

DISCOVERY COMMUNITY SCHOOL POLICY

Committee: Communication

Number: COM.01

Title: Enrollment

Created: 03/04

Dates Reviewed: 02-03/07, 05/10 **Page: 1 of 6**

LEGAL/REGULATORY REFERENCE

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy outlines the procedures and guidelines by which prospective students become enrolled in Discovery Community School (DCS). Check the DCS website for current enrollment dates. (www.lwsd.org/schools/discovery)

POLICY DISCUSSION

1. Eligibility

- 1.1 Any family that lives in the Lake Washington School District (LWSD) may apply for admission to DCS.
- 1.2 Application Calendar Requirements
 - 1.2.1 For fall enrollment of the next school year, applications are accepted during Open Enrollment: the period beginning September 1st and ending on the established deadline, usually two weeks after the annual DCS Information Night (usually held the second week in January).
- 1.3 To be eligible for admission, applicant families must have completed the enrollment requirements described in Section 3 below:
- 1.4 Out-of-District Applications
 - 1.4.1 In keeping with LWSD policies, out-of-district eligible applicants will be considered for admission to DCS only if the number of grade openings exceeds the number of in-district eligible applicants. If space is available for an out-of-district applicant, DCS gives the student a commitment to remain for that entire year. For the following year, he/she may remain only if the number of grade openings again exceeds the number of in-district eligible applicants.
 - 1.4.2 Should a DCS student move out of LWSD, they must apply as an out-of-district applicant for the potential of continued enrollment.

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2. Enrollment Process

- 2.1 For admissions, a lottery conducted by LWSD from among eligible applicants will establish a priority list for the purpose of determining admission into available class openings, allowing for exception under the Sibling Preference Policy described in section 2.3 below.
- 2.2 Eligible applicants that are not granted admission due to insufficient openings will maintain their priority on the list for any future openings that become available.
- 2.3 Sibling Preference
 - 2.3.1 Parent and family involvement is a cornerstone of Elementary Choice School programs. The involvement of families with multiple elementary students is best supported when elementary age siblings attend the same school. Therefore, Elementary Choice School enrollment policies allow for sibling preference for students who will attend concurrently with a *previously admitted sibling*. {Choice Schools Principal's Meeting, December 2009}
 - 2.3.2 Sibling preference is initiated *only during the lottery into the school's lowest entry grade*. If a student entering the lowest entry grade has a sibling currently attending that will also attend the following year, the student is eligible for admission under the Sibling Preference Policy.
 - 2.3.3 Sibling applicants must have a completed application on file by Information Night of the school year prior to enrollment.
 - 2.3.4 Should the number of lowest entry grade applicants with older siblings in the school exceed the number of slots available, a lottery will be conducted to establish a priority list for admission into available class openings. A separate non-sibling lottery will complete the waitlist positions.
 - 2.3.5 This Sibling Preference Policy is intended to address only the enrollment process for applicants who will attend concurrently with a *previously admitted sibling*. It does not apply to multiple births in regards to the enrollment process into any grade.

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2.4 Twins and Multiple Siblings and Lottery

2.4.1 As in all district lottery processes, each student must enter the lottery as an individual and each student will receive an individual lottery number. There is no guarantee that twin/multiple siblings will both receive admittance into an Elementary Choice School. However, due to the elementary sibling preference policy (outlined above), should one twin/multiple be admitted via sibling preference or lottery in the lowest entry grade, twin/multiple siblings will also be accepted, provided there is space available (i.e. provided that the one twin/multiple sibling did not receive the last spot via lottery).
{Choice Schools Principal's Meeting, December 2009}

2.5 Openings during the school year

2.5.1 As openings become available during the school year, DCS will contact applicants according to the waitlist order. Applicants have the option of declining openings offered during the school year while maintaining their position on the waitlist. If the position is declined, the next applicant on the waitlist will be offered the position.

3. Mandatory Enrollment Requirements

3.1 Failure to meet the following enrollment requirements in the current enrollment year cycle will result in the applicant being ineligible for the DCS lottery for that enrollment year.

3.1.1 By definition, sibling applicants are deemed to have already completed the enrollment requirements 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 through the admission of the elder child.

3.1.2 DCS Information Night: It is important that parents are aware of and support the school's concepts and ideas. DCS holds an Information Night each year for this purpose. It is mandatory that applicant parents attend the Information Night prior to the enrollment school year. At the sole discretion of the school administration, the period for accepting applications may be extended and this requirement waived.

3.1.3 Classroom Observation: Parents must attend the mandatory classroom observation after Information Night and prior to the lottery.

4. Admissions and Placement Process

4.1 Class openings are based on the space available per classroom, as determined by the staff with consideration of the educational needs of the current students, the age/class levels to be filled and the requirement to maintain an overall balance in number.

