

201. ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

Date Adopted: October 22, 2015

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Green Woods Charter School adheres to the State law requiring admission to be open by lottery and/or established criteria, including the terms and conditions established by the School Reform Commission (“SRC”) in granting and renewing Green Woods’ Charter, pursuant to the Charter School Law, 24 Pa.C.S.A. Section 17-1701-A, et seq.

2. Delegation of Responsibility

- 2.1 The Board of Trustees delegates the CEO to create and oversee the admissions and lottery process.

3. Guidelines

- 3.1 Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before September 1st.
- 3.2 Non-resident Philadelphia students applying through the lottery process may be admitted only if there are no Philadelphia students applying through the lottery for that particular grade. The tuition of non-resident students must be paid by the district in which the student resides.
- 3.3 Criteria for admission:
 - (a) Applications for participation in the lottery must be submitted by the deadline. If a child has been selected for admission through the lottery, all required paperwork to complete the enrollment process must be hand-delivered to Green Woods Charter School by the deadline, otherwise the child will not be enrolled at Green Woods Charter School, and instead his/her seat will be forfeited and given to the next child on the waitlist.
- 3.4 Open House information sessions are offered to prospective families prior to conducting the lottery. Attendance at an information session is encouraged but is purely optional, and is neither requested nor required for participating in the lottery for admission.

4. Application

4.1 Application Access

- (a) The application to Green Woods Charter School is available to all individuals.
- (b) The application is accessible primarily from the website, though also may be accessed in person by meeting with the registrar, and is available in multiple languages.

4.2 Application Process

- (a) Applications will be accepted for at least two (2) consecutive months.
- (b) The application process involves submitting the application form by the deadline.
- (c) The application availability and deadline are announced through three (3) public avenues (e.g. local newspapers, community flyers, bulletins, or school website).
- (d) Green Woods Charter School will communicate receipt of the completed application to each parent or guardian who successfully submits one.

5. The Lottery

5.1 Partial Suspension of Section 17-1723-A(a) of the Charter School Law and Enrollment of Students from Attendance Zones.

- (a) The SRC has partially suspended Section 17-1723-A(a) of the Charter School Law, which states: “All resident children of this Commonwealth qualify for admission to a charter school . . .” for Green Woods, only, during the Term of its renewed Charter up to and including June 30, 2017. The purpose of such action was to enable Green Woods, through its annual lottery, to enroll a minimum of 75% of its new students from the attendance zones of the following schools: Cook-Wissahickon Elementary, Dobson Elementary, Mifflin Elementary and Shawmont Elementary, if the prospective new students have complied with Green Woods’ application for enrollment process.

5.2 Exempted from Lottery.

- (a) All students currently enrolled and attending Green Woods Charter School.
- (b) Siblings of students currently enrolled and attending Green Woods Charter School ("sibling preference") who have applied for admission, provided that there is space available for their admission to the grade applied for. Siblings must reside in the same household as the currently enrolled sibling and be Philadelphia residents in order to be eligible for "sibling preference". A sibling lottery will be held in the event there are more siblings applying than seats available in any particular grade.
- (c) Children of Essential Staff Members as adopted by resolution of the Board of Trustees on 12/21/2011.

5.3 Included in Lottery

- (a) Other than those identified above in paragraph 5.2, all eligible applicants including, but not limited to, applicants from the attendance zones of the aforementioned schools.

5.4 Lottery Process

- (a) Green Woods Charter School will first establish an enrollment period and, if at the end of that period, the total number of applicants exceeds the spaces available, a lottery is conducted for those grades in which spaces are available or may become available.
- (b) Sorting Applications for the Lottery - These will be sorted for eligibility in the following order: 1) Residents of the mandated catchment area including students from the attendance zones of the following schools: Cook-Wissahickon Elementary, Dobson Elementary, Mifflin Elementary and Shawmont Elementary; 2) Residents outside the mandated catchment area; and 3) Non-Philadelphia residents of Pennsylvania. In the event there are more prospective students than available seats, a lottery will be conducted to select students. Only after all attempts have been made to seat a minimum of 75% of new lottery students from the catchment area, this includes second-phase marketing, will Green Woods seat a student from outside the catchment area and outside Philadelphia.
- (c) The lottery will be held publicly, the date of which will be announced publicly at least two (2) months in advance.

