottery waitlist ranking by submitting a letter explaining the reason for the appeal and any additional information or documentation. An appeal may be granted on two grounds: (a) Failure of a school or ETC to follow established transfer procedures, or (b) New substantial information related to an extenuating circumstance.