

School Choice Guidelines

Parents of applicants are invited to read this document for information and are encouraged to contact the School Choice office if there are any questions.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted online and received by the School Choice office by 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the open enrollment period each year. All applicants must reside in the DeKalb County School District throughout the process. Every applicant must meet the eligibility criteria for the program they apply for to be considered for entry into the lottery. Eligibility criteria are listed under the Programs tab on our website. Applicants who previously applied but were not accepted into a School Choice Program must reapply. **Note:** To be considered on time, an applicant must submit all supporting documents by 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the open enrollment period each year.

Late Applications

Any application submitted after 4:01 p.m. on the last day of the open enrollment period each year will be stamped late and processed only if seats are available after the initial lottery and all waitlists have been exhausted.

Lottery Policy

DCSD will conduct a lottery if the number of applications exceeds the projected number of open seats for any School Choice Program. Visit the DeKalb County School District website at <http://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/school-choice> for School Choice lottery dates.

All lotteries are conducted online using a software program for random selection. A waitlist is generated if the number of applicants exceeds available seats.

Note: Kittredge and Wadsworth lotteries have a pool of applicants per middle school. The initial lottery is conducted to select three applicants per school. One wait list is generated after the initial lottery, and seats are assigned as per the wait list number. As and when seats become available, seat placement offers are made based on the wait list order.

Age Requirement

Applicants applying for preschool through first grade must meet the Georgia Age of Entry requirement. The applicant must be age-eligible **by September 1st** of the current school year.

Attendance/Behavior

Students enrolled in any School Choice Program must abide by the DCSD and local school attendance and behavior policies and guidelines as indicated in the DCSD Student Code of Conduct Handbook to continue.

- Behavior infractions – students with at least three (3) disciplinary infractions of level 3 or higher may be referred for exiting the selected program.
- If an infraction is at or above level 4, a student may be subject to immediate revocation upon the first violation.
- Attendance – students with at least five (5) unexcused absences or at least six (6) unexcused tardies may be referred for exiting the selected program.

School Choice Selections

If desired, applicants may apply for as many programs as eligible and choose first, second, and third choice schools under each program. **Once a seat is accepted, all other selections and waitlist placements will be removed.**

Lottery Pools

Only 1st Choices are run in the initial lottery. The first-choice selection under each program/category is entered into the initial lottery. If the school has additional seats after exhausting the first-choice lottery, a 2nd or 3rd choice lottery will be conducted.

Programs Requiring Standardized Test Scores for Grades 4 - 9 Eligibility

High Achiever Magnet Programs at Wadsworth, Kittredge, Chapel Hill Middle, Chamblee Middle, Southwest DeKalb, and Chamblee High require eligible Standardized M.A.P. test scores to satisfy one of the eligibility requirements. (Review the High Achiever Magnet program description for other eligibility criteria.)

From 2016-17 onwards, DeKalb County School District (DCSD) will utilize the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (M.A.P.). This assessment determines the eligibility of applicants applying for a 4-10 grade seat in the High Achievers Magnet program lottery. M.A.P. replaces the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).

Measures of Academic Progress (M.A.P.) is a test administered online. DeKalb resident students who score 75% or higher on the Reading R.T. (Reading Total) and Math MT (Math Total) on the M.A.P. assessment and a 3.0 or higher G.P.A. in all four core subjects will be eligible to enter the lottery.

All enrolled DCSD K-12 students are administered the M.A.P. during the August-September test window. DCSD School Choice department offers private and homeschooled students the opportunity to take the test once during the fall of the current year. The test dates for private and homeschooled students will be between October and November each year. Information about the testing Magnet Eligibility testing session for private and homeschooled students is available on the School Choice website at <http://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/school-choice/>.

DCSD administers the M.A.P. assessment of currently enrolled DCSD students three times per year. DCSD magnet program accepts scores from the baseline test session. **Note: The baseline test is when a student takes the M.A.P. assessment for the first time each school year.** Although the M.A.P. percentile score is valid for two years, only the baseline test score determines eligibility to enter the Magnet program lottery if applying for a High Achievers Magnet program seat placement offer.