- (d) The lottery date will be announced through at least three (3) public avenues (e.g. local newspapers, community flyers, bulletins and/or school website).
- (e) On the lottery date, Green Woods Charter School, in collaboration with an outside party, will conduct a public lottery in the school cafeteria for all grades K-6. The school will assign a confirmation number to each applicant participating in the lottery. A computer program will generate a randomized ordering of applicants in each group. After admission by preferences, as applicable and in the order specified in Section 9, the order determined by lottery will be used to fill the open slots and the waitlist. Admission through the lottery is subject to the mandate of the School District of Philadelphia that Green Woods Charter School must seat a minimum of 75% of new lottery students from the catchment area. The lottery list will be posted on the school's website to enable applicants to check their confirmation number against the lottery results to learn of their place on the waitlist.
- (f) Notification
 - (i) Parents/guardians who have applied for their child to attend Green Woods Charter School will be notified of the lottery date at least two (2) weeks in advance.
 - (ii) All families who submitted applications and who were not selected for admission through the lottery will be assigned a number on the waitlist, and will be notified of their position on the school's waitlist via the website or by contacting the registrar.
 - (iii) Applicants selected for admission through the lottery will be notified and guidance for completion of the enrollment process will be provided, if applicable. Families are responsible for updating contact information with the school.
- (g) Waitlist
 - (i) The ordering of applicants on the waitlist is determined first by preferences, as applicable and in the order specified in Section 9, and then as determined by the lottery results, subject to the mandate of the School District of Philadelphia that Green Woods Charter School must seat a minimum of 75% of new lottery students from the

catchment area. Green Woods Charter School will maintain a current waitlist in the main office.

- (ii) When definite space becomes available in a grade, the next eligible applicant on the waitlist will be contacted, offered admission and given a deadline for compliance with the enrollment process.
- (iii) The waitlist is valid for one (1) school year only, and is based on the current year applications. New waitlists are generated every year. If an applicant is not notified of acceptance, he or she MUST reapply for the next school year.

5.5 Accountability

- (a) The lottery date and summary of school lottery procedures will be submitted to the Charter School Office via Epicenter.

6. Enrollment of Students Selected in the Lottery

6.1 Submission of Documents Necessary to Complete Enrollment

- (a) Provided that the required enrollment documentation described herein is timely provided, students who are selected in the lottery will be permitted to attend Green Woods Charter School within five (5) business days of the receipt of all required documents as follows:

- (i) Proof of the Child's Age - Acceptable documentation includes any one of the following: birth certificate; baptismal certificate; or copy of the record of baptism -- notarized or duly certified and showing the date of birth; notarized statement from the parents or other relative indicating the date of birth; a valid passport; or a prior school record indicating the date of birth.

- (ii) Two (2) Documents Establishing Residency in the Catchment Area or Philadelphia - Acceptable documentation includes the following in the name of the parent or guardian (copy or original):

- Deed of home ownership
- Lease to rent
- Property tax bill or receipt
- Vehicle registration

- Driver's license
- Department of Transportation identification card
- Current utility bill
- Current credit card bill
- IRS statement or other wage and tax statements e.g., W2,1040, 1099
- Employer pay stub
- Bank statement
- Voter registration card
- Welfare card
- Health insurance card

Green Woods Charter School will rely on the information provided above as proof of residency in the catchment area or Philadelphia to determine the sorting of applications for the lottery. Giving false, misleading, or inaccurate information is a crime. Green Woods Charter School may refer any cases it suspects are false, misleading, or inaccurate for criminal investigation and prosecution.

- (iii) Immunizations Required by Law - Acceptable documentation includes: student's immunization record, written statement from prior school district or a medical office that the required immunizations have been administered or that a required series is being administered, or verbal assurances from the former school district or a medical office that the required immunizations have been completed, with records to be sent.
- (iv) Parent Registration Statement (Section 1304-A Sworn Statement) - As required by 24 P.S. Section 13-1304-A, during the enrollment process, but prior to admission to a charter school, a parent must provide the school with a sworn statement that his or her child has not been suspended or expelled for an Act 26 offense involving weapons, alcohol, drugs, infliction of injury, or violence on school property. While Green Woods Charter School may not deny or delay a child's school enrollment based on the information contained in a disciplinary record or sworn statement, a student who is currently expelled from his or her school district is ineligible for admission at Green Woods, even if it is determined subsequently that, notwithstanding the parent's sworn statement to the contrary, the student has been suspended or expelled for an Act 26 violation. Unless the student's prior school district

has reinstated the student, Green Woods has no obligation under law to admit the student either.

