

STUDENT APPLICATION, ENROLLMENT, AND PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWING/LOTTERY POLICY

Overview

This Policy shall apply to Ross Valley Charter (Charter School or RVC). This Policy shall be published in the instructions for student application for admission and the Charter School's Parent and Student Handbook.

All students who wish to attend the Charter School shall be admitted, subject to the Charter School's capacity. If there are more applications than the Charter School has capacity, enrollment, except for pupils currently enrolled in the Charter School, shall be determined by public random drawing (or "lottery"), and conducted in accordance with the procedures described.

The initial lottery is held in late February or early March. Information about the date, time and location of the lottery will be posted on the Charter School's website, at the school site, included in public notices, newsletters and/or flyers posted in the community, and will be available by calling the Charter School information number that will be included on all student admissions/lottery materials.

The Charter School strongly encourages all potential applicants to review the charter and the Parent and Student Handbook (available on the Charter School's website) and published information regarding the Charter School, and visit the Charter School, prior to submitting an application for admission.

RVC hereby notifies the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School.

Assurances

In addition to any other requirement imposed under law, the Charter School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate

crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics.

The Charter School's Board of Trustees shall ensure that student outreach activities and information sessions, including but not limited to those activities as described in the Charter School charter, which are designed to recruit a broad, diverse representation of students, are conducted in accordance with the charter.

A. Application for Admission

Submission of an application for admission is not a guarantee of admission to the Charter School; if there are more applications in any year than there are available spaces in each grade, the application will be entered into the Charter School's lottery. If an applicant does not submit an application by the posted open enrollment deadline, the applicant will not be entered into that enrollment period's lottery.

There is no fee to apply to or attend the Charter School.

Applications for enrollment must be submitted on-line, or submitted in hard copy to the Charter School's administrative office, or submitted via mail to the Charter School's Post Office Box with a postmarked date no later than the specified application deadline date of each enrollment period. RVC will hold orientation meetings from time to time and applications can be submitted at these meetings to the person designated at the meeting to accept applications.

Applications for admission for each academic year are valid solely for that academic year. Any offers of admission to the Charter School or waiting list positions from one academic year shall not carry over to any other academic years. Any applicant who was not offered admission in one academic year, and who wishes to reapply to the Charter School in the future, must submit a new application for the new academic year by the posted open enrollment deadline.

The application deadline for each enrollment period will be posted on the Charter School's website. Email and facsimile copies of applications will not be accepted. Once an application is received, it is "on file" for entry in the lottery. Applicants may phone or email the Charter School to ensure receipt of the application.

Applications submitted online, or received with a postmarked date, or otherwise received after the specified application deadline date will be automatically entered into the lottery for the next open enrollment period for that school year. Subsequent open enrollment periods will be held as needed. Dates will be posted on the website for deadlines for these subsequent open enrollment periods and applicants involved will be emailed the public lottery details. After June

1 of each year, enrollment periods will not have a published end date and lotteries will be held whenever the School Director and Board chair, in their joint discretion, deem appropriate. All applicants who will be in the resulting lotteries will be notified at least 24 hours in advance of the public lottery details.

Preferences will apply in all lotteries held.

B. Admissions Selection Process and Public Random Drawing/Lottery

1. Each year, the Board of Trustees, acting on recommendations from the Charter School Director (or designee), will approve a plan for school size for the upcoming academic year, which shall include the capacity per grade level, and in accordance with the charter. The Board may designate parameters for each grade and delegate to the School Director and Board Chair the decisions regarding the exact numbers for admission for each grade. For capacity purposes, Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten will be considered one grade level. Transitional Kindergarten is for children who will have their fifth birthday between September 2 and December 2.
2. It has long been the intention of RVC to give admission preference to siblings, children of staff, and founders' children, and these preferences were included in RVC's original petition. At the State Board of Education (SBE) meeting on July 14, 2016, when RVC's first material revision was approved, the SBE asked that these preferences be removed because there was disagreement about whether they were allowed under state law and because the SBE wanted to address them more thoroughly in a subsequent meeting. On October 13, 2017, AB 1360 was signed into law by the Governor and Section 47605(c)(2)(B) explicitly added that preferences can now be given to: "siblings of pupils admitted or attending the charter school and children of the charter school's teachers, staff, and founders identified in the initial charter, may also be permitted by the chartering authority on an individual charter school basis."

RVC's authorizer, the SBE, has asked that RVC submit a material revision of our petition to request such a change to our preferences in order to implement this change. Unfortunately, such a change cannot be made before RVC offers admission to students for 2018-19 based on the March 2018 lottery. As a result, for the 2018-19 school year only, if there are children in the lottery who fall into one of these preference categories and their names are not selected for admission in the March 2018 lottery, seats in the appropriate classes be saved at least until the July 2018 SBE meeting. If the SBE does authorize this material revision, these students will be offered admission in July. If authorization to change the petition is not received by the July 2018 SBE meeting, then these placeholders will be withdrawn and the next students on the wait list will be offered these spots until the class is filled to capacity.

3. If, at the end of the first and any subsequent open enrollment period(s), the Charter School receives more applications than it has capacity for any grade as determined by the Board of Trustees, except for existing students of the Charter School, admission shall be determined by a public random drawing in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2). Applications received after the first open enrollment deadline will be held in abeyance and admission will be determined by subsequent lotteries, which will be scheduled as needed. Admissions preferences will be applied for each lottery.
4. **Lottery Date and Time:** The lottery shall be held within two weeks or less of the application deadline. Public notice of the lottery will be posted at the school site and on the Charter School's website, regarding the date, time, and location of the lottery.
5. **Lottery Location:** The lottery will be held in one of the classrooms at the Charter School. If necessary, the location of the lottery will be arranged to ensure maximum parent participation in a public space large enough to safely accommodate all interested families. Attendance is not required for applicants.
6. **Admission Preference:** As specified in the Charter School's charter, preference for admission will be given in the following order:
 1. Existing pupils of the Charter School will be exempt from the lottery
 2. Pupils residing in the district
 3. Pupils residing outside the district
7. **Sequence of admission:** At the end of each open enrollment period, all applicants will be added to either an admission list or waitlist (after taking into account admission of existing students) in order of preference. All applicants residing in the district (Preference 2) will be admitted or added to a waitlist before applicants residing outside the district (Preference 3) are added to an admission or waitlist.

Within the **applicants residing within the district** grade levels will be filled in the following sequence:

 1. Grades will be filled starting with 5th grade and in descending order.

Next, all **applicants residing outside the district** will be added to either an admission list or waitlist in the following sequence:

 1. Grades will be filled starting with 5th grade and in descending order.
8. **Existing students** are exempt from the lottery and are guaranteed enrollment in the next academic year if the following step is completed:

- a. Letter of Intent: The Charter School will distribute a “Letter of Intent” to parents of currently enrolled students annually by January. This letter must be returned to the Charter School by the specified date in order to secure the student’s enrollment at the Charter School. The letter will state the parents’ intention for their student(s) for the following year. Parents who do not return the letter by the specified date will be contacted by the Charter School at least two times to attempt to assure that the letter is returned. If the letter is not received within three weeks of the specified date, the Charter School will document in its records and inform the parents that the student is not re-enrolling at the Charter School. If the Charter School is submitting a Proposition 39 request for the following year, the Intent to Enroll Form involved in this process will serve as this letter of intent.
9. **Lottery Procedures**: The lottery will be operated by at least two currently employed Charter School staff members with no personal interest in the lottery. The lottery will be open to the public and families will be encouraged to attend, however, families are not required to be present at the time of the drawing to be eligible for admission.

If the number of students exceeds the capacity of the Charter School, a lottery will be utilized to add all applicants to either an admission list or waitlist. The Lottery will be conducted in the sequence described in **Section 6: Sequence of Admission** with all applicants residing within the district being added to admission and wait lists first followed by all applicants who reside outside the district.

Each applicant will be assigned a number which will be written on poker chips that are of equal size, shape, and weight. Parents will be provided their chip number during the lottery check-in process.

All chips will be placed into a container or lottery device that will randomly mix the chips. The persons leading the lottery will draw the chips one at a time and read the number on the chip. As each chip is pulled its number will be posted visibly on a display in the order it was chosen. Chip numbers will be given a numerical ranking based on the order they were drawn.

The drawing will continue until all chips have been drawn and all chip numbers have been assigned a numerical ranking. These rankings will be recorded in an electronic database that will be double checked by the lottery officials.

10. All applicants will be informed by email and U.S. postal mail within a week of the lottery whether their student was admitted and if not where on the wait list the student was placed.

Follow up phone calls or emails will be made to those applicants who will be offered an enrollment spot as the spot becomes available.

11. **Waiting list:** If vacancies occur, the vacancies will be filled according to the waiting list. Students who are not offered seats for the academic school year for which the lottery was held will remain on the waiting list until the end of that academic school year unless otherwise requested by the parent/guardian to be removed. The order of applicants on the waiting list will not change throughout the academic year.

The waiting list shall be cleared at the end of the academic year for which the lottery was drawn and shall not carry over from one year to the next; students who remain on the waiting list at the end of the academic year will be required to submit an application again for the next school year.

12. If a student is extended an offer of admission due to one of the preferences or due to the sequence in which grade levels are filled, the Charter School may require **supporting documentation** from the parent/guardian with the student's enrollment package. The Charter School may conduct verification of such documentation prior to finalizing the student's enrollment and offers of admission may be rescinded if the Charter School deems that an application was completed inaccurately.

Acceptable proof of residency will include the following:

- a. Utility bill (current bill within 30 days)
- b. Homeowner's or renter's insurance policy
- c. Lease agreement
- d. Current property tax bill from the County Tax Collector's Office
- e. Official letter or form from a social services or government agency (current within 30 days)

C. Admissions Offers and Acceptance of Offers/Enrollment

Following acceptance through the lottery, families who are offered admission at the Charter School will have fifteen (15) business days to complete the following:

Registration Packet: All forms in the Registration Packet must be completed to gain enrollment at the Charter School. Each packet will include a "Registration Check List" to assist parents/guardians in ensuring that all necessary paperwork is accounted for and submitted to the Charter School. All paperwork and documentation, as indicated in the packet, must be returned per the Charter School's instructions. (Not Applicable before July 2018: Those who were selected in the lottery and had a preference will be required to return the appropriate documentation for the preference category as referenced in Section B.6 above.)

Enrollment offers are valid only for the applied-for academic year. There is no option to defer an offer for enrollment. No *added* preference in the future will be given to an applicant who is offered a slot and declines that slot. However, applicants who remain eligible for admissions preference, as defined above, may still receive such preference if they decline an offer of enrollment and then reapply for a future academic year.

If slots become available after the initial lottery in February or March because an accepted student declines acceptance or a student leaves the Charter School after the start of the academic year, or as slots become available, or as subsequent lotteries are held for any available or waiting list spaces, the Charter School staff will notify families via telephone and/or email (as stated in the student's application for admission) in the order they appear on the waiting list or, if there is no waiting list, in the order they were drawn in the subsequent lottery. Families shall have 5 business days to accept the enrollment slot (via telephone or email to the Charter School) and proceed with the registration process. This may be extended by the School if contact with the family cannot be made. Applicants must complete a registration packet with all required documentation by the deadline given by the Charter School to confirm enrollment. This procedure may be repeated until all slots for the upcoming/current academic year have been filled with applicants who confirm their enrollment in the Charter School. If an applicant is offered admission and does not accept within five business days, the offer of admission may be rescinded, and the student be removed from the waiting list.

D. Issues Not Covered Under this Policy

In the case that the procedures herein do not cover a situation that arises during the admissions and enrollment process, the School Director or Board Chair in the absence of a School Director will take any additional steps necessary to execute the admissions and enrollment process.