Applicants must submit standardized test scores by the last day of the open enrollment period each year. Students tested by a DeKalb County School District school, or the School Choice Office do not have to upload test scores with the online application. Private and homeschooled applicants must upload the scores from the first M.A.P. test taken for the current school year (baseline M.A.P. test of the current school year).

Continuation Guidelines

Students enrolled in any School Choice Program must abide by the DCSD and local school contracts, policies, and guidelines to continue.

1. Attend school regularly and arrive on time. Students with at least five (5) unexcused absences or at least six (6) unexcused tardies may be referred for exiting the selected program.
2. Avoid excessive check-outs.
3. Complete all schoolwork assignments to the best of his/her ability.
4. Conduct themselves appropriately for school as indicated in the Student Handbook/Code of Conduct for the current school year. Students with at least three (3) disciplinary infractions of level 3 or higher may be referred for program revocation. If an infraction is at or above level 4, a student may be subject to revocation upon the first violation. *If a seat is revoked, the student must enroll at their home attendance area school.*
5. Maintain required G.P.A. for academically eligible programs, including Special Interest Magnet, High Achievers Magnet, and International Baccalaureate High School Program.
6. Successful completion of probationary periods as indicated by the school or School Choice office.
7. Complete mandatory parent and community service hours for Theme, Magnet, and I.B. programs.
8. Leave the campus promptly at the end of the school day or after participation in an authorized school activity.

Transportation

The most current DeKalb County transportation policy will be followed for the School Choice Programs. During the operating school year, students offered a seat in a Theme School, Magnet program, Arabia Mountain School Career Pathway, and Champion Theme Middle School will have transportation services. All other school choice programs do not provide transportation. **Note:** Once the parent accepts a seat online, transportation information will be emailed along with the seat placement notification. Student must report to their preferred satellite pick-up location and will be transported to the school and dropped off after school at the same location.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal from any School Choice program will result in the loss of the seat.

Proof of Residence

Proof of residency is required for students not currently enrolled in a DeKalb County Public School. To complete your School Choice application, proper proof of residency is required. Acceptable documents are Gas, Light, Water, or Lease/Mortgage Statements. Documents should be uploaded to the online application. If the parent or legal guardian does not have proof of residence documents in their name as listed above, then the DeKalb County School District Affidavit of Residence is required. You can obtain an Affidavit on our School Choice Home page under Forms/Brochure. Pages 2-4 of the Affidavit must be filled out correctly. The Owner/Lessee must fill out page 4, provide proof of residence, and a photo I.D. of Owner/Lessee. The legal parent or guardian must provide a bill or other business mail addressed to them at the address listed on the affidavit.

It will not be necessary for the form to be signed in the presence of a School Official since it is for the purpose of a School Choice application only. The Affidavit form can be found at <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/school-choice/forms-and-brochures/>

Disclaimer

If a deadline falls on a date that DCSD administrative offices are closed for business, the document will be considered due on the first business day after the deadline. The District reserves the right to change the timeline as necessary. No exceptions will be made for missed deadlines.

Students selected for any School Choice Program must register at the assigned online or building address by the date indicated in the selection notification email/letter or school website. If the applicant does not register, the seat will be declined and offered to the next eligible applicant on the waiting list. Please see individual school/program descriptions for school locations and telephone numbers. All lottery results are subject to verification by the Management Information System Office. Any malfunction of the lottery system will result in the immediate voiding of the drawing. The DeKalb County School District reserves the right to void and repeat any lottery drawing that results from any system malfunction or human error. Alternate lottery dates for additional available seats will be held electronically as needed, May – August.

DeKalb County School District (DCSD) reserves the right to change any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, procedures, program guidelines, dates, curricula, and courses without advance notice or obligation. DCSD reserves the right to place students in any school choice program due to unforeseen circumstances. Failure to read this brochure does not excuse parents and students from the regulations and requirements described herein. It is the policy of the DeKalb County Board of Education not to discriminate based on age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or handicap in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices. The DeKalb County School District School Choice Programs Office reserves the right to revise program guidelines, procedures, services, curricula, and student placements without advance notice or obligation to support local, state and federal practices, regulations, and policies. Failure to read this passage does not excuse parents and students from the regulations and requirements described on this website and the DCSD School Choice webpage.