- (v) Home Language Survey - All students seeking first time enrollment in a school shall be given a Home Language Survey in accordance with requirements of the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Enrollment of the student may not be delayed in order to administer the Home Language Survey.

6.2 Additional Documentation Requested (But Not Required for Enrollment):

- Picture identification
- Health or physical examination records
- Academic records
- Attendance records
- Individualized Education Program
- Special education record
- Completed physical examination
- Completed registration form

6.3 Completion of Enrollment Packet

- (a) Parents of incoming students will be provided a maximum of six (6) weeks to submit their enrollment packet. Failure to submit all required documentation by the deadline will result in forfeiture of the student's seat.
- (b) All documents required to complete the enrollment process must be hand delivered to Green Woods Charter School. Both the parent/guardian and Green Woods' personnel will sign and date a form to verify that documents were received.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the incoming student's parent or guardian to complete the enrollment packet with all required documentation. It is not the responsibility of Green Woods Charter School to notify an applicant of an incomplete application.

6.4 Enrollment During the School Year

- (a) Spots opening during the year are filled based on the current waiting list or first come first serve if no waitlist exists.

7. Reapplication of Currently Enrolled Students

- 7.1 To enable Green Woods Charter School to determine the number of available seats that will be open for lottery applicants, current students are required to confirm their intention to return for the following school year and/or to apply for a new sibling or other preference.

8. Other Reasonable Criteria for Admission and Enrollment

8.1 Authority

Act 22 - The Charter School Law of 1997 - allows charter schools to establish “reasonable criteria” for admissions and to independently develop internal policies and procedures for admission.

- 8.2 All students who apply to Green Woods must meet our reasonable requirements for admission, including submission of a complete and accurate application, and all parts thereof, during the enrollment process. This is to ensure that all eligible applicants have equitable access to Green Woods.

- 8.3 Curriculum and Instruction Focus on Hiking and the Outdoor Environment - The curriculum and instruction at Green Woods Charter School is based on hiking and using the outdoor environment as a focus for study. Information regarding the curriculum focus will be shared with prospective families at the Open House. The mission of our charter school is to, “Foster a keen understanding of the interrelatedness and interconnectedness of our local and global environment ...creating active young stewards of the natural world.” Applicants will be reminded that hiking and outdoor activities are an integral component of the education at Green Woods.

9. Preferences for Seating

Pursuant to the SRC’s partial suspension of Section 17-1723-A(a) of the Charter School Law, Green Woods will implement the following preferential seating:

- 9.1 First Priority: Currently enrolled students are given first priority for any available seats in their current grade or any other grade.

- 9.2 Second Priority: After all currently enrolled students are seated, siblings of currently enrolled students are then given preference for available seats in admissible grades. A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, by blood, marriage or adoption, living in the same household. Sibling preference, however, is offered only if the sibling resides in the same primary legal residence/household in Philadelphia as the currently enrolled student and/or after the currently enrolled student is successfully enrolled at Green Woods.

Step-siblings of seated Green Woods Charter School students must meet the same requirement and are given preference only if their primary legal residence in Philadelphia is with the currently enrolled family. If a child was chosen in the current lottery process and enrolled, that child's sibling/s will be given preference for the following school year if a spot is available and if that student meets the required criteria as listed above. However, currently seated students still have priority over siblings and any new student to occupy a seat in any current grade.