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- 4.2 Parents of currently enrolled students must confirm enrollment for the next school year by Information Night of the current school year.
- 4.3 Eligible sibling applicants will receive preference for available openings in the lowest entry grade.
- 4.4 Admission to all other openings in the lowest entry grade will be determined by a lottery among eligible applicants conducted by LWSD.
- 4.5 Once a position is available, the DCS Secretary will contact the family, who is asked to respond to confirm acceptance within one week. One of the three actions below then occurs:
 - 4.5.1 The family accepts the placement by completing the requirements.
 - 4.5.1.1 By accepting a position at DCS the family agrees to withdraw their child's name from any other LWSD choice school's waitlist. Families may reapply for their child at other choice schools at any time.
 - 4.5.2 The family declines the placement; or
 - 4.5.2.1 If acceptance is declined before the school year has started, the application is removed from the waitlist.
 - 4.5.2.2 If this is a mid-year acceptance, the family may decline the position without losing his/her place on the list, and the opening is offered to the next applicant on the waitlist. No guarantee can be made that another opening will become available for the following year. See sections 2.4 and 2.5.
 - 4.5.3 The family effectively declines the placement by failing to respond within one week.

5. Priority/Waitlist Information Requests

- 5.1 DCS is aware that applicants have an interest in their positions on the appropriate list, and would like to keep applicants informed. Applicants may call the DCS Secretary to request information about the current status.

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Approved by _____
DCS/Carl Sandburg Principal

Date

Approved by _____
DCS Chair

Date

CROSS REFERENCES

POLICY AUTHOR(S)

Patty Richter, Mark Lamb, Emily Hoffman, Sibyl Jorgenson

02-03/07 Revisions – Mary Brown, Steering Committee

05/10 Revisions – Janet Zins, Diane Jewell, Mark Blomquist, Shannon Barnes, Jill Chwojko-Frank, Dawn Grant

REVISION HISTORY

- 02/07 Section 3: First Grade Enrollment Process and Section 9: Admissions and Placement Process – Amended to reflect that DCS, not LWSD, conducts the lottery.
- 02/07 Section 6: Mandatory Enrollment Requirements – Clarified and emphasized that attending Information Night and a classroom observation are mandatory enrollment requirements.
- 02/07 Section 6: Mandatory Enrollment Requirements – Modified date by which applicants must attend a classroom observation, from March 31st to March 15th.
- 03/07 Section 10: Priority/Waitlist Information Requests – Deleted statement that the DCS web page will be updated to show the highest priority/waitlist number that is currently enrolled for each grade.
- 05/10 Throughout – Due to expected District grade reconfiguration in 2012/2013, removed all references to specific grades, especially replacing references to “1st grade” with “lowest entry grade”.
- 05/10 Throughout – Deleted most references to specific dates; instead referenced the DCS website for current enrollment dates. (www.lwsd.org/schools/discovery)

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- 05/10 Section 1: Philosophy – Removed – Effectively replaced with 2.3.1. When this policy was written in 2004, retention of the Sibling Preference Policy was a pivotal victory for maintaining the “community” spirit of DCS. At the Elementary Choice Schools Principal’s meeting in December 2009, District staff demonstrated they recognize and fully support a Sibling Policy for concurrently attending students as an essential element of Elementary Choice School programs.
- 05/10 Section 1: Eligibility – Clarified out-of-district application process for students that move.
- 05/10 Section 2: Enrollment Process – Eliminated separate enrollment processes for lowest entry grade vs. continuing grades.
- 05/10 Section 2: Enrollment Process and Section 4: Admissions and Placement Process – Amended to reflect that LWSD, not DCS, conducts the lottery.
- 05/10 Section 2: Enrollment Process – Moved Sibling Preference content to this section. Adopted District wording agreed to at Elementary Choice Schools Principal’s meeting (December 2009) for Sibling Preference/Twins and Multiple Siblings and Lottery.
- 05/10 Section 2: Enrollment Process – Modified “date” by which sibling applicants must have a completed application on file, from April 1st to Information Night of the school year prior to enrollment.
- 05/10 Section 2: Enrollment Process – Moved information regarding mid-year openings to this section.
- 05/10 Section 3: Mandatory Enrollment Requirements – Deleted references to postcard as it is no longer used.
- 05/10 Section 3: Mandatory Enrollment Requirements – Updated timing requirements for classroom observations to after Information Night and prior to the lottery.
- 05/10 Section 8: Application Process – Removed. Content in this section was largely redundant and/or processes have changed due to implementation of electronic technology for information gathering and communication.
- 05/10 Section 4: Admissions and Placement Process – Modified “date” by which parents of currently enrolled students must confirm enrollment for the next school year, from March 31st to Information Night.
- 05/10 Section 4: Admissions and Placement Process – Clarified that eligible applicants have one week to confirm acceptance once contacted by the DCS Secretary.
- 05/10 Section 4: Admissions and Placement Process – Updated to reflect that applications are removed from the waitlist if placement is declined before the school year begins.
- 05/10 Section 11: Policy Interpretation – Removed. Unresolved questions/issues having to do with Enrollment are directed to the DCS Principal, not the DCS Steering Committee.