



2012-13 DPS SchoolChoice Process Parent and Student Frequently-Asked-Questions

Q: How will Denver Public Schools (DPS) enrollment work for the 2012-13 school year?

A: Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, DPS will offer the **SchoolChoice** enrollment process. Enrollment will follow five steps for any student who wants or needs to attend a new school in 2012-13, especially “transitioning” students.

1. Research DPS schools by reviewing the SchoolChoice Enrollment Guide and online resources, and by visiting schools of interest.
2. Prioritize your student’s top five preferences and list them in order on the SchoolChoice form.
3. Complete any extra enrollment steps and submit them to your schools of interest if they are required. Submit your SchoolChoice form by January 31, 2012.
4. SchoolChoice will combine your student’s top five preferences with each school’s admissions priorities and available space. For schools with more interested students than available space, students will be randomly assigned a lottery number that will determine the order in which they are enrolled with a school.
5. Students will be awarded a seat at their highest-preference school with an available seat in March 2012.

Q: Why is the enrollment system changing?

A: The current enrollment process is extremely complex, making it both hard to navigate and unfair for many families. Today, there are more than 60 different enrollment processes, applications, and timelines within the DPS system, each of which takes time and resources for families to understand and use. The current system also creates challenges for schools that are unable to hire the right number of teachers and plan other resources because they don’t know how many students will be enrolled. Accordingly, DPS is implementing a new, streamlined and unified system that will be easy and equitable for families and efficient for schools.

Q: What is a “transitioning” student?

A: A transitioning student is one who has completed the highest grade available at his/her current school. For example, a current 5th grader who is attending an ECE-5 school is considered to be “transitioning”.

Q: What happens if my transitioning student doesn’t submit a SchoolChoice form?

A: Transitioning students who do not submit a SchoolChoice form will be projected to attend their boundary school.

Q: Can students in “non-transition” grades (i.e. 2nd) still participate in the SchoolChoice process?

A: Yes. Students who are interested in choosing a different school other than the school where they are currently enrolled should fill out a SchoolChoice form.

Q: What are the important dates of which I need to be aware?

A: December 1, 2011 – SchoolChoice forms will be available online and in each DPS school
January 31, 2012 – SchoolChoice forms are due
March, 2012 – Notification letters sent to families

Q: When will the SchoolChoice form be available?

A: The SchoolChoice form will be available for distribution on or before December 1, 2011. In future years, we anticipate that the form may be available earlier in the school year.

Q: Where do we submit our SchoolChoice form?

A: All district schools will accept forms through January 31, 2012. SchoolChoice forms may also be submitted at the Evie Dennis Enrollment Center at 4800 Telluride Street or at the DPS administrative office at 900 Grant Street.

Q: What schools are included in the SchoolChoice enrollment process?

A: Nearly all district schools will be part of the new enrollment process, including boundary schools, magnet schools, innovation schools and most charter schools. “Alternative” schools such as Multiple Pathways Centers and Intensive Pathway Schools may or may not be part of the new process. Please contact those schools directly for enrollment information.

Q: Are there any extra enrollment steps for certain schools?

A: Some schools will continue to have extra enrollment steps beyond just completing the SchoolChoice form. For example, Denver School of the Arts will continue to require auditions as part of a student's application. This will not change under the new process. These schools will be identified in the SchoolChoice Enrollment Guide, at <http://schoolchoice.dpsk12.org> and on the SchoolChoice form.

Q: Will all schools have the same timeline?

A: Yes. All schools will now have the same deadline for submitting enrollment forms. All students will also be notified of their school assignment at the same time. Some magnet and charter schools have extra enrollment steps and follow separate timelines for completing these steps (usually in the fall leading up to the January enrollment deadline). If you are considering a magnet or charter program, please contact the school for details.

Q: How will the lottery work, and how will my child be enrolled with a school?

A: Students will be considered for enrollment at each school based on the preferences they list on the SchoolChoice form and the admissions priorities (i.e. siblings, Denver residents, etc.) established by each school. Within each priority group, a random number will be assigned to each student to break any "ties" within the priority group. The SchoolChoice tool will consider student preferences, schools' priorities, and available seats to determine the order in which students are enrolled.

Q: If my student only lists one school on the SchoolChoice form, will we have a higher chance of getting into that school?

A: No. The number of schools listed on a SchoolChoice form will not affect the likelihood of being assigned to any particular school. DPS strongly recommends that each student lists his/her top five preferred schools.

Q: What if my student doesn't get assigned to his/her first choice school?

A: If your student is not assigned to his/her first preference school, he/she will be placed on the waitlist at that school. When/if the school has space available, they will call you to offer you a seat.

Q: Will my student have to re-apply every year?

A: No. Once a student in grade kindergarten or higher is enrolled in a school via the SchoolChoice process, he/she will be expected to return to that school until he/she completes the highest grade available. The exception to this rule is Advanced Kindergarten, which is a one-year program and does not automatically "roll" into 1st grade.

Q: Is my child still guaranteed a spot at our boundary school?

A: Yes. The SchoolChoice process does not change district policies including a guaranteed spot at your boundary school. The only exception is if the student has previously "choiced" into a different DPS school – that new school is then considered their "home" school. If, at a later date, the student wants to return to his/her boundary school, the student will need to complete a SchoolChoice form to be considered for admission. Please note that once a student has "choiced" out of his/her boundary school, a seat at that school is no longer guaranteed.

Q: After enrolling in a school other than my boundary school through SchoolChoice, am I still guaranteed a seat at my boundary school?

A: It depends. If your boundary school is not full in your child's grade after the First Round, you may submit a Second Round Choice form to attend and your child will be enrolled right away. However, if your boundary school is full after the First Round, you will need to submit a Second Round Choice form and your child will be placed on the waitlist.

Q: When will I need to choose between different school offers?

A: In March, your student will be given only one school offer to his/her "best match" DPS school. You will need to ensure that you have prioritized your schools appropriately in January, prior to submitting your SchoolChoice form.

Q: What if I am not pleased with my student's school assignment or if I change my mind?

A: The Second Round of SchoolChoice (March 1, 2012 – August 31, 2012) will work similarly to how it does today. If a student desires to participate in the Second Round, the student must fill out a Second Round form and turn it in at the desired school. Additionally, if a student wants to be considered at multiple schools during the Second Round, that student must turn in a separate form at each school. Students will be assigned to their desired school on a first-come, first-served basis, contingent upon space availability. If your student participated in the First Round of SchoolChoice, and did not get assigned to his/her highest-preference school and is on a waitlist, participating in Second Round does not take your student off of any waitlists. If your student is assigned to a new school during Second Round, their school assignment from Round One will be inactivated.

Q: Will transportation be impacted by the SchoolChoice system?

A: No. The SchoolChoice process will not impact transportation policies. Please visit the DPS Transportation website at <http://transportation.dpsk12.org/> for details.

Q: Who should I contact if I have further questions?

A: The Office of Choice and Enrollment Services can be reached at (720)423-3493 or schoolchoice@dpsk12.org.