- 9.3 Third Priority: Children of Essential Staff as adopted by resolution of the Board of Trustees on 12/21/2011.
- 9.4 Fourth Priority: Other priority preferences as allowed by law, if applicable.
- 9.5 Fifth Priority: Eligible applicants through the lottery who reside in the mandated catchment area, including students from the following schools: Cook-Wissahickon Elementary, Dobson Elementary, Mifflin Elementary and Shawmont Elementary.
- 9.6 Sixth Priority: If enrollment slots are still available after admitting (i) students having sibling, Essential Staff Lottery Policy, or other priority preferences as allowed by law and (ii) a minimum of up to 75% of the School's new students, through the annual lottery, from the attendance zones for Cook-Wissahickon Elementary, Dobson Elementary, Mifflin Elementary and Shawmont Elementary, Green Woods will fill the remaining slots on the annual lottery basis in accordance with Section 17-1723-A. All other provisions of Section 1723-A and the Public School Code shall remain in force.
- 9.7 The number of new students who will be allowed to enroll in Green Woods Charter School in any school year, and the open students slots available for new students in any and all grade configurations of Green Woods Charter School, is, and will remain during the Term of the Charter, the sole decision and at the sole discretion of its Board of Trustees.

- 9.8 All students, including siblings and step-siblings, etc. who turn down admission or withdraw from Green Woods for any reason cannot request priority seating in subsequent years using sibling or other preference. Any student who is eligible through priority seating and turns down admission or withdraws from Green Woods Charter School at any time may seek re-admission only through the regular lottery process. A former student, sibling or step-sibling who has withdrawn from Green Woods, who meets all of the required admissions criteria for student eligibility, can apply for admission through the regular lottery process.
10. Classroom Caps
- 10.1 The Board and Administration have full discretion to establish the number of students admitted to each grade and the grades they are admitted to. However, the Board and the Administration may not exceed the school's cap of a maximum of 675 students during the term of the school's charter, unless authorized otherwise by the SRC in writing. Green Woods also will not request payment for more students or to enroll students in different grades without SRC approval by resolution.
11. Registration Requirements
- 11.1 Selected students meeting all criteria for enrollment will receive a letter confirming acceptance, which must be completed and returned to Green Woods Charter School by the required date listed on that form. Parents/guardians who complete the registration process by signing this confirmation are acknowledging that their child is officially enrolled in Green Woods Charter School and that the child will attend Green Woods in September.
- 11.2 To ensure that Green Woods can contact prospective parents, it is the responsibility of parents to update Green Woods with any changes in contact information.
- 11.3 All enrollments are contingent upon Green Woods Charter School receiving all necessary paperwork from a child's family in a timely manner. Should Green Woods not receive such information and in the time required, the applicant's seat will be offered to the next student on our waiting list. It is the responsibility of the applicant's family to ensure all required paperwork is received in a timely manner.
- 11.4 A child must successfully complete the grade prior to the grade to which he or she is applying. If an applicant applies for a grade that he or she should be entering in the new school year and, at anytime during the application process, up to and including the start of the school year, the child is, for whatever reason, not able to officially be assigned to the grade

applied for, but instead requires another grade (based on official school records), that child's application would then move to the bottom of the waiting list for his or her eligible grade.

12. Parent Involvement

12.1 Parent Involvement – Green Woods recognizes the importance of parent involvement and volunteers in helping to improve the success of children and offers many opportunities for parent involvement at Green Woods.

13. Affirmation of Commitment to Equal Opportunity in Education and Equal Access of All Eligible Applicants to Green Woods Charter School

13.1 Green Woods Charter School affirms its commitment to the principle of equal opportunity in education. No student applying for or enrolled in the School will be denied opportunity for education or be subject to discrimination in any program or activity because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability.

13.2 Green Woods thus will not deny enrollment or admission on any basis otherwise illegal for a school district. Accordingly, no student who has been admitted to Green Woods when not otherwise eligible will be allowed to remain on the rolls of Green Woods, in order to ensure equal access of all eligible applicants to Green Woods.

13.3 Green Woods will remove from its rolls any student whose residency information given to the school, for the purpose of enrollment, is determined to be false, in accordance with 24 P.S. Section 13-1302. Green Woods also will seek prosecution and remedies as provided by this statute.

13.4 Green Woods will remove from its rolls any student for whom, for the purpose of enrollment, false or misleading information has been provided pertaining to suspension or expulsion for an Act 26 violation. Such a student has no entitlement to continued enrollment or reinstatement at his or her prior school district, but may be legally excluded from its rolls. Accordingly, Green Woods also will remove the student from its rolls, consistent with student's legal exclusion from his or her prior school district. Moreover, Green Woods will seek prosecution as provided by 24 P.S. Section 13-1304-A(b) and 18 Pa.C.S.A. Section 4904.