

Anchorage School District – Lottery Procedures 332.3

332.3 Lottery Procedures - Open Enrollment

a. Purpose

(1) To provide an equal opportunity for all students who request participation in one of the Anchorage School District's programs or schools other than the assigned District program or school and to provide grade level balance and gender and racial diversity. No student shall be denied participation because of a learning disability, handicapping condition, or special need.

b. Responsibilities

(1) Standard Schools

Requests for registration shall be made through the Attendance Zone Exception Application process. Approval or denial shall be based on the school's total space availability and gender, and the achievement of grade level, gender, and racial balance.

(2) Alternative Schools/Programs

Administrators of each alternative school/program will inform the parents and students of openings as they occur and will require an information session. All parents and students are required to attend an information session prior to enrollment when appropriate. For primary grades, the parent information session may not be appropriate for their attendance. These sessions will be designated to familiarize the parents and students with the new school or program and to identify the student's needs. Approval or denial shall be based on the school's/program's total space availability; the grade level of the applicant (to ensure grade level balance); and consideration given to the promotion of racial and gender balance and diversity.

c. How to Apply

(1) Standard Schools

Parents of children requesting an Attendance Zone Exception to another standard school outside their assigned attendance area will complete an Attendance Zone Exception form and submit it to the building administrator. If no space is available, the request will be held for inclusion in the next Lottery Process for that school. A Lottery Application form will be completed and submitted at the time of the request. If space is available, approval will be based on space availability, grade level, gender, and racial balance, and reasons stated on the request.

(2) Alternative Schools/Programs

Parents of children requesting entrance into an alternative school or program must complete and return an application on the approved Lottery Application form to the administrator in charge of the alternative school/program of their choosing.

All applications received prior to the designated lottery date will be entered in the next available lottery. The building administrator will keep a copy of the applications on file in the school office. Information available to the Alternative Program Advisory Committee is the standard lottery application form and student generated writing sample. At the time of the application, parents are given a copy of the Open Enrollment Lottery Procedures. In addition, at the time of application, parents should be given any available written information regarding program philosophy, program goals, and parental and student commitments that are a part of the particular alternative program guidelines.

Any required orientations, information sessions, or visits should be explained to the parents at the time applications are submitted.

At the time of approval for entrance into the alternative school, the parents will complete an Attendance Zone Exception form.

The application form will be revised to allow parents to give written permission to share their name, address, and phone number in a "waiting list directory" in order to facilitate communication among parents. Upon passage of these procedures, and prior to completion of the revision to the application form, all parents of students presently on waiting lists will be given the opportunity to have their names, addresses, and phone numbers compiled into this directory. This information will be kept at the individual schools as well as at the offices of the appropriate Instructional Division Executive Director and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction.

d. Time Period for Lotteries

The administrator of the school/program will conduct two (2) lotteries annually for all schools if the applications received to attend any school or program exceed the available openings at that school or program.

(1) Schedule for Lotteries

- a) August: Five (5) school days prior to opening of school.
- b) March/April: Five (5) school days prior to the end of the third quarter.
- c) Additional lotteries may be held if needed.

e. Priorities

(1) Siblings and attendance area children

(2) Districtwide

(3) The building administrators shall preempt the process with the approval of the appropriate Instructional Division Executive Director for the following reasons:

- a) Grade level balance.
- b) Documented hardship (extenuating circumstances, medical, safety, psychological, or curriculum considerations).
- c) The achievement of gender and racial balance and diversity.

f. Drawing Process

(1) All drawings will be by grade levels K-12. Grade levels are drawn first to determine draw order for the lottery.

(2) When a student's name is drawn, it is placed on the appropriate schools' waiting list in numerical order.

(3) Students will be enrolled in the standard school or alternative school/program from the approved waiting list in numerical order.

(4) Students' parents must annually acknowledge their interest in remaining on a school's/program's waiting list by notifying the school of their interest. Future drawings will add to the approved list. Student's remaining on a waiting list will retain their place on the list; the grade level list will move up a grade annually.

(5) Pre-kindergarten students are eligible for the lottery only in April preceding eligibility for school entrance and if the program begins in kindergarten. The first lottery for which pre-kindergarten students will be eligible will be the one in April preceding their intended enrollment. For example, for kindergarten students for the 1996-97 school year, the first eligible lottery will be April 1996. Students wanting consideration for early entry to either kindergarten or first grade will be allowed to enter the lottery. Their space will be reserved pending approval by the Executive Director of Elementary Education or the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction until the August lottery preceding their intended enrollment.

g. Continued Participation

Students who have been chosen to attend a school or program must register in that school or program within two (2) school days after notification. In the case of pre-kindergarten students, they will notify the school within the two day period of their acceptance, but actual registration will take place during the normal kindergarten registration period in May of each year. Those students who do not enroll within the designated period will be withdrawn from the waiting list and they must reapply if they wish to attend. If students are already in the program and are withdrawn for any reason, they must follow the lottery procedures if there is a waiting list. Positions may not be reserved because of a student's temporary withdrawal from the program. No student will be allowed to accept a place in more than one program at the same time. All schools will turn in their waiting lists to the appropriate Instructional Division Executive Director and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction within five (5) days of each lottery.

h. The Lottery Process

(1) All new applications will be held without numbers between scheduled lotteries.

(2) At lottery time, the initial step will be the drawing for position according to grade level. The lottery will then proceed as follows:

- a) Draw grade levels to determine order of the drawing;
- b) Draw siblings and attendance area children if applicable to the school/program;
- c) Draw Districtwide applications.

(3) Siblings and attendance area (if there is an attendance area) names will be drawn and assigned the lowest available waiting list numbers. Where families have more than one child, the lowest available number will be assigned simultaneously to each grade level. To be eligible under this section, the sibling must be on the rolls for the school/program at the time the other entering sibling is enrolled. For example, a sixth grader during the 1997-98 school year would not qualify as a sibling for a kindergartner entering a program in the fall of 1998.

(4) Names of children from the rest of the District will be drawn second and assigned waiting list numbers in sequence behind siblings and attendance area children's names.

(5) After each lottery, families will be notified of their status on the list and advised that they must notify the school if they wish to remain on the list. At that time they should provide updated information (address, telephone number, etc.) if necessary.

i. Waiting List

(1) The names will be entered into the waiting list two (2) times each year in March/April and August of each year for grades K-12 after the scheduled lottery is held. A copy of the list will be forwarded to either Elementary, Middle Level, or Secondary Education and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction will compile a listing of all students on wait lists and will include a listing of each program the student has applied for.

(2) Names will be numbered consecutively within each grade level based on the lottery draw.

(3) An indication will be made after the last number entered from each lottery so that it will be possible to determine which names were entered from every lottery (i.e., Spring 1997; Fall 1997, etc.)

(4) Students will be enrolled in the school/program from the approved waiting lists in numerical order unless the administrator preempts the waiting list to ensure racial/gender balance as stated in the criteria description below, or for documented hardship circumstances. As openings occur in a particular grade level, the parents of the next student on the waiting list will be notified of the opening and the requirement of registering in the school/program within two (2) school days.

(5) When an opening occurs and no names remain on the waiting list, a special lottery will be held for that grade level only after soliciting for interest from students in the school and/or the District.

j. Criteria

(1) Space availability will be determined by weighing the following factors:

- a) Overall program capacity as established by the District for zone exceptions and enrollment of the school; and
- b) Grade level and individual classroom enrollments must be balanced. The classroom and grade level restriction that may be applied are the standard pupil teacher ratios for the coming school year.

(2) Racial Balance

In order to ensure cultural and racial diversity of the student population in alternative programs, the administrator, when filling available classroom spaces, will preempt the lottery process for racial balance if the percentage of minority students is not within plus or minus (+/-) ten (10) percentage points of the District's minority student enrollment. For example for 1997-98, the range would be 22% to 42% since the District's percentage of minority students is 32%. This will only apply if there are minority applicants on file for the school/program.

(3) Gender Balance

In order to provide gender balance, the administrator shall preempt the waiting list if more than two-thirds ($2/3$) of the class is of one gender in order to ensure a minimum of two-thirds ($2/3$) to one-third ($1/3$) gender ratio.

k. Preemption Policy

(1) The administrator shall preempt the lottery procedure in the interest of achieving gender and racial balance and diversity within a school or program. For purposes of this policy, racial classifications are (1) Caucasian and 2) minority, and gender classifications are (1) female and (2) male. For purposes of this policy, a racial imbalance occurs when the student body in a particular school or program has a racial composition that is not within plus or minus (+/-) ten (10) percentage points of the districtwide percentage for Caucasians and minorities; and a gender imbalance occurs when the student body in a particular school or program has more than 2/3 of either gender.

(2) The procedure for preemption the normal lottery process is as follows:

a) When a gender or race imbalance exists or would exist without preemption in a grade level at the time of the lottery, the administrator will fill the available spaces in the grade level by taking the numerically lowest ranking students of the minority gender or race until the occurrence of one of the following:

1) all students on the minority list have been placed in the grade level;

2) race/gender balance is achieved; or

3) all spaces in the grade level are filled.

(3) After balance is achieved, the administrator will fill the remaining available spaces in the grade level by following normal lottery procedures.

(4) Example:

Assume that a specific grade level in an alternative school or program has a racial distribution of 91% Caucasian and 9% minority; and that the districtwide racial distribution is 69% Caucasian and 31% minority. To be racially diversified and balanced, minority enrollment in each grade level shall be between 21% and 41% of the students in that grade level. At a 9% minority student enrollment, this grade level is not diversified and the administrator must preempt the lottery procedure to correct the imbalance. Assume that this grade level must enroll additional minority students to be within percentage range for racial balance. The administrator would select those students by taking the numerically lowest ranking minority student from the lottery list for that grade level and repeating that selection until the appropriate percentage of minority students had been admitted to that grade level, unless the administrator ran out of available spaces or minority applicants before reaching the appropriate number. If there are spaces available in this grade level after implementing the preemption policy, the administrator fills the remaining spaces by taking the numerically lowest ranking students from the grade level lottery list. Each grade level must be balanced regardless of whether other grade levels in the school or program meet or exceed the minimum minority student enrollment if applicants are available.

(5) The preemption policy becomes effective only when a racial or gender imbalance exists in a grade level.

(Section 332.3 - Approved April 9, 1984)

(Section 332.3 - Revised October 11, 1993)

(Section 332.3 - Revised February 28, 1994)

(Section 332.3 - Revised October 30, 